

## FAQ

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- How do I file a protest if I think I couldn't sell my property for the amount appraised? Within 30 days of the sending of the appraisal notice, the taxpayer should fill out the form that is enclosed in the notice of protest and mail, email, or fax the form to the appraisal district along with any evidence of value that they have. This protects the taxpayer's right to continue the appeal.
- How does an appeal work? Initially, the appraisers of the district will discuss the value issue with you and share sales information of similar properties. They will go over the information to ensure that the information the district has is correct. If the taxpayer has evidence such as a recent closing statement, estimates of cost to repair major issues, or pictures of interior problems with the property, those things will be considered by the appraiser and an adjustment to value may be offered. If a settlement number is offered and accepted, then the appeal is over and paperwork is signed by both parties.
- An appeal sounds difficult. Should I be afraid? No, the process is very easy and we are working hard to be cordial and respectful. There is nothing to fear with either the informal appeal with a staff person or the formal hearing before the Appraisal Review Board.
- Do I have the right to see the evidence that the appraisal district will present? Yes, by requesting that information before the hearing date, you will be provided a copy of the evidence that the district will present to the ARB.
- Do I need a lawyer or agent? It is not necessary to have a lawyer or agent. The discussions are informal. The staff of the district is not going to use anything tricky or unethical to "win" their argument. Our goal is to complete the discussion with a realistic market value on all property.
- Why does property have to be valued at its selling price? Texas is a "market value" state meaning that in our constitution and in law, the standard for appraisal is what a property would sell for if offered on the market. The appraisal process simply levels the playing field for all taxpayers in the community having each property owner pay based on what they own. The tax units each set a tax rate based on their needs for revenue to supply education, police protection, water, streets, and other services to the people they serve. The equality of taxation is also mandated by the courts in the distribution of funds for public education.
- Why are property taxes so high? The decision by state government to rely on sales taxes and property taxes as the primary sources of revenue cause both of those tax amounts to be high. The majority of states have an income tax to help with the state tax burden but Texas has made the decision to raise revenues from other sources instead of income and so those taxes are burdensome.
- How can I get my taxes down? The taxpayer should be sure that they are receiving all legal benefits to which they are entitled. All persons who own their home are entitled to a homestead exemption. That provides discounts to homeowners. Also, persons who are over 65 years of age or those persons who are disabled under social security regulations may apply for additional

exemptions. Disabled veterans also receive discounts from the market value of their property. And finally, an annual review of the proposed value is important to ensure that it is in line with actual selling prices.