

# Frequently Asked Questions about the Senior Tax Work-off Program

## **Where can I obtain an application for the SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM?**

Applications are available at all Springfield Senior Centers and the City of Springfield's website.

## **At what age can you apply for the SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM?**

Applicants must be aged 60 as of July 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 to earn property tax abatement under this program. Proof of age will need to be provided at time of application by completing the Form I-9.

## **Do I have to own the property in order to apply for the SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM?**

Yes, the applicant/taxpayer must be the assessed owner of the property as of July 1<sup>st</sup> of the applicable assessment year or, if the property is subject to a trust, the senior must have legal title, (i.e. be one of the trustees) to the property on which the tax to be abated is assessed. Where there is a question, the Board of Assessor's will make a final determination.

## **Is there a minimum amount of years I have to own and occupy a property in Springfield to apply for the SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM?**

No, you must own and occupy a home in Springfield prior to July 1st.

## **Will I be able to participate in the SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM if I owe back taxes?**

No, you must be current with the Collector's office and not in arrears.

## **What is the maximum amount of hours I can volunteer during the year in the SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM?**

The maximum hours allowed for volunteering is 67 hours for a maximum abatement amount of \$1,000. Rate is calculated based on minimum wage rate.

## **How will my hours worked in the SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM be documented?**

Hours must be documented in the time sheet provided at orientation and signed off on by the volunteer and his/her supervisor.

## **Can more than one qualifying owner participate in the SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM per fiscal year?**

No, only one qualifying owner of the parcel may earn an abatement under this program per fiscal year.

## **What happens if I am participating in the SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM and due to circumstances, I cannot complete all of the hours?**

If a selected owner cannot fulfill the commitment for all hours, another owner of the same property may complete the program if they also meet the SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM requirements. If that's not possible, credit will be awarded for hours towards the abatement.

## **Will everyone who applies receive a position in the SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM?**

No. There are a limited number of available positions each year. Applicants will be entered into a public lottery. Twenty (20) applications will be anonymously selected to participate in this pilot year. (2025 )

**When should I submit my completed application for the SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM?**

Completed applications must be submitted to the Raymond Jordan Center by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025 by 4:00pm EST. to be considered for the SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM for the upcoming calendar year. **Late applications will not be accepted.**

**Where do I submit my completed application?**

All applications must be submitted to the Department of Elder Affairs at the Raymond Jordan Senior Center, 1476 Roosevelt Avenue, Springfield, MA 01109. A PDF or Microsoft Word Document can be downloaded and printed out to complete through the Springfield City Website.

**What is a CORI check and why is one being done?**

CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) is a record of all criminal court appearances in Massachusetts for a particular individual, including arrests, convictions, dismissals, and serious violations. All volunteers for the City of Springfield, including SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM applicants, are subject to a CORI check as required by policy. This information is kept strictly confidential.

**Am I ensured this position from year to year?**

No, program selection is valid for one year. Applicants cannot participate in consecutive years.

**Who is responsible for administering SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM?**

**The Department of Elder Affairs will be responsible for overseeing this program.**

**When will I receive my Senior Work-off Abatement?**

All hours must be completed between July 1<sup>st</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup>. You will receive a certificate of completion by January 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year. The abatement is applied to the following year's tax bill. The abatement is typically credited to the third and fourth quarter tax bills.

**Since participation in the SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM is considered income earned, will there be taxes deducted?**

Yes, the abatement is subject to federal social security withholdings (FICA and Medicare) and the taxpayer is responsible for filing the income earned. The abatement is not subject to state income tax withholdings. **The City will pay the employer share of the federal withholdings and issue a W-2. The share** of these deductions will be deducted from the abatement amount. A 1099 will have to be filled out as well. **This means that the actual amount abated from the tax bill will be the amount earned less federal tax withholding.**

**If I'm not selected, are there other Savings Programs available that can help me?** Yes, there are many programs that can assist such as Circuit Breaker, Extra Help for Prescriptions, Fuel Assistance, and SNAP Benefits. Check with our Outreach Division at 787-6125

**Questions regarding the Program may be directed to:** [taxworkoff@springfieldcityhall.com](mailto:taxworkoff@springfieldcityhall.com). or call (413) 886-5260 You may also visit the Department of Elder Affairs at the Raymond Jordan Senior Center at 1476 Roosevelt Avenue, Springfield, MA 01109

## **Program Overview**

The **Senior Tax Work-Off Program** allows eligible seniors and veterans, aged 60 and up, to volunteer in City/Town Departments and receive in exchange an abatement on their property taxes. Volunteer work is paid at the minimum wage and the “wages” earned are applied to property taxes as an abatement.

## **Program Goals**

To assist senior citizen homeowners of the City of Springfield with the offset payment residential property tax bills. Acknowledging the skills and abilities of senior citizens and the community is continuing need for their services.

Applications will be accepted from February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025 and will be reviewed in the order in which they are received.

**Please note that awarded participants will be selected, via a lottery system.** Applicants, who are selected may be required to show proof of income, and will receive notification of acceptance by no later than April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025.