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PROPERTY TAX ATTORNEYS

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## Residential FAQ's (Non-Cook)

### **Why is the assessment of my home being increased this year?**

Outside of Cook County, assessments are adjusted *each year* to reflect increases (or decreases) in the real estate values in your local market. So, the Assessor will adjust your assessment this year even though you may have obtained an assessment reduction through an appeal previously and even if your home was quadrennially re-assessed recently.

### **My taxes have increased a lot recently, can I file an appeal?**

High taxes are not enough of a reason to obtain an assessment reduction. You should be entitled to an assessment reduction if the Assessor's estimate of the value of your home is greater than the value of your home based on the price you recently paid for your home, a recent appraisal of your home or recent sales of comparable homes in your neighborhood. The Assessor values your home at 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of its market value. So, if you multiply your assessment by 3, you will know the Assessor's estimate of the market value of your home. You will find your assessment on your tax bill or on the Assessor's website.

### **The Assessor's description of my home is wrong. Is that basis for an appeal?**

Not necessarily. If the Assessor's estimate of the value of your home is correct, but his description of your home is wrong, the mistaken description doesn't really matter. If the Assessor's estimate of the square footage of your home is too high and your assessment is too high, that would be a good basis for appeal. Information on bathroom counts, fireplaces, etc. don't affect the assessment that much.

### **My neighbor's home is assessed lower than mine. Is that basis for an appeal?**

The assessing officials are required to assess property uniformly. That means that similar homes should be assessed similarly. If you can identify 3 or 4 homes similar to yours that are assessed much lower than yours, you may have a good case for appeal. One home assessed lower than you isn't enough. To be similar, homes should be in the same neighborhood, same style (ranch, split-level, 2-story, etc), similar age, similar size and similar quality. When evaluating similarity of assessment, the assessor will consider assessment per square foot of home, excluding the basement. If you can provide us with a list of similar homes assessed lower than yours (we need the PIN numbers and addresses), we may be able to help you.