

Keene Township

Poverty Exemption Guidelines and Instructions for 2026

***** It is recommended that you read the guidelines and instructions before you fill out the application. In some instances, you may not qualify. *****

A property owner may apply for property tax relief under MCL 211.7u of the General Property Tax Act, Public Act 206 of 1893. The principal residence of persons who, by reason of poverty, are unable to contribute toward the public charges is eligible for exemption in whole or in part from taxation per MCL 211.7u(1).

To be considered for a poverty exemption, you must meet the following criteria:

1. The applicant must **own and occupy** the property and have a valid Principal Residence Exemption filed with the Assessor's Office.
2. File a Poverty Exemption Application as well as required supporting documentation with the Assessor's Office each year on or after January 1st but before the day prior to the last day of the December Board of Review the year in which the exemption is requested. No exception will be allowed to this deadline.
4. Ability to produce a valid driver's license, or other form of identification, if requested.
5. Ability to produce a deed, land contract, or other evidence of ownership of the property, if requested.
6. **Income Test:** Meet the poverty income guidelines as adopted by the Township Board. These amounts are currently determined by the US Department of Health and Human Services.

Income includes, but is not limited to; salaries, self-employment, Social Security, pensions, IRA's, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation, disability, supplemental security income (SSI), dividends, rental income, claims and judgements from lawsuits, military payments, scholarships, grants, gambling or lottery winnings, cash assistance, child support, alimony, friend or family contribution, and all other sources of income.

Poverty Guidelines Used in the Determination of Poverty Exemptions

Size of Family Unit	Poverty Guidelines (US Dept HHS +25%)
1	\$19,562.50
2	\$26,437.50
3	\$33,312.50
4	\$40,187.50
5	\$47,062.50
6	\$53,937.50
7	\$60,812.50
8	\$67,687.50
For each additional person	\$6,875

7. **Asset Test:** In addition to income limits, applicants cannot exceed the asset level test adopted by the Township Board.

Asset Limits Used in the Determination of Poverty Exemptions

Size of Family Unit	Maximum Total Household Assets
1	\$19,562.50
2	\$26,437.50
3	\$33,312.50
4	\$40,187.50
5	\$47,062.50
6	\$53,937.50
7	\$60,812.50
8	\$67,687.50
For each additional person	\$6,875

Household assets include but are not limited to; real estate (other than primary residence), more land than a minimum “footprint” for the home, land, automobiles, recreational vehicles such as, campers, boats, and ATV’s, jewelry, antiques, artwork, equipment, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, bank accounts, pensions, inheritance, federal non-cash benefits programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, school lunches, gifts, loans, and one-time insurance payments.

To be considered for a poverty exemption, the following information must be provided:

1. The Poverty Exemption Application must be completed in its entirety.
2. Submit completed and signed copies of the following for **all occupants** of your household:
 - Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit Claim (MI 1040 CR)
 - Michigan Income Tax Return
 - Federal Income Tax Return (1040 or 1040A)
 - State of Michigan Form 4988, if you are not required to file State or Federal income tax.
3. Submit income verification for yourself and all persons in the household including dependents.
4. Submit a list of assets and accounts for all persons in the household possession along with the value or recent statement.
5. The application must be legible. If you need to provide additional information, please attach a separate sheet.
6. Do not submit originals of supporting documentations as these are kept for records of the Board of Review.
7. If the application is incomplete, or if you fail to include the required documents, the exemption may be denied by the Board of Review.

Notice: Any willful misstatements or misrepresentations made on this form may constitute perjury, which, under the law, is a felony punishable by fine or imprisonment.

Recommended documentation checklist

Copies of the following documents are recommended as applicable for all persons living in the home when applying for a poverty exemption.

Identification:

- Driver's license or State of Michigan ID

Proof of Income:

- Most recent federal and state income tax returns with attachments or signed affidavit for all persons who were not required to file federal or state income tax returns
- Most recent Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit Claim
- Social Security benefit award letter for previous year (if lost, call 800.772.1213)
- Veterans Benefits statement
- Michigan Department of Human Services benefits, including the Family Independence Plan (FIP), cash assistance, state disability, and Food Assistance Plan (FAP)/Bridge Card benefits
- Income from employment
- Profit and Loss statement for the previous calendar year, if self-employed
- Worker's compensation
- Unemployment benefits
- Income from renters or boarders
- Farm income
- Alimony or child support
- Documentation of college or university scholarships, grants, fellowships, and assistantships

Household expenses:

- Mortgage payment or lease statements for the previous calendar year
- Homeowner's insurance for the previous calendar year
- Heat and electric bills for past 12 months (if lost, call Consumers Energy at 800.477.5050 or Lansing Board of Water and Light at 517.702.6006)

Assets:

- Bank and/or credit union statements for all savings, checking, draft, and money market accounts or shared accounts dated within 30 days and all statements for the previous calendar year
- Uncashed checks, drafts, and warrants
- Certificates of deposit: statement from financial institution or the certificate itself
- Money held by others: written statement from person holding funds
- Withdrawals of bank deposits and borrowed money
- Gifts, loans, lump-sum inheritances, and one-time insurance payments
- Long term care trust fund: written statement from facility
- Gaming/lottery winnings
- Stocks, bonds: written statement from broker or company
- Lump sum and accumulated benefits
- Vehicles – title, proof of insurance, registration, loan statement, or payment book to any cars, trucks, snowmobiles, campers, boats, farm equipment, motorcycles, and trailers
- Real estate or property: property tax assessment or certified statement of value or county records (primary residence/homestead excluded)
- Most recent pension and/or Individual Retirement Account (IRA) statement and all statements for the previous calendar year for all accounts
- Burial assets and life insurance: all statements for the previous calendar year
- Documentation of other assets of value: jewelry, antiques, artworks, equipment, etc.

This is not an exhaustive list. Further documentation may be requested at the discretion of the Assessing Department.

Application for MCL 211.7u Poverty Exemption

This form is issued under the authority of the General Property Tax Act, Public Act 206 of 1893, MCL 211.7u.

MCL 211.7u of the General Property Tax Act, Public Act 206 of 1893, provides a property tax exemption for the principal residence of persons who, by reason of poverty, are unable to contribute toward the public charges. This application is to be used to apply for the exemption and must be filed with the Board of Review where the property is located. This application may be submitted to the city or township the property is located in each year on or after January 1.

To be considered complete, this application must: 1) be completed in its entirety, 2) include information regarding all members residing within the household, and 3) include all required documentation as listed within the application. Please write legibly and attach additional pages as necessary.

PART 1: PERSONAL INFORMATION — Petitioner must list all required personal information.				
Petitioner's Name			Daytime Phone Number	
Age of Petitioner	Marital Status	Age of Spouse	Number of Legal Dependents	
Property Address of Principal Residence		City	State	ZIP Code
<input type="checkbox"/> Check if applied for Homestead Property Tax Credit		Amount of Homestead Property Tax Credit		
PART 2: REAL ESTATE INFORMATION				
List the real estate information related to your principal residence. Be prepared to provide a deed, land contract or other evidence of ownership of the property at the Board of Review meeting.				
Property Parcel Code Number		Name of Mortgage Company		
Unpaid Balance Owed on Principal Residence	Monthly Payment	Length of Time at this Residence		
Property Description				
PART 3: ADDITIONAL PROPERTY INFORMATION				
List information related to any other property owned by you or any member residing in the household.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Check if you own, or are buying, other property. If checked, complete the information below.			Amount of Income Earned from other Property	
1	Property Address	City	State	ZIP Code
	Name of Owner(s)	Assessed Value	Date of Last Taxes Paid	Amount of Taxes Paid
2	Property Address	City	State	ZIP Code
	Name of Owner(s)	Assessed Value	Date of Last Taxes Paid	Amount of Taxes Paid

PART 4: EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION — List your current employment information.					
Name of Employer					
Address of Employer		City	State	ZIP Code	
Contact Person		Employer Telephone Number			
PART 5: INCOME SOURCES					
List all income sources, including but not limited to: salaries, Social Security, rents, pensions, IRAs (individual retirement accounts), unemployment compensation, disability, government pensions, worker's compensation, dividends, claims and judgments from lawsuits, alimony, child support, friend or family contribution, reverse mortgage, or any other source of income, for all persons residing at the property.					
Source of Income				Monthly or Annual Income (indicate which)	
PART 6: CHECKING, SAVINGS AND INVESTMENT INFORMATION					
List any and all savings owned by all household members, including but not limited to: checking accounts, savings accounts, postal savings, credit union shares, certificates of deposit, cash, stocks, bonds, or similar investments, for all persons residing at the property.					
Name of Financial Institution or Investments	Amount on Deposit	Current Interest Rate	Name on Account	Value of Investment	
PART 7: LIFE INSURANCE — List all policies held by all household members.					
Name of Insured	Amount of Policy	Monthly Payments	Policy Paid in Full	Name of Beneficiary	Relationship to Insured
PART 8: MOTOR VEHICLE INFORMATION					
All motor vehicles (including motorcycles, motor homes, camper trailers, etc.) held or owned by any person residing within the household must be listed.					
Make	Year	Monthly Payment	Balance Owed		

PART 9: HOUSEHOLD OCCUPANTS — List all persons living in the household.

First and Last Name	Age	Relationship to Applicant	Place of Employment	\$ Contribution to Family Income

PART 10: PERSONAL DEBT — List all personal debt for all household members.

Creditor	Purpose of Debt	Date of Debt	Original Balance	Monthly Payment	Balance Owed

PART 11: MONTHLY EXPENSE INFORMATION

The amount of monthly expenses related to the principal residence for each category must be listed. Indicate N/A as necessary.

Heating	Electric	Water	Phone
Cable	Food	Clothing	Health Insurance
Garbage	Daycare	Car Expense (gas, repair, etc.)	
Other (type and amount)	Other (type and amount)	Other (type and amount)	
Other (type and amount)	Other (type and amount)	Other (type and amount)	

NOTICE: Per MCL 211.7u(2)(b), federal and state income tax returns for all persons residing in the principal residence, including any property tax credit returns, filed in the immediately preceding year or in the current year must be submitted with this application. Federal and state income tax returns are not required for a person residing in the principal residence if that person was not required to file a federal or state income tax return in the tax year in which the exemption under this section is claimed or in the immediately preceding tax year.

PART 11: POLICY AND GUIDELINES ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The governing body of the local assessing unit shall determine and make available to the public the policy and guidelines used for the granting of exemptions under MCL 211.7u. In order to be eligible for the exemption, the applicant must meet the federal poverty guidelines published in the prior calendar year in the Federal Register by the United States Department of Health and Human Services under its authority to revise the poverty line under 42 USC 9902, or alternative guidelines adopted by the governing body of the local assessing unit so long as the alternative guidelines do not provide income eligibility requirements less than the federal guidelines. The policy and guidelines must include, but are not limited to, the specific income and asset levels of the claimant and total household income and assets. The combined assets of all persons must not exceed the limits set forth in the guidelines adopted by the local assessing unit.

The applicant has reviewed the applicable policy and guidelines adopted by the city or township, including the specific income and asset levels of the claimant and total household income and assets.

PART 12: CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the best of my knowledge that the information provided in this form is complete, accurate and I am eligible for the exemption from property taxes pursuant to Michigan Compiled Law, Section 211.7u.

Printed Name	Signature	Date
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This application shall be filed after January 1, but before the day prior to the last day of the local unit's December Board of Review.

Decision of the March Board of Review may be appealed by petition to the Michigan Tax Tribunal by July 31 of the current year. A July or December Board of Review decision may be appealed to the Michigan Tax Tribunal by petition within 35 days of decision. A copy of the Board of Review decision must be included with the petition.

Michigan Tax Tribunal
PO Box 30232
Lansing MI 48909

Phone: 517-335-9760
E-mail: taxtrib@michigan.gov

Affirmation of Ownership and Occupancy to Remain Exempt by Reason of Poverty

This form is issued under the authority of Public Act 253 of 2020.

This form is to be used to affirm ownership, occupancy, and income status. MCL 211.7u(2) provides that, to be eligible for exemption under this section, a person shall, subject to subsection (6) and (8), annually affirm that the applicant owns and occupies, as a principal residence, the property for which an exemption is requested.

PART 1: OWNER INFORMATION — Enter information for the person owning and occupying the residence.			
Owner Name		Owner Telephone Number	
Mailing Address	City	State	ZIP Code
PART 2: LEGAL DESIGNEE INFORMATION (Complete if applicable.)			
Legal Designee Name		Daytime Telephone Number	
Mailing Address	City	State	ZIP Code
PART 3: HOMESTEAD PROPERTY INFORMATION — Enter information for property in which the exemption is being claimed.			
City or Township (check the appropriate box and enter name) <input type="checkbox"/> City <input type="checkbox"/> Township <input type="checkbox"/> Village		County	
Name of Local School District			
Parcel Identification Number	Year(s) Exemption Previously Granted by Board of Review		
Homestead Property Address	City	State	ZIP Code
PART 4: AFFIRMATION OF OWNERSHIP, OCCUPANCY, AND INCOME STATUS (Check all boxes that apply.)			
<input type="checkbox"/> I own the property in which the exemption is being claimed.			
<input type="checkbox"/> The property in which the exemption is being claimed is used as my homestead. Homestead is generally defined as any dwelling with its land and buildings where a family makes its home.			
<input type="checkbox"/> After establishing initial eligibility for the exemption, my income and asset status has remained unchanged and/or I receive a fixed income solely from public assistance that is not subject to significant annual increases beyond the rate of inflation, such as federal Supplemental Security Income or Social Security disability or retirement benefits.			
PART 5: CERTIFICATION			
I hereby certify to the best of my knowledge that the information provided on this form is true and I am eligible to receive an exemption from property taxes by reason of poverty pursuant to Michigan Compiled Law, Section 211.7u.			
Owner or Legal Designee Name (print)	Signature of Owner or Legal Designee	Date	
Designee must attach a letter of authority.			
LOCAL GOVERNMENT USE ONLY (DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied (Attach appeal instructions and provide to owner.)		Tax Year(s) exemption will be posted to tax roll	
CERTIFICATION — I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this form is complete and accurate.			
Assessor Signature		Date Certified by Assessor	

Poverty Exemption Affidavit

This form is issued under authority of Public Act 206 of 1893; MCL 211.7u.

INSTRUCTIONS: When completed, this document must accompany a taxpayer's Application for Poverty Exemption filed with the supervisor or the board of review of the local unit where the property is located. MCL 211.7u provides for a whole or partial property tax exemption on the principal residence of an owner of the property by reason of poverty and the inability to contribute toward the public charges. MCL 211.7u(2)(b) requires proof of eligibility for the exemption be provided to the board of review by supplying copies of federal and state income tax returns for all persons residing in the principal residence, including property tax credit returns, or by filing an affidavit for all persons residing in the residence who were not required to file federal or state income tax returns for the current or preceding tax year.

I, _____, swear and affirm by my signature below that I reside in the principal residence that is the subject of this Application for Poverty Exemption and that for the current tax year and the preceding tax year, I was not required to file a federal or state income tax return.

Address of Principal Residence: _____

Signature of Person Making Affidavit

Date