



Town of Mansfield

6 Park Row, Mansfield, Massachusetts 02048

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS RE: TAXPAYER REAL ESTATE BILLS

When is the Town's Fiscal Year?

The Town's fiscal year is July 1st of the current calendar year to June 30th of the next calendar year.

When are my real estate tax payments due?

Preliminary and actual tax bills are mailed twice per year and installments are due on a quarterly basis. Each mailing includes 2 remit slips and a taxpayer copy. The preliminary bills (1st and 2nd installments) are mailed during the last week of June and due on August 1st and November 1st. The preliminary installments typically represent $\frac{1}{4}$ of the prior year's total tax. The actual bills (3rd and 4th quarter installments) are mailed during the last week of December and due on February 1st and May 1st. The actual bills represent the current year assessment and tax rate which is set in early November.

Why are my 3rd and 4th quarter real estate tax bills (due February & May) higher than my 1st and 2nd quarters (due August & November)?

Your 1st quarter and 2nd quarter real estate tax bills (due August 1st & November 1st) are preliminary tax bills and do not include any tax adjustments for the fiscal year as the tax rate has not been set by this time period. Once the tax rate has been set by the Town, any tax adjustment will be reflected on the 3rd and 4th quarter actual real estate bills (due February 1st & May 1st).

How is my final real estate tax bill amount calculated?

It is your actual real estate's valuation multiplied by this fiscal year's tax rate for your property's classification.

I think my home valuation is incorrect. What can I do?

Please contact the Assessor's office at 508-261-7350 or assessor@mansfieldma.com for more information.

What is an abatement?

An abatement is a reduction in the amount of tax owed on a property for a given fiscal year. Abatements are given by the Board of Assessors. Please contact the Assessor's office at 508-261-7350 or assessor@mansfieldma.com for more information.

I didn't get a real estate tax bill. Does that mean that I don't have to pay? What should I do?

It is important to note that per Mass. General Law Chapter 60 Section 3, failure to receive a bill shall not affect the validity of either a tax or the proceedings for its collection. The Assessors receive transfer of ownership information from the Registry of Deeds and as timing allows, they make every effort to include the subsequent owner's name on the second line of the bill along with an updated mailing address. New owners should contact the Assessor's Office at (508) 261-7350 or assessor@mansfieldma.com for more information.

The real estate bill I received is not in my name. What should I do?

Under Massachusetts General Law (MGL), the tax bill must show the owner of record as of January 1st prior to the start of that fiscal year. The Assessors receive transfer of ownership information from the Registry of Deeds and as timing allows, they make every effort to include the subsequent owner's name on the second line of the bill along with an updated mailing address. New owners should contact the Assessor's Office at (508) 261-7350 or assessor@mansfieldma.com for more information.

What options do I have for paying my real estate tax bill? Can I pay late? Will I be charged a late fee?

The Town provides the following payment options:

Payments (check and remit slip) should be mailed to:

P.O. Box 9192

Chelsea, MA 02150-9192

There is a Payment Drop Box located at the exit of the Park Row Parking Lot. Payments may be dropped off at any time. Payments are picked up from the box Monday through Friday at 8 AM and posted using the prior business day as the effective date.

Online payments are accepted through City Hall Systems (click Online Payment tab on the left side of the Treasurer/Collector's web page at <https://www.mansfieldma.com/187/Treasurer-Collector>).

Cash, check or credit card payment can be made at the Treasurer's Office window at Town Hall. A fee will be charged by the bank for paying by debit or credit card.

Payment is NOT accepted over the phone.

Note: To be considered timely, payment must be received in the Collector's Office on or before the due date. Postmark dates are NOT accepted.

Interest at the annual rate of 14% accrues on all outstanding balances. If any tax balance remains unpaid after May 1st, a \$5.00 demand fee is assessed. The Demand bill is due in 10 days from the date of issuance.

What is a real estate tax lien? How do I remove it from my property? What happens if I do nothing and don't pay it?

If, after several reminders a Real Estate bill continues to go unpaid, the Town initiates a 'Tax Taking' which results in a tax lien being recorded at the Bristol County Registry of Deeds. This process can prevent change of ownership of a property until the lien is satisfied. For more information on how to remove a tax lien on your property, please contact the Treasurer/Collector's office at 508-261-7340 or the Treasurer/Collector Jacqueline Boudreau directly at jboudreau@mansfieldma.com.

Were there any public hearings held regarding the tax rate? When were they? How can I make my voice heard?

Several meetings are held throughout the year to discuss the tax rate. Also, a formal public hearing is scheduled by the Select Board each fall to discuss the tax rate. Each of these meetings is open to the public and you are encouraged to attend. Please contact the Select Board at 508-261-7372 for more information.

Does the Town offer any real estate tax exemptions for its elderly and disabled citizens, or for its veterans? If so, what are they? How do I apply?

The Town does offer numerous real estate tax exemptions to its residents. Please contact the Assessor's Office at (508) 261-7350 or assessor@mansfieldma.com for more information.

I am older and on a limited income, but I do have time that I could devote to the Town to reduce my tax bill. Is there any way that I can "work-off" a portion of my tax bill by working for the Town? If so, how do I find out more information?

The Town does offer a "Senior Work-off" program that allows residents to "work-off" a portion of their real estate tax bill. Please contact the Assessor's Office at (508) 261-7350 or assessor@mansfieldma.com for more information.