Sen. Celina Villanueva

Filed: 5/29/2025

AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 1977

AMENDMENT NO. ______. Amend Senate Bill 1977 by replacing everything after the enacting clause with the following:

"Section 5. The Property Tax Code is amended by changing Sections 15-172, 21-150, and 21-385 and by adding Sections 1-71, 1-72, 21-254, and 21-291 as follows:

(35 ILCS 200/1-71 new)

Sec. 1-71. Homestead. The land and buildings thereon, including a condominium or a dwelling unit in a multi-dwelling building that is owned and operated as a cooperative, occupied by the taxpayer as the principal residence, or which is temporarily unoccupied by the taxpayer because the taxpayer is temporarily residing, for not more than one year, in a licensed facility as defined in Section 1-113 of the Nursing Home Care Act.

(35 ILCS 200/1-72 new)

Sec. 1-72. Homestead exemption. A property tax exemption that decreases all or a portion of the equalized assessed value of homestead property for a designated group of taxpayers. The term "homestead exemption" is limited to an exemption that is granted for the purpose of residential property tax relief and that has one or more of the following goals: (i) lowering the tax burden on targeted and identified groups; (ii) promoting progressivity into property tax system; (iii) sheltering groups at risk by lowering tax burden; or (iv) supporting rehabilitation and maintenance of existing housing.

(35 ILCS 200/15-172)

Sec. 15-172. Low-Income Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption.

(a) This Section may be cited as the Low-Income Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption.

(b) As used in this Section:

"Applicant" means an individual who has filed an application under this Section.

"Base amount" means the base year equalized assessed value of the residence plus the first year's equalized assessed value of any added improvements which increased the assessed value of the residence after the base year.

"Base year" means the taxable year prior to the taxable year for which the applicant first qualifies and applies for the exemption provided that in the prior taxable year the property was improved with a permanent structure that was occupied as a residence by the applicant who was liable for paying real property taxes on the property and who was either (i) an owner of record of the property or had legal or equitable interest in the property as evidenced by a written instrument or (ii) had a legal or equitable interest as a lessee in the parcel of property that was single family residence. If in any subsequent taxable year for which the applicant applies and qualifies for the exemption the equalized assessed value of the residence is less than the equalized assessed value in the existing base year (provided that such equalized assessed value is not based on an assessed value that results from a temporary irregularity in the property that reduces the assessed value for one or more taxable years), then that subsequent taxable year shall become the base year until a new base year is established under the terms of this paragraph. For taxable year 1999 only, the Chief County Assessment Officer shall review (i) all taxable years for which the applicant applied and qualified for the exemption and (ii) the existing base year. The assessment officer shall select as the new base year the year with the lowest equalized assessed value. An equalized assessed value that is based on an assessed value that results from a temporary irregularity in the property that reduces the assessed value for one or more taxable years shall not be considered the lowest equalized assessed value. The selected year shall be the base year for taxable year 1999 and thereafter until a new base year is established under the terms of this paragraph.

"Chief County Assessment Officer" means the County Assessor or Supervisor of Assessments of the county in which the property is located.

"Equalized assessed value" means the assessed value as equalized by the Illinois Department of Revenue.

"Household" means the applicant, the spouse of the applicant, and all persons using the residence of the applicant as their principal place of residence.

"Household income" means the combined income of the members of a household for the calendar year preceding the taxable year.

"Income" has the same meaning as provided in Section 3.07 of the Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities Property Tax Relief Act, except that, beginning in assessment year 2001, "income" does not include veteran's benefits.

"Internal Revenue Code of 1986" means the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or any successor law or laws relating to federal income taxes in effect for the year preceding the taxable year.

"Life care facility that qualifies as a cooperative" means a facility as defined in Section 2 of the Life Care Facilities

Act.

"Maximum income limitation" means:

(1) $35,000 prior to taxable year 1999;

(2) $40,000 in taxable years 1999 through 2003;

(3) $45,000 in taxable years 2004 through 2005;

(4) $50,000 in taxable years 2006 and 2007;

(5) $55,000 in taxable years 2008 through 2016;

(6) for taxable year 2017, (i) $65,000 for qualified property located in a county with 3,000,000 or more inhabitants and (ii) $55,000 for qualified property located in a county with fewer than 3,000,000 inhabitants; ~~and~~

(7) for taxable years 2018 through 2024 ~~and thereafter~~, $65,000 for all qualified property;~~.~~

(8) for taxable year 2025, $75,000 for all qualified property;

(9) for taxable year 2026, $77,000 for all qualified property; and

(10) for taxable years 2027 and thereafter, $79,000 for all qualified property.

As an alternative income valuation, a homeowner who is enrolled in any of the following programs may be presumed to have household income that does not exceed the maximum income limitation for that tax year as required by this Section: Aid to the Aged, Blind or Disabled (AABD) Program or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), both of which are administered by the Department of Human Services; the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which is administered by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity; The Benefit Access program, which is administered by the Department on Aging; and the Senior Citizens Real Estate Tax Deferral Program.

A chief county assessment officer may indicate that he or she has verified an applicant's income eligibility for this exemption but may not report which program or programs, if any, enroll the applicant. Release of personal information submitted pursuant to this Section shall be deemed an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy under the Freedom of Information Act.

"Residence" means the principal dwelling place and appurtenant structures used for residential purposes in this State occupied on January 1 of the taxable year by a household and so much of the surrounding land, constituting the parcel upon which the dwelling place is situated, as is used for residential purposes. If the Chief County Assessment Officer has established a specific legal description for a portion of property constituting the residence, then that portion of property shall be deemed the residence for the purposes of this Section.

"Taxable year" means the calendar year during which ad valorem property taxes payable in the next succeeding year are levied.

(c) Beginning in taxable year 1994, a low-income senior citizens assessment freeze homestead exemption is granted for real property that is improved with a permanent structure that is occupied as a residence by an applicant who (i) is 65 years of age or older during the taxable year, (ii) has a household income that does not exceed the maximum income limitation, (iii) is liable for paying real property taxes on the property, and (iv) is an owner of record of the property or has a legal or equitable interest in the property as evidenced by a written instrument. This homestead exemption shall also apply to a leasehold interest in a parcel of property improved with a permanent structure that is a single family residence that is occupied as a residence by a person who (i) is 65 years of age or older during the taxable year, (ii) has a household income that does not exceed the maximum income limitation, (iii) has a legal or equitable ownership interest in the property as lessee, and (iv) is liable for the payment of real property taxes on that property.

In counties of 3,000,000 or more inhabitants, the amount of the exemption for all taxable years is the equalized assessed value of the residence in the taxable year for which application is made minus the base amount. In all other counties, the amount of the exemption is as follows: (i) through taxable year 2005 and for taxable year 2007 and thereafter, the amount of this exemption shall be the equalized assessed value of the residence in the taxable year for which application is made minus the base amount; and (ii) for taxable year 2006, the amount of the exemption is as follows:

(1) For an applicant who has a household income of $45,000 or less, the amount of the exemption is the equalized assessed value of the residence in the taxable year for which application is made minus the base amount.

(2) For an applicant who has a household income exceeding $45,000 but not exceeding $46,250, the amount of the exemption is (i) the equalized assessed value of the residence in the taxable year for which application is made minus the base amount (ii) multiplied by 0.8.

(3) For an applicant who has a household income exceeding $46,250 but not exceeding $47,500, the amount of the exemption is (i) the equalized assessed value of the residence in the taxable year for which application is made minus the base amount (ii) multiplied by 0.6.

(4) For an applicant who has a household income exceeding $47,500 but not exceeding $48,750, the amount of the exemption is (i) the equalized assessed value of the residence in the taxable year for which application is made minus the base amount (ii) multiplied by 0.4.

(5) For an applicant who has a household income exceeding $48,750 but not exceeding $50,000, the amount of the exemption is (i) the equalized assessed value of the residence in the taxable year for which application is

made minus the base amount (ii) multiplied by 0.2.

When the applicant is a surviving spouse of an applicant for a prior year for the same residence for which an exemption under this Section has been granted, the base year and base amount for that residence are the same as for the applicant for the prior year.

Each year at the time the assessment books are certified to the County Clerk, the Board of Review or Board of Appeals shall give to the County Clerk a list of the assessed values of improvements on each parcel qualifying for this exemption that were added after the base year for this parcel and that increased the assessed value of the property.

In the case of land improved with an apartment building owned and operated as a cooperative or a building that is a life care facility that qualifies as a cooperative, the maximum reduction from the equalized assessed value of the property is limited to the sum of the reductions calculated for each unit occupied as a residence by a person or persons (i) 65 years of age or older, (ii) with a household income that does not exceed the maximum income limitation, (iii) who is liable, by contract with the owner or owners of record, for paying real property taxes on the property, and (iv) who is an owner of record of a legal or equitable interest in the cooperative apartment building, other than a leasehold interest. In the instance of a cooperative where a homestead exemption has been granted under this Section, the cooperative association or its management firm shall credit the savings resulting from that exemption only to the apportioned tax liability of the owner who qualified for the exemption. Any person who willfully refuses to credit that savings to an owner who qualifies for the exemption is guilty of a Class B misdemeanor.

When a homestead exemption has been granted under this Section and an applicant then becomes a resident of a facility licensed under the Assisted Living and Shared Housing Act, the Nursing Home Care Act, the Specialized Mental Health Rehabilitation Act of 2013, the ID/DD Community Care Act, or the MC/DD Act, the exemption shall be granted in subsequent years so long as the residence (i) continues to be occupied by the qualified applicant's spouse or (ii) if remaining unoccupied, is still owned by the qualified applicant for the homestead exemption.

Beginning January 1, 1997, when an individual dies who would have qualified for an exemption under this Section, and the surviving spouse does not independently qualify for this exemption because of age, the exemption under this Section shall be granted to the surviving spouse for the taxable year preceding and the taxable year of the death, provided that, except for age, the surviving spouse meets all other qualifications for the granting of this exemption for those years.

When married persons maintain separate residences, the exemption provided for in this Section may be claimed by only one of such persons and for only one residence.

For taxable year 1994 only, in counties having less than 3,000,000 inhabitants, to receive the exemption, a person shall submit an application by February 15, 1995 to the Chief County Assessment Officer of the county in which the property is located. In counties having 3,000,000 or more inhabitants, for taxable year 1994 and all subsequent taxable years, to receive the exemption, a person may submit an application to the Chief County Assessment Officer of the county in which the property is located during such period as may be specified by the Chief County Assessment Officer. The Chief County Assessment Officer in counties of 3,000,000 or more inhabitants shall annually give notice of the application period by mail or by publication. In counties having less than 3,000,000 inhabitants, beginning with taxable year 1995 and thereafter, to receive the exemption, a person shall submit an application by July 1 of each taxable year to the Chief County Assessment Officer of the county in which the property is located. A county may, by ordinance, establish a date for submission of applications that is different than July 1. The applicant shall submit with the application an affidavit of the applicant's total household income, age, marital status (and if married the name and address of the applicant's spouse, if known), and principal dwelling place of members of the household on January 1 of the taxable year. The Department shall establish, by rule, a method for verifying the accuracy of affidavits filed by applicants under this Section, and the Chief County Assessment Officer may conduct audits of any taxpayer claiming an exemption under this Section to verify that the taxpayer is eligible to receive the exemption. Each application shall contain or be verified by a written declaration that it is made under the penalties of perjury. A taxpayer's signing a fraudulent application under this Act is perjury, as defined in Section 32-2 of the Criminal Code of 2012. The applications shall be clearly marked as applications for the Low-Income Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption and must contain a notice that any taxpayer who receives the exemption is subject to an audit by the Chief County Assessment Officer.

Notwithstanding any other provision to the contrary, in counties having fewer than 3,000,000 inhabitants, if an applicant fails to file the application required by this Section in a timely manner and this failure to file is due to a mental or physical condition sufficiently severe so as to render the applicant incapable of filing the application in a timely manner, the Chief County Assessment Officer may extend the filing deadline for a period of 30 days after the applicant regains the capability to file the application, but in no case may the filing deadline be extended beyond 3 months of the original filing deadline. In order to receive the extension provided in this paragraph, the applicant shall provide the

Chief County Assessment Officer with a signed statement from the applicant's physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant stating the nature and extent of the condition, that, in the physician's, advanced practice registered nurse's, or physician assistant's opinion, the condition was so severe that it rendered the applicant incapable of filing the application in a timely manner, and the date on which the applicant regained the capability to file the application.

Beginning January 1, 1998, notwithstanding any other provision to the contrary, in counties having fewer than 3,000,000 inhabitants, if an applicant fails to file the application required by this Section in a timely manner and this failure to file is due to a mental or physical condition sufficiently severe so as to render the applicant incapable of filing the application in a timely manner, the Chief County Assessment Officer may extend the filing deadline for a period of 3 months. In order to receive the extension provided in this paragraph, the applicant shall provide the Chief County Assessment Officer with a signed statement from the applicant's physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant stating the nature and extent of the condition, and that, in the physician's, advanced practice registered nurse's, or physician assistant's opinion, the condition was so severe that it rendered the applicant incapable of filing the application in a timely manner.

In counties having less than 3,000,000 inhabitants, if an applicant was denied an exemption in taxable year 1994 and the denial occurred due to an error on the part of an assessment official, or his or her agent or employee, then beginning in taxable year 1997 the applicant's base year, for purposes of determining the amount of the exemption, shall be 1993 rather than 1994. In addition, in taxable year 1997, the applicant's exemption shall also include an amount equal to (i) the amount of any exemption denied to the applicant in taxable year 1995 as a result of using 1994, rather than 1993, as the base year, (ii) the amount of any exemption denied to the applicant in taxable year 1996 as a result of using 1994, rather than 1993, as the base year, and (iii) the amount of the exemption erroneously denied for taxable year 1994.

For purposes of this Section, a person who will be 65 years of age during the current taxable year shall be eligible to apply for the homestead exemption during that taxable year. Application shall be made during the application period in effect for the county of his or her residence.

The Chief County Assessment Officer may determine the eligibility of a life care facility that qualifies as a cooperative to receive the benefits provided by this Section by use of an affidavit, application, visual inspection, questionnaire, or other reasonable method in order to insure that the tax savings resulting from the exemption are credited by the management firm to the apportioned tax liability of each qualifying resident. The Chief County Assessment Officer may request reasonable proof that the management firm has so credited that exemption.

Except as provided in this Section, all information received by the chief county assessment officer or the Department from applications filed under this Section, or from any investigation conducted under the provisions of this Section, shall be confidential, except for official purposes or pursuant to official procedures for collection of any State or local tax or enforcement of any civil or criminal penalty or sanction imposed by this Act or by any statute or ordinance imposing a State or local tax. Any person who divulges any such information in any manner, except in accordance with a proper judicial order, is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

Nothing contained in this Section shall prevent the Director or chief county assessment officer from publishing or making available reasonable statistics concerning the operation of the exemption contained in this Section in which the contents of claims are grouped into aggregates in such a way that information contained in any individual claim shall not be disclosed.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for taxable year 2017 and thereafter, in counties of 3,000,000 or more inhabitants, the amount of the exemption shall be the greater of (i) the amount of the exemption otherwise calculated under this Section or (ii) $2,000.

(c-5) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, each chief county assessment officer may approve this exemption for the 2020 taxable year, without application, for any property that was approved for this exemption for the 2019 taxable year, provided that:

(1) the county board has declared a local disaster as provided in the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act related to the COVID-19 public health emergency;

(2) the owner of record of the property as of January 1, 2020 is the same as the owner of record of the property as of January 1, 2019;

(3) the exemption for the 2019 taxable year has not been determined to be an erroneous exemption as defined by this Code; and

(4) the applicant for the 2019 taxable year has not asked for the exemption to be removed for the 2019 or 2020 taxable years.

Nothing in this subsection shall preclude or impair the authority of a chief county assessment officer to conduct audits of any taxpayer claiming an exemption under this Section to verify that the taxpayer is eligible to receive the exemption as provided elsewhere in this Section.

(c-10) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, each chief county assessment officer may approve this exemption for the 2021 taxable year, without application, for any property that was approved for this exemption for the 2020 taxable year, if:

(1) the county board has declared a local disaster as provided in the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act related to the COVID-19 public health emergency;

(2) the owner of record of the property as of January 1, 2021 is the same as the owner of record of the property as of January 1, 2020;

(3) the exemption for the 2020 taxable year has not been determined to be an erroneous exemption as defined by this Code; and

(4) the taxpayer for the 2020 taxable year has not asked for the exemption to be removed for the 2020 or 2021 taxable years.

Nothing in this subsection shall preclude or impair the authority of a chief county assessment officer to conduct audits of any taxpayer claiming an exemption under this Section to verify that the taxpayer is eligible to receive the exemption as provided elsewhere in this Section.

(d) Each Chief County Assessment Officer shall annually publish a notice of availability of the exemption provided under this Section. The notice shall be published at least 60 days but no more than 75 days prior to the date on which the application must be submitted to the Chief County Assessment Officer of the county in which the property is located. The notice shall appear in a newspaper of general circulation in the county.

Notwithstanding Sections 6 and 8 of the State Mandates Act, no reimbursement by the State is required for the implementation of any mandate created by this Section.

(Source: P.A. 101-635, eff. 6-5-20; 102-136, eff. 7-23-21; 102-895, eff. 5-23-22.)

(35 ILCS 200/21-150)

Sec. 21-150. Time of applying for judgment. Except as otherwise provided in this Section or by ordinance or resolution enacted under subsection (c) of Section 21-40, in any county with fewer than 3,000,000 inhabitants, all applications for judgment and order of sale for taxes and special assessments on delinquent properties shall be made within 90 days after the second installment due date. In Cook County, all applications for judgment and order of sale for taxes and special assessments on delinquent properties shall be made (i) by July 1, 2011 for tax year 2009, (ii) by July 1, 2012 for tax year 2010, (iii) by July 1, 2013 for tax year 2011, (iv) by July 1, 2014 for tax year 2012, (v) by July 1, 2015 for tax year 2013, (vi) by May 1, 2016 for tax year 2014, (vii) by March 1, 2017 for tax year 2015, (viii) by April 1 of the next calendar year after the second installment due date for tax year 2016 and 2017, and (ix) within 365 days of the second installment due date for each tax year thereafter. Notwithstanding these dates, in Cook County, the application for judgment and order of sale for the 2018 annual tax sale that would normally be held in calendar year 2020 shall not be filed earlier than the first day of the first month during which there is no longer a statewide COVID-19 public health emergency, as evidenced by an effective disaster declaration of the Governor covering all counties in the State, except that in no event may this application for judgment and order of sale be filed later than October 1, 2021. When a tax sale is delayed because of a statewide COVID-19 public health emergency, no subsequent annual tax sale may begin earlier than 180 days after the last day of the prior delayed tax sale, and no scavenger tax sale may begin earlier than 90 days after the last day of the prior delayed tax sale. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any deadlines set forth in this Section for applications for judgment and order of sale for taxes and special assessments on delinquent properties that occur on or after the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 104th General Assembly but before March 10, 2026 shall be tolled until March 10, 2026. In those counties which have adopted an ordinance under Section 21-40, the application for judgment and order of sale for delinquent taxes shall be made in December. In the 10 years next following the completion of a general reassessment of property in any county with 3,000,000 or more inhabitants, made under an order of the Department, applications for judgment and order of sale shall be made as soon as may be and on the day specified in the advertisement required by Section 21-110 and 21-115. If for any cause the court is not held on the day specified, the cause shall stand continued, and it shall be unnecessary to re-advertise the list or notice.

Within 30 days after the day specified for the application for judgment the court shall hear and determine the matter. If judgment is rendered, the sale shall begin on the date within 5 business days specified in the notice as provided in Section 21-115. If the collector is prevented from advertising and obtaining judgment within the time periods specified by this Section, the collector may obtain judgment at any time thereafter; but if the failure arises by the county collector's not complying with any of the requirements of this Code, he or she shall be held on his or her official bond for the full amount of all taxes and special assessments charged against him or her. Any failure on the part of the county collector shall not be allowed as a valid objection to the collection of any tax or assessment, or to entry of a judgment against any delinquent properties included in the application of the county collector.

(Source: P.A. 101-635, eff. 6-5-20; 102-519, eff. 8-20-21.)

(35 ILCS 200/21-254 new)

Sec. 21-254. Annual tax sale postponed. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no annual tax sale shall be held on or after the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 104th General Assembly and before March 10, 2026. This Section is a limitation under subsection (i) of Section 6 of Article VII of the Illinois Constitution on the concurrent exercise by home rule units of powers and functions exercised by the State.

(35 ILCS 200/21-291 new)

Sec. 21-291. Scavenger sale postponed. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no scavenger sale shall be held on or after the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 104th General Assembly and before March 10, 2026. This Section is a limitation under subsection (i) of Section 6 of Article VII of the Illinois Constitution on the concurrent exercise by home rule units of powers and functions exercised by the State.

(35 ILCS 200/21-385)

Sec. 21-385. Extension of period of redemption.

(a) For any tax certificates held by a county pursuant to Section 21-90, the redemption period for each tax certificate shall be extended by operation of law until the date established by the county as the redemption deadline in a petition for tax deed filed under Section 22-30. The redemption deadline established in the petition shall be identified in the notices provided under Sections 22-10 through 22-25 of this Code. After a redemption deadline is established in the petition for tax deed, the county may further extend the redemption deadline by filing with the county clerk of the county in which the property is located a written notice to that effect describing the property, identifying the certificate number, and specifying the extended period of redemption. Notwithstanding any expiration of a prior redemption period, all tax certificates forfeited to the county and held pursuant to Section 21-90 shall remain enforceable by the county or its assignee, and redemption shall be extended by operation of law until the date established by the county as the redemption deadline in a petition for tax deed filed under Section 22-30.

(b) Within 60 days of the date of assignment, assignees of forfeited certificates under Section 21-90 or Section 21-145 of this Code must file with the county clerk of the county in which the property is located a written notice describing the property, stating the date of the assignment, identifying the certificate number and specifying a deadline for redemption that is not later than 3 years from the date of assignment. Upon receiving the notice, the county clerk shall stamp the date of receipt upon the notice. If the notice is submitted as an electronic record, the county clerk shall acknowledge receipt of the record and shall provide confirmation in the same manner to the certificate holder. The confirmation from the county clerk shall include the date of receipt and shall serve as proof that the notice was filed with the county clerk. In no event shall a county clerk permit an assignee of forfeited certificates under Section 21-90 or Section 21-145 of this Code to extend the period of redemption beyond 3 years from the date of assignment. If the redemption period expires and no petition for tax deed has been filed under Section 22-30, the assigned tax certificate shall be forfeited to and held by the county pursuant to Section 21-90.

(c) Except for the county as trustee pursuant to Section 21-90, the purchaser or his or her assignee of property sold for nonpayment of general taxes or special assessments may extend the period of redemption at any time before the expiration of the original period of redemption, or thereafter prior to the expiration of any extended period of redemption, but only for a period that will expire not later than 3 years from the date of sale, by filing with the county clerk of the county in which the property is located a written notice to that effect describing the property, stating the date of the sale and specifying the extended period of redemption. Upon receiving the notice, the county clerk shall stamp the date of receipt upon the notice. If the notice is submitted as an electronic record, the county clerk shall acknowledge receipt of the record and shall provide confirmation in the same manner to the certificate holder. The confirmation from the county clerk shall include the date of receipt and shall serve as proof that the notice was filed with the county clerk. The county clerk shall not be required to extend the period of redemption unless the purchaser or his or her assignee obtains this acknowledgement of delivery. If prior to the expiration of the period of redemption or extended period of redemption a petition for tax deed has been filed under Section 22-30, upon application of the petitioner, the court shall allow the purchaser or his or her assignee to extend the period of redemption after expiration of the original period or any extended period of redemption, provided that any extension allowed will expire not later than 3 years from the date of sale. If the period of redemption is extended, the purchaser or his or her assignee must give the notices provided for in Section 22-10 at the specified times prior to the expiration of the extended period of redemption by causing a sheriff (or if he or she is disqualified, a coroner) of the county in which the property, or any part thereof, is located to serve the notices as provided in Sections 22-15 and 22-20. The notices may also be served as provided in Sections 22-15 and 22-20 by a special process server appointed by the court under Section 22-15 and as provided in Sections 22-15 and 22-20.

The changes made to this Section by this amendatory Act of the 103rd General Assembly apply to matters concerning tax certificates issued on or after January 1, 2024.

(d) For any tax certificates held by a county, the county clerk may create and administer a payment plan during the redemption period. Under the payment plan, the county clerk may waive interest penalties when payments are made in accordance with the parameters set forth in the payment plan.

(Source: P.A. 103-555, eff. 1-1-24.)

Section 10. The Senior Citizens Real Estate Tax Deferral Act is amended by changing Sections 2 and 3 as follows:

(320 ILCS 30/2) (from Ch. 67 1/2, par. 452)

Sec. 2. Definitions. As used in this Act:

(a) "Qualified Taxpayer" means an individual (i) who will be 65 years of age or older by June 1 of the year for which a tax deferral is claimed; (ii) who certifies that they have owned and occupied as their residence such property or other qualifying property in the State for at least the last 3 years, except for any periods during which the taxpayer may have temporarily resided in a nursing or sheltered care home; and (iii) whose household income for the year is no greater than the maximum household income. ~~: (i) $40,000 through tax year 2005; (ii) $50,000 for tax years 2006 through 2011; (iii) $55,000 for tax years 2012 through 2021; (iv) $65,000 for tax years 2022 through 2025; and (v) $55,000 for tax year 2026 and thereafter.~~

(b) "Tax deferred property" means the property upon which real estate taxes are deferred under this Act.

(c) "Homestead" means the land and buildings thereon, including a condominium or a dwelling unit in a multidwelling building that is owned and operated as a cooperative, occupied by the taxpayer as his residence or which are temporarily unoccupied by the taxpayer because such taxpayer is temporarily residing, for not more than 1 year, in a licensed facility as defined in Section 1-113 of the Nursing Home Care Act.

(d) "Real estate taxes" or "taxes" means the taxes on real property for which the taxpayer would be liable under the Property Tax Code, including special service area taxes, and special assessments on benefited real property for which the taxpayer would be liable to a unit of local government.

(e) "Department" means the Department of Revenue.

(f) "Qualifying property" means a homestead which (a) the taxpayer or the taxpayer and his spouse own in fee simple or are purchasing in fee simple under a recorded instrument of sale, (b) is not income-producing property, (c) is not subject to a lien for unpaid real estate taxes when a claim under this Act is filed, and (d) is not held in trust, other than an Illinois land trust with the taxpayer identified as the sole beneficiary, if the taxpayer is filing for the program for the first time effective as of the January 1, 2011 assessment year or tax year 2012 and thereafter.

(g) "Equity interest" means the current assessed valuation of the qualified property times the fraction necessary to convert that figure to full market value minus any outstanding debts or liens on that property. In the case of qualifying property not having a separate assessed valuation, the appraised value as determined by a qualified real estate appraiser shall be used instead of the current assessed valuation.

(h) "Household income" has the meaning ascribed to that term in the Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities Property Tax Relief Act.

(i) "Collector" means the county collector or, if the taxes to be deferred are special assessments, an official designated by a unit of local government to collect special assessments.

<u>(j) "Maximum household income" means:</u>

<u>(1) $40,000 through tax year 2005;</u>

<u>(2) $50,000 for tax years 2006 through 2011;</u>

<u>(3) $55,000 for tax years 2012 through 2021;</u>

<u>(4) $65,000 for tax years 2022 through 2024;</u>

<u>(5) $75,000 for tax year 2025;</u>

<u>(6) $77,000 for tax year 2026; and</u>

<u>(7) $79,000 for tax years 2027 and thereafter.</u>

(Source: P.A. 102-644, eff. 8-27-21.)

(320 ILCS 30/3) (from Ch. 67 1/2, par. 453)

Sec. 3. A taxpayer may, on or before March 1 of each year, apply to the county collector of the county where his qualifying property is located, or to the official designated by a unit of local government to collect special assessments on the qualifying property, as the case may be, for a deferral of all or a part of real estate taxes payable during that year for the preceding year in the case of real estate taxes other than special assessments, or for a deferral of any installments payable during that year in the case of special assessments, on all or part of his qualifying property. The application shall be on a form prescribed by the Department and furnished by the collector, (a) showing that the applicant will be 65 years of age or older by June 1 of the year for which a tax deferral is claimed, (b) describing the property and verifying that the property is qualifying property as defined in Section 2, (c) certifying that the taxpayer has owned and occupied as his residence such property or other qualifying property in the State for at least the last 3 years except for any periods during which the taxpayer may have temporarily resided in a nursing or sheltered care home, and (d) specifying whether the deferral is for all or a part of the taxes, and, if for a part, the amount of deferral applied for. As to qualifying property not having a separate assessed valuation, the taxpayer shall also file with the county collector a written appraisal of the property prepared by a qualified real estate appraiser together with a certificate signed by the appraiser stating that he has personally examined the property and setting forth the value of the land and the value of the buildings thereon occupied by the taxpayer as his residence. <u>The county collector may use eligibility for the Low-Income Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption under Section 15-172 of the Property Tax Code as qualification for items (a) and (c).</u>

The collector shall grant the tax deferral provided such deferral does not exceed funds available in the Senior Citizens Real Estate Deferred Tax Revolving Fund and provided that the owner or owners of such real property have entered into a tax deferral and recovery agreement with the collector on behalf of the county or other unit of local government, which agreement expressly states:

(1) That the total amount of taxes deferred under this Act, plus interest, for the year for which a tax deferral is claimed as well as for those previous years for which taxes are not delinquent and for which such deferral has been claimed may not exceed 80% of the taxpayer's equity interest in the property for which taxes are to be deferred and that, if the total deferred taxes plus interest equals 80% of the taxpayer's equity interest in the property, the taxpayer shall thereafter pay the annual interest due on such deferred taxes plus interest so that total deferred taxes plus interest will not exceed such 80% of the taxpayer's equity interest in the property. Effective as of the January 1, 2011 assessment year or tax year 2012 and through the 2021 tax year, ~~and beginning again with the 2026 tax year,~~ the total amount of any such deferral shall not exceed $5,000 per taxpayer in each tax year. For the 2022 tax year <u>and every tax year after</u> ~~through the 2025 tax year~~, the total amount of any such deferral shall not exceed $7,500 per taxpayer in each tax year.

(2) That any real estate taxes deferred under this Act and any interest accrued thereon are a lien on the real estate and

improvements thereon until paid. If the taxes deferred are for a tax year prior to 2023, then interest shall accrue at the rate of 6% per year. If the taxes deferred are for the 2023 tax year or any tax year thereafter, then interest shall accrue at the rate of 3% per year. No sale or transfer of such real property may be legally closed and recorded until the taxes which would otherwise have been due on the property, plus accrued interest, have been paid unless the collector certifies in writing that an arrangement for prompt payment of the amount due has been made with his office. The same shall apply if the property is to be made the subject of a contract of sale.

(3) That upon the death of the taxpayer claiming the deferral the heirs-at-law, assignees or legatees shall have first priority to the real property upon which taxes have been deferred by paying in full the total taxes which would otherwise have been due, plus interest. However, if such heir-at-law, assignee, or legatee is a surviving spouse, the tax deferred status of the property shall be continued during the life of that surviving spouse if the spouse is 55 years of age or older within 6 months of the date of death of the taxpayer and enters into a tax deferral and recovery agreement before the time when deferred taxes become due under this Section. Any additional taxes deferred, plus interest, on the real property under a tax deferral and recovery agreement signed by a surviving spouse shall be added to the taxes and

interest which would otherwise have been due, and the payment of which has been postponed during the life of such surviving spouse, in determining the 80% equity requirement provided by this Section.

(4) That if the taxes due, plus interest, are not paid by the heir-at-law, assignee or legatee or if payment is not postponed during the life of a surviving spouse, the deferred taxes and interest shall be recovered from the estate of the taxpayer within one year of the date of his death. In addition, deferred real estate taxes and any interest accrued thereon are due within 90 days after any tax deferred property ceases to be qualifying property as defined in Section 2.

If payment is not made when required by this Section, foreclosure proceedings may be instituted under the Property Tax Code.

(5) That any joint owner has given written prior approval for such agreement, which written approval shall be made a part of such agreement.

(6) That a guardian for a person under legal disability appointed for a taxpayer who otherwise qualifies under this Act may act for the taxpayer in complying with this Act.

(7) That a taxpayer or his agent has provided to the satisfaction of the collector, sufficient evidence that the qualifying property on which the taxes are to be deferred is insured against fire or casualty loss for at least the total amount of taxes which have been deferred.

If the taxes to be deferred are special assessments, the unit of local government making the assessments shall forward a copy of the agreement entered into pursuant to this Section and the bills for such assessments to the county collector of the county in which the qualifying property is located.

(Source: P.A. 102-644, eff. 8-27-21; 102-895, eff. 5-23-22.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.".