



"Ask Lori"

**Helpful Tax Saving Advice and Tips from
Broward County Property Appraiser Lori Parrish**

Dear Lori:

I'm a Realtor® in Deerfield Beach and concerned about homeowners who are fraudulently claiming Homestead exemption on second homes and investment properties. I live locally and want to help. How can I report these abuses and help the county collect the much needed funds?

E. B., Deerfield Beach, FL (*via email*)

Property owners who file false applications to obtain a Homestead Exemption are breaking the law and causing you to pay more in property taxes each year. Why? Because your various taxing authorities, such as the County, City and School Board, must equitably divide the tax burden among all property owners within their jurisdictions in order to provide services such as police, fire and schools. If someone lies to lower his or her taxes, someone else must pay more to make up the difference.

Our office aggressively seeks to stop Homestead fraud and catch homeowners in Broward who are fraudulently claiming a Homestead Exemption on their properties. We work with local governments, homeowner and civic associations to help identify exemption fraud. We also rely on anonymous phone and mail tips about potential fraud.

If you know of anyone claiming Homestead exemption on a property which is not their primary residence, we urge you to contact our Department of Professional Standards and Compliance at 954.357.6900 or <http://www.bcpa.net/fraudform.asp> and we'll check it out. You are free to provide your contact information or remain completely anonymous when reporting potentially fraudulent activity to our office.

Property owners who fraudulently obtain Homestead Exemption can be back taxed for as many as ten years, plus be required to pay substantial and annual interest (50% of the unpaid taxes for each year and pay interest at a rate of 15% per year).

Sincerely,

If you have a question for the Property Appraiser, please email Lori at lori@bcpa.net or write to her at the Broward County Property Appraiser's Office, 115 S. Andrews Avenue, Room 111, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301. (12/14)