



"Ask Lori"

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

Dear Lori:

I filed for Homestead Exemption last year at one of your Community Outreach Events. I just received a mailing from your office with a newsletter and change card. Do I have to re-file in 2016 to keep this tax-saving exemption.

J. S., Hollywood, FL (via email)

After your initial application for the Homestead Exemption has been approved, it **automatically renews** each year unless there is a change of ownership or eligible use of the property. In January our office mailed 364,471 Homestead Renewal Notice and "Change-Cards" to all Homesteaded properties. This card allows property owners to verify the status, use, and ownership of the property have not changed. Florida law requires the property owner to notify our office of any changes in permanent residency, use or status which would affect an exemption. If anyone named on the Homestead Exemption has died, you must report it to our office to avoid potential penalties. The Homestead Exemptions do not transfer to family members and do not remain with the property after the Homesteaded owner passes away. By law, you **MUST** notify us if any portion of the property has been rented, or if you are claiming a Homestead (or other residency based) exemptions on any other property anywhere.

Failure to report a change of ownership, use, death of a Homesteaded owner or Homesteaded trust beneficiary, divorce or separation may result in a costly back lien, plus penalties and interest, for continuing to improperly receive the benefits of the expired exemption. State law allows for a back tax for as many as ten years, plus payment of substantial penalty and annual interest (50% of the unpaid taxes for each year and pay interest at a rate of 15% per year). If there are **NO** changes to the use and/or ownership of the property, simply keep the card as your receipt verifying you were automatically renewed for another year. However, if there are changes, please mark the Change Card accordingly and return it to our office.

If you recently moved to this property, the exemption from the previous residence does **NOT** transfer to your new home—you must apply for a new exemption. If you received this card at your home address, but the name printed below is the former owner or not printed on the card, you must apply for a new exemption in your name to receive tax savings. If you have any questions relating to the Homestead Renewal, Change card or need assistance in filing for other exemptions, please visit our website at www.bcpa.net or contact our Customer Service Department at 954.357.6830.

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. (January 2016)