

PROPERTY TAX OVERSIGHT

Florida's property taxes are administered by locally elected officials and supervised by the Florida Department of Revenue. Florida does not have a state-level property tax.



1 Property Tax Base

Property Appraisers

Florida's Constitution requires property appraisers to establish the property tax base for their counties annually. In doing so, property appraisers determine the just, or market, value of each parcel of property in the county as of January 1 of each year. Then they apply all valid exemptions, classifications, and assessment limitations to determine each property's taxable value, or relative tax burden. The property appraiser does not determine the property tax rate or the amount of property taxes levied.



Department of Revenue

The department reviews each county's property tax rolls in July and August of every year. These reviews ensure that the just value that the property appraiser established is equitable, uniform, and in compliance with Florida law. The department also reviews and approves each property appraiser's annual budget.

2 Property Tax Rates

Locally Elected Officials

Florida has more than 640 local governments that levy a property tax. These include cities, counties, school boards, and special districts. Each year, usually in September, locally elected officials in each jurisdiction set a millage, or tax, rate for the upcoming fiscal year, usually beginning on October 1. Millage rates for each jurisdiction are uniform across all property types.



Department of Revenue

The department ensures that local government millage rates do not exceed state-mandated caps. In addition, the department confirms that local governments send notices and advertise public hearings to adopt millage rates and annual budgets properly and on time.

3 Annual Truth-in-Millage (TRIM) Notice

Property Appraisers and Locally Elected Officials

In August, the property appraiser sends each property owner a Notice of Proposed Property Taxes, or TRIM notice. This notice contains the property's value on January 1, the millage rates proposed by each local government, and an estimate of the amount of property taxes the property owner owes based on the proposed millage rates. The date, time, and location of each local government's budget hearing are also on the notice. This provides property owners the opportunity to attend the hearings and comment on the millage rates before approval.



Department of Revenue

The department verifies that the information from each local government is accurate and in compliance with Florida Truth-in-Millage requirements.

4 Appeals Process

Value Adjustment Boards

Each county has a five-member value adjustment board, which hears and rules on challenges to a property's assessment, classification, or exemptions. The value adjustment board is independent of the property appraiser and tax collector. Value adjustment boards cannot change the millage, or property tax, rates local governments adopt.



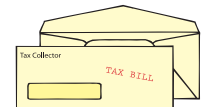
Department of Revenue

The department provides annual training to value adjustment boards. The department also issues mandatory procedures and forms to promote fair, impartial, and uniform hearings for all taxpayers.

5 Billing and Payment

Tax Collectors

After local governments adopt millage rates, county tax collectors send annual property tax bills, usually in late October or early November. Full payment is due by the following March 31. Taxpayers receive discounts of up to 4 percent for early payment.



Department of Revenue

The department provides training and certification to tax collectors and their staff to promote uniform and cost-effective tax collection practices. The department also reviews and approves most tax collectors' annual budgets.

7 Funding of Public Education and Local Services

Tax Collectors

The tax collector distributes property taxes to the local governments and taxing authorities. Roughly 50 percent of Florida's public education funding and 30 percent of its local government revenues come from property taxes.



Department of Revenue

The department provides statistics to the Department of Education to ensure adequate funding for public education.

6 Collections and Refunds

Tax Collectors

If a taxpayer does not pay a property tax bill by the following March 31, the tax collector sells a tax certificate on that property to collect the unpaid taxes. A tax deed may be sold if the property owner has not paid all back taxes, interest, and fees within two years. Tax collectors also process and issue refunds for overpayment of property taxes.



Department of Revenue

The department assists those who have questions about the local property tax process. The department also reviews property tax refunds of \$2,500 or more to verify they were issued in accordance with Florida law.



Additional information is available at <http://floridarevenue.com/property/Pages/Home.aspx>.