

ASSEMBLY, No. 162

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman HAROLD "HAL" J. WIRTHS

District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)

Assemblyman PARKER SPACE

District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)

SYNOPSIS

“Property Assessment Appeal Transparency Act”; revises content of required annual notification of real property assessment.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **AN ACT** concerning notification of real property assessment,
2 designated as the “Property Assessment Appeal Transparency
3 Act,” and amending P.L.1991, c.75.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

7
8 1. Section 32 of P.L.1991, c.75 (C.54:4-38.1) is amended to
9 read as follows:

10 32. a. Except as provided in subsection b. of this section, every
11 assessor, prior to February 1, shall notify by mail each taxpayer of
12 the current assessment and preceding year's taxes. Thereafter, the
13 assessor or county board of taxation shall notify each taxpayer by
14 mail within 30 days of any change to the assessment. This
15 notification of change of assessment shall contain the prior
16 assessment and the current assessment. The **[director]** Director of
17 the Division of Taxation shall establish the form of notice of
18 assessment and change of assessment. Any notice issued by the
19 assessor or county board of taxation shall contain the following
20 statement:

21 “This notice is to inform you of the assessment on your real
22 property for the current tax year. This assessment will be used to
23 calculate your property tax bill. If you disagree with the assessed
24 value of your real property, you should file an appeal of this
25 assessment with your county board of taxation. If the assessed
26 value exceeds \$1,000,000, you may appeal to your county board of
27 taxation or directly to the Tax Court.”

28 The notice also shall contain information instructing taxpayers
29 on how to appeal their assessment.

30 b. In the case of a municipality located in a county where the
31 county board of taxation is participating in the demonstration
32 program established in section 4 of P.L.2013, c.15 (C.54:1-104),
33 every assessor, on or before November 15 of the pretax year, shall
34 notify by mail each taxpayer of the preliminary assessment and
35 preceding year's taxes. Thereafter, the assessor or county board of
36 taxation shall notify each taxpayer by mail within 30 days of any
37 change to the assessment. This notification of change of assessment
38 shall contain the prior assessment and the current assessment. The
39 **[director]** Director of the Division of Taxation shall establish the
40 form of notice of assessment and change of assessment. Any notice
41 issued by the assessor or county board of taxation shall contain the
42 following statement:

43 “This notice is to inform you of the assessment on your real
44 property for the current tax year. This assessment will be used to
45 calculate your property tax bill. If you disagree with the assessed

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 value of your real property, you should file an appeal of this
2 assessment with your county board of taxation. If the assessed
3 value exceeds \$1,000,000, you may appeal to your county board of
4 taxation or directly to the Tax Court.”

5 The notice also shall contain information instructing taxpayers
6 on how to appeal their assessment.

7 c. The county board of taxation of the demonstration county
8 shall make the preliminary data electronically accessible to the
9 public by posting the data in searchable form on the county's
10 website not later than 15 business days after the submission of the
11 preliminary data.

12 (cf: P.L.2013, c.15, s.15)

13
14 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

15
16
17 STATEMENT

18
19 This bill, designated as the “Property Assessment Appeal
20 Transparency Act,” would require that the annual property
21 assessment notice required to be mailed to each taxpayer, pursuant
22 to section 32 of P.L.1991, c.75 (C.54:4-38.1), contain information
23 explaining the impact of the assessed value of a parcel of real
24 property on the property tax bill for that parcel of real property.

25 Under current law, this annual notice is only required by statute
26 to contain the current year’s assessment and preceding year’s
27 property taxes. A notification of a change of assessment, also
28 required under the statute, only requires information about the
29 current and prior assessments on the property. Both notices must
30 also contain information instructing taxpayers on how to appeal
31 their assessment. However, no information is currently required in
32 either case about the effect of a property’s assessed value on the
33 property taxes due and owing on the property. This lack of
34 information leads to confusion on the part of many property owners
35 who do not understand that the amount of their property tax bill is
36 directly related to the property’s assessed value.

37 In order to provide this information to taxpayers, this bill would
38 require that the notice of assessment and notice of change of
39 assessment also contain this statement:

40 “This notice is to inform you of the assessment on your real
41 property for the current tax year. This assessment will be used to
42 calculate your property tax bill. If you disagree with the assessed
43 value of your real property, you should file an appeal of this
44 assessment with your county board of taxation. If the assessed
45 value exceeds \$1,000,000, you may appeal to your county board of
46 taxation or directly to the Tax Court.”

A162 WIRTHS, SPACE

4

- 1 This statement would provide property taxpayers with greater
- 2 knowledge and understanding about the effect of their property's
- 3 assessed value on their property taxes, and would also effectuate
- 4 transparency in how property taxes are calculated.