Charter Township of Fenton

**Financial Hardship / Poverty Exemption Official Policy – 2024**

1. To request a property tax financial hardship poverty exemption under MCL 211.7u (“the statute”), a property owner must obtain and complete in full the **Application for MCL 211.7u Poverty Exemption** (*MI Treasury Form 5737*). This application is available at the Fenton Township office and on the Fenton Township website, [www.fentontownship.org](http://www.fentontownship.org).

**2.** Applicants must submit with their application form, copies of the following income documentation for **ALL** persons residing in the homestead.

1. 2022 or 2023 Federal Income Tax Return 1040 or 1040A and /or W-2 forms, (or Michigan Department of Treasury Form 4988 if applicant is not required to file an income tax return).
2. 2022 or 2023 Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit Claim, MI-1040CR.
3. 2022 or 2023 Social Security Administration and/or Michigan Social Services Statements of income paid.

Any applications submitted that are not filled out completely and/or do not include required documentation, will be considered incomplete and, therefore, ineligible for exemption.

1. Requirements:
2. To be eligible for an exemption, a person shall, own and occupy as a principal residence the property for which an exemption is requested.
3. Applicants may be requested to produce a deed, land contract or other evidence of property ownership.
4. Applicants may be requestedto produce a valid driver’s license or other form of identification.
5. Applicants must meet the income standards indicated below, which are based on the *Very-Low Income* standards as defined and determined annually by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) and the Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission. Standards for 2024 assessments are:

 **Number of Persons Poverty**

 **Residing in Homestead Threshold**

 1 person 29,000

 2 persons 33,000

 3 persons 37,000

 4 persons 41,000

 5 persons 45,000

 6 persons 48,000

 7 persons 51,000

 8 persons 55,000

9 or more persons 55,000 + 5,200 per person over 8

\*Income levels determined by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development and the Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission shall not be set lower than the federal poverty guidelines updated annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

1. All asset information, as requested in the Application for Poverty Exemption must be completed in total. The Board of Review may request additional information and verification of assets if they determine it to be necessary and may reject any application if the assets are not properly identified.

Liquid Assets may include, but are not limited to:

* Bank accounts
* Stocks and Bonds
* IRA’s and other investment accounts
* Pensions
* Money received from the sale of property such as stocks, bonds, a house or a car unless a person is in the specific business of selling such property.

In addition, total assets may also include, but are not limited to:

* A second home
* Excess or vacant land
* Rental property
* Extraordinary automobiles
* Recreational vehicles\*
* Buildings other than the residence
* Equipment
* Other personal property of value
* Food or housing received in lieu of wages and the value of food and fuel produced and consumed on farms.

*\* Recreational vehicles include snowmobiles, boats, camping trailers, travel trailers, motor homes, Jet skis, motor cycles, off road vehicles, or anything else that may be considered a recreational vehicle.*

The applicants shall not be eligible for exemption if asset levels exceed $42,000 per household resident.

The applicant shall not be eligible for exemption if “liquid” assets (excluding the value of the principal residence subject to the exemption request) total more than two (2) times the amount of the estimated tax obligation of the current assessment.

1. Applicants requesting exemption may submit their application using one of the following methods:
* Submit the application and appear in person at a scheduled Board of Review meeting.
* Submit the application by mail or email and appear by telephone at a scheduled Board of Review meeting.
* Simply submit the application in person, by mail or by email before the stated deadline without appearing at a Board of Review meeting.

Exemption applications must be submitted after January 1, 2024 and received no later than 8:00 p.m. March 13, 2024, which is the day of the final scheduled Board of Review meeting.

If appearing in person or by telephone, the applicant may be asked under oath to answer questions regarding their financial status, health concerns, other family members in the household, etc.

 The secretary of the Board of Review will keep and record minutes of all proceedings before the Board of Review. Oral testimony of petitioners may be electronically recorded.

1. If the Board of Review determines that the application meets all of the eligibility criteria of the statute, the Board of Review shall grant an exemption as follows:
	1. A full exemption equal to a 100% reduction in taxable value; or
	2. A partial exemption equal to a 75% reduction in taxable value; or
	3. A partial exemption equal to a 50% reduction in taxable value; or
	4. A partial exemption equal to a 25% reduction in taxable value.

Applicants shall be notified in writing of the granting of a full or partial exemption, or the denial of such exemption and the reasons for the denial. Applicants shall also be notified of their appeal rights.

1. Exemptions approved in 2024 will remain exempt for up to three (3) years (through 2026) for those persons who receive a fixed income solely from public assistance that is not subject to significant annual increases, (Federal Supplemental Security Income, Social Security disability or retirement benefits), provided that the applicant files an **Affirmation of Ownership and Occupancy to Remain Exempt by Reason of Poverty** (*MI Treasury Form 5739*), with the Fenton Township Assessor after January 1st and no later than the day immediately preceding the day of the final scheduled Board of Review meeting of each subsequent year.
2. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, physically handicapped applicants may contact the Township Office to request necessary assistance in completing the application.

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF FENTON**

**FINANCIAL HARDSHIP / POVERTY EXEMPTION APPLICATION**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. **You must** complete this application (MI Treasury Form 5737) in full and return it to the Fenton Township Assessor after January 1, 2024 and no later than 8:00pm on March 13, 2024.
2. **You must** submit copies of the following completed and signed documents for **ALL** persons residing in the homestead.
3. 2023 Federal Income Tax Return, or Michigan Department of Treasury Form 4988 if not required to file an income tax return.
4. 2023 Michigan Income Tax Return, including the homestead property credit form **MI-1040CR**.
5. 2023 Social Security Administration and/or Michigan Social Services Statements of income paid, (if applicable).

[**NOTE**: 2022 documents are acceptable if 2023 documents are not yet available.]

1. Your application and all required documentation, along with a cover letter, may be submitted by mail, email or in person to:

 **Fenton Township Assessor**

 **12060 Mantawauka Drive**

 **Fenton, MI 48430-8817**

**jwilson@fentontownship.org**

1. You may also choose to appear before the Board of Review in person or by telephone. **Hearings will be conducted by appointment only**. Contact the Fenton Township Assessor’s to schedule an appointment date and time. If you appear in person or by telephone, you may be asked under oath to answer questions regarding your financial status, health concerns, other family members in the household, etc., as well as any other relevant information.

If your application does not include all of the necessary documentation as listed above, your application will be considered **incomplete**, and therefore **ineligible for any consideration**.

Hardship Exemption as defined by the Michigan Compiled Laws is as follows:

**Section 211.7u: The real and personal property of persons who, in the judgment of the Supervisor and Board of Review, by reason of poverty, are unable to contribute toward the public charges, is exempt from taxation under this Act.**

Please be aware that, as an applicant for hardship exemption, you must also comply with the following section of the Michigan Compiled Laws:

**Section 211.118: Perjury: Any person who, under any of the proceedings required or permitted by this Act shall willfully swear falsely, will be guilty of perjury and subject to its penalties.**

**Section 211.119: Willful Neglect: Penalty.........a person who willfully neglects or refuses to perform a duty imposed upon that person by this Act, when no other provision is made in this Act, is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment for not more than 6 months, or a fine of not more than $300.00 and is liable to a person injured to the full extent of the injury sustained.**

If you have questions regarding any of the above, please contact the Fenton Township Assessing Office at (810) 629-3445.