



Department of Assessment

128 East Buffalo Street

Jay Franklin
Director

Inclusion through Diversity

Irene Kehoe
Assistant Director

To: Town of Lansing
From: Jay Franklin
Date: March 10, 2025
Re: Real Property Tax Exemptions – “The Main Ones”

New York State has many real property tax exemptions whose authorization ranges from the Vienna Convention to the Public Housing Finance Law to the actual Real Property Tax Law. While many of these exemptions are for specific instances, there are many exemptions that are applicable to most communities.

I have enclosed the “Big Exemption Spreadsheet” which keeps track of the most commonly enacted local option exemptions and which taxing jurisdictions have adopted that exemption. I started to keep track of this in the mid-2000s. If the column is blank, the muni/school does not offer that exemption. If there is a No in the box, I know that they considered it and said no (if they do not offer the exemption, I would have hoped that they considered it at some point in time, I just wasn’t present to record it).

But I will provide a quick summary of each of these exemptions but for more information on the exemption, please contact me directly and I’ve also included a hyperlink to the ‘cheat sheet’ that the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance creates for each exemption.

Exemptions the Town of Lansing Currently Offers

[RPTL 458/ 458a / 458b](#) – Veterans Exemption – Must Opt-in to be applicable.

Starting with the 2023 Assessment Roll, finally all municipalities have adopted the Alternative Veterans Exemption (458-a) but we still do administer from Eligible Funds exemption (458). This provides a 15% reduction in assessed value for honorably discharged veterans who served during a period of conflict. And additional reduction is available if they served in the combat theater or if they were disabled as a result of their service. The Town of Lansing offers both the Alternative Veterans (for Veterans who served during a period of conflict) and the Cold War Veterans (for Veterans who served during the ‘Cold War’).

[RPTL 459-c](#) – Low-income disabled individual exemption – Must Opt-in to be applicable.

Provides for a 5% to 50% reduction in assessment (based upon income) for a property owner who has been declared disabled by the Social Security Administration (and a few other instances too). The state maximum for a 50% reduction is \$50,000.

[RPTL 466-a](#) – Volunteer FF/Ambulance Worker Exemption – Must Opt-in to be applicable.

Provides an exemption for a volunteer who lives in the service area that they volunteer at. Exemption is limited to 10% of the assessed value for a volunteer who meets the service requirements to be considered an active volunteer. There is no cap on this exemption and renters to not receive a benefit. Can only claim this exemption or the \$200 income tax credit provided by NYS already. *Only the Town of Lansing offers this – the Lansing Fire District does not offer it.*

[RPTL 467](#) – Low-income Senior Exemption – Must Opt-in to be applicable.

Provides for a 5% to 50% reduction in assessment (based upon income) for a property owner who is over 65 years and whose income is limited. The state maximum for a 50% reduction is \$50,000.

[RPTL 469](#) – Living Quarters for Parent/Grandparent – Must Opt-in to be applicable.

Provides for an exemption for any auxiliary dwelling unit constructed for a parent/grandparent. The exemption may not exceed the lesser of (1) the increase in assessed value resulting from construction or reconstruction of such property, (2) 20 percent of the total assessed value of such property as improved, or (3) 20 percent of the median sale price of residential property.

[RPTL 485-b](#) – Business Improvement Exemption – Automatically in – can reduce exemption to 0%.

Provides for a 10-year exemption at 50% in the first, 45% in the second, etc for facilities used primarily for the buying, selling, storing, or development of goods or services, the manufacture or assembly of goods, or the processing of raw materials; however, local taxing jurisdictions may restrict exemption to only some types of businesses in any or all of these categories. Everyone is technically in this exemption, but you can reduce the percentage of the exemption that is granted to 0% essentially opting out of this exemption. The City, ICSD, County, and Town of Ithaca all opted around the time of Big Box Stores were starting to appear.

[A&M 305\(6\)](#) – Tax on Land at Ceiling Values for Special Districts

The governing body of a fire, fire protection, or ambulance district for which special ad valorem levies or special assessments are made may adopt a resolution allowing the use of agricultural assessments in the levy of such charges. This allows the taxing of agricultural properties based upon the productivity of the soil as compared to the market value of the agricultural land. *The Lansing Fire District has chosen to offer this exemption.*

Exemptions the Town of Lansing Does Not Offer

[RPTL 421-f](#) – Capital Improvements – Must Opt-in to be applicable.

Phases in the increase in assessment due to capital improvements. Capped at \$80,000 reduction. Only applicable to 1-2 family residences.

[RPTL 444-a](#) – Historic Property – Must Opt-in to be applicable.

Phases in the increase in assessment due to improvements made to preserve the historic character of the building. Only applicable in City of Ithaca due to the ILPC 458-b is the Cold War Veteran exemption and provides an exemption for Veterans who served during this specific time period.

[RPTL 459-a](#) – Improvements for the Disabled – Must Opt-in to be applicable.

Provides for a 10-year exemption for the increase in assessment due to renovations that remove architectural barriers for person with disabilities. *This exemption has never been applied for in Tompkins County.*

[RPTL 467-j](#) – Housing Trust Exemption – Must Opt-in to be applicable.

Provides for an exemption between the difference between the market value of the property and the estimated restricted resale price that the current owner could sell the property for. Only applicable where the individual owns the improvement, and a qualifying housing trust organization owns the land which is rented under a resale agreement.

[RPTL 470](#) – Green Building Exemption – Must Opt-in to be applicable.

Provides for a phased in exemption based upon the “green-ness” of the building. The exemption is greater for a Platinum building as compared to a Silver building (the county has chosen LEED as it’s

standard for this exemption as that was the best available at the time. The County also capped this exemption at \$100,000 as they looked at the incremental cost of building to a LEED standard).

[RPTL 483-b](#) – Historic Barn Exemption – Must Opt-in to be applicable.

Provides for an exemption for the increase in the assessment due to the renovation of a barn into a barn and not into a house, for barns built before 1936. This property tax exemption has never been applied for in Tompkins County. *This exemption has never been applied for in Tompkins County.*

[RPTL 485 – g](#) – Infrastructure Exemption

Provides for a 3-year exemption for the increase in value due to putting in the necessary infrastructure to create a subdivision. Once a lot is sold to an individual from the developer, the exemption is removed. The Village of Dryden offered this first and the County adopted it in June 2017. *This exemption has never been applied for in Tompkins County.*

[RPTL 487](#) – Solar/Wind/Farm Waste Energy/etc Exemption

There are a lot of bad exemption statutes but this one takes the lead. You are in this exemption until you opt out. If you are in the exemption, you can negotiate a PILOT with an industrial solar installation. If you are out of the exemption, any PILOT would have to be negotiated by the TCIDA. We have still not seen that solar panels add to value so being out of this exemption at this time does not jeopardize residential solar panels.