

Hi Cindy,

My intention was to allow a qualified veteran to claim the exemption only on her/his VT primary residence. In other words, a qualified veteran must be a Vermont residence and must file a homestead application on the property for which she/he is requesting the exemption.

I do not feel the local taxpayers should have to pay the local agreement tax on a 2nd home/camp a qualified veteran might own or on a property where a qualified veteran refuses to file a homestead declaration. In Montgomery, the homestead tax rate is 30 cents less than the non-residential tax rate. There is one veteran in Montgomery who refuses to file a homestead declaration and is basically breaking the law. When I was a lister, we offered any taxpayer to come into our office and we would help them file their homestead declaration. I made this offer personally to the veteran in question several times. The current Board of Listers has retained the same policy and offers to help any local taxpayer file their homestead declaration online. As a result of the veteran's refusal to file a homestead declaration on his primary residence, the Montgomery taxpayers must pay a local agreement tax on the higher resulting taxes for the veteran's \$30,000 exemption (voted by the Town's taxpayers) on his assessment.

Bottom line...if an otherwise qualified veteran refuses to file a homestead declaration on her/his primary residence, the veteran should NOT be eligible for the veteran's exemption. Additionally, a qualified veteran should ONLY be able to claim the veteran's exemption on her/his primary residence. After talking to other listers throughout Vermont over the years, I know this issue is not unique to Montgomery.

I hope this helps explain it. If you need me to talk to someone, I'd be happy to do so. Just let me know.

Thanks again for your efforts on this issue.

Sharon Perry