

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Council Policy for the Municipal Tax Assistance Program (MTAP) is to provide Council, municipal staff and the public with a framework by which MTAP exemptions will be applied for, reviewed and awarded.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- 1.1 ensure a framework is in place for consideration of MTAP applications for provision of meaningful property tax relief to low income households throughout the Municipality;
- 1.2 outline the requirements of the program while adhering to other policies, bylaws and the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*;
- 1.3 ensure MTAP applications are processed in a timely and effective manner;
- 1.4 ensure that all taxpayers are treated fairly and equitably; and,
- 1.5 provide staff with guidance for informed and sustainable decision making, consistent with the Municipality's organizational values of excellence and fiscal responsibility.

SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all staff involved in the processing of applications for the Municipal Tax Assistance Program.

POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 Council will provide a general tax exemption amount in accordance with Section 69 of the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*, increasing the base exemption and household taxable income levels by Consumer Price Index (CPI) each year.
- 2.2 This exemption applies to taxpayers in the Municipality whose household taxable income does not exceed the limits set by Council (See Table A). Household taxable income is defined as the total taxable income of all individuals living in the home who are 18 years or older. Taxable income is reported on Line 26000 of the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) *Notice of Assessment* (received after annual income taxes have been filed).
- 2.3 The Municipality must be provided with proof of household taxable income by way of the *CRA Notice of Assessment* or *CRA Proof of Income Statement* (the name of CRA forms is subject to change from time to time) for all persons 18 years or older living in the home.

2.4 Taxpayers must either own or have a life interest in the home as well as live in the home in order to qualify. A spouse who resides in the home of a registered home owner who is deceased, where the property is part of an estate, would also qualify for this program. Only one property per household will receive tax assistance.

2.5 The exemption amounts are calculated based on the greater of the base exemption amounts (See Table B) or 20% of the final property tax bill.

2.6 The household income and base exemption amounts will be increased by CPI each year.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME & BASE EXEMPTION

Table A - Household Taxable Income Levels

Household Size	Total Household Taxable Income (Line 26000 - CRA Notice of Assessments)
1 adult	\$27,946
2 adults	\$34,014
1 adult + 1 child	\$42,305
3 persons	\$52,067
4 persons	\$63,132
5 persons	\$71,592
6+ persons	\$80,704

These amounts are increased by CPI each year. CRA Notice of Child Tax Benefit must be presented as proof of any dependent children.

Table B - Base Exemption Amounts

Area	F/Y 2023 - 2024
Base	\$255
Enfield - USR	\$282
Elmsdale - USR	\$282
Lantz - USR	\$282
Milford - USR	\$314
Shubenacadie - USR	\$335

Exemption amounts begin with a Base Exemption and increase proportional to total tax rate, for areas subject to the Urban Service Rate (USR). These amounts are increased by CPI each year.

The exemption amounts are calculated based on the greater of the base exemption amounts (See Table B) or 20% of the final property tax bill.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

- 3.1 The deadline to apply for the MTAP exemption is August 31st each year.
- 3.2 All MTAP applications received are reviewed, approved if conditions are met, and applied as tax credits to the applicable property tax accounts. Every effort is made to process approved applications prior to the issuance of the final tax bill.
- 3.3 At the discretion of the Collection Officer, an exemption may be granted and applied to an account after the deadline.

PRIOR YEAR ADJUSTMENT

At the discretion of the Treasurer, exemptions for prior years may be applied to an account where the taxpayer would have met the criteria for the prior year.

ACCOUNT CREDITS

Where the application of an exemption to a tax payer's account exceeds the annual taxes owing and in turn would create a credit on the account, the full amount of the exemption would not be applied. If the credit is a result of a payment made on the account, a cheque may be issued at the tax payer's request, to refund the credit amount.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
<p>Policy Editor Manager of Accounting</p>	<p>The Policy Editor is a person having managerial and policy-making responsibility related to the writing, compilation and revision of content and will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure policies in their care and control are always up-to-date, reviewed annually or sooner if necessary • Draft new or edit existing policy content • Be able to interpret and explain policy content • Ensure policy documents are branded and any supporting documents, ie. applications forms are also branded and content consistent with the policy • Ensure policy content is relevant and accurate • Seek and secure approval recommendation of the policy from the Policy Owner • Seek and secure approval of the policy from the appropriate Approver; and, • Provide the final approved policy document to the Assistant Municipal Clerk
<p>Policy Owner Director of Finance</p>	<p>The Policy Owner will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide oversight to ensure policies in their care and control are always up-to-date, reviewed annually or sooner if necessary by the assigned Policy Editor • Be able to interpret and explain policy content • Provide oversight to ensure policy documents are branded and any supporting documents, i.e. application forms are also branded and content consistent with the policy • Provide oversight to ensure policy content is relevant and accurate • Review the policy and make recommendation for approval to the appropriate Approver; and, • Ensure that the final approved policy document has been provided to the Assistant Municipal Clerk
<p>Approver Council</p>	<p>The Approver will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Policy recommendations for approval consideration (approve, reject or edit); and, • Notify the Policy Editor, Policy Owner and Assistant Municipal Clerk of decision
<p>Assistant Municipal Clerk</p>	<p>The Assistant Municipal Clerk will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate an annual Policy Review; and, • Ensure final approved policies are maintained, stored and posted where appropriate
<p>Employees</p>	<p>The Employees will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify the Policy Owner of changes to be considered • Notify the Policy Owner when the policy becomes out of date or obsolete • Follow the Policy



RELATED DOCUMENTATION

Related forms, processes, procedures and other documents that support the policy.

Document Name	Document ID	Document Type
Tax & Water Collection Administrative Policy		Administrative Policy
Municipal Government Act		MGA
MTAP Application Form		PDF Form

VERSION LOG

Version Number	Amendment Description	Amendment/Policy Editor	Amendment/Policy Owner	Approver	Approval Date
1.0	C11(49) - Upgraded MTAP program to higher income levels for test and graduated exemption amounts.	Director of Finance & Administration	Director of Finance & Administration	Council	Feb 23, 2011
2.0	Formal policy created based on Council program established by motion C11(49).	Manager of Accounting/Director of Finance & Administration	Director of Finance & Administration	Council	Nov 23, 2016
3.0	Annual update of Table A & B	Manager of Accounting/Director of Finance & Administration	Director of Finance & Administration	Director of Finance & Administration	Feb 23, 2017
4.0	Annual update of Table A & B	Manager of Accounting/Director of Finance & Administration	Director of Finance & Administration	Director of Finance & Administration	Feb 14, 2018
5.0	Annual update of Table A & B	Manager of Accounting/Director of Finance	Director of Finance	Director of Finance	Mar 1, 2019
6.0	Annual update of Table A & B	Manager of Accounting/Director of Finance	Director of Finance	Director of Finance	Feb 7, 2020
7.0	Addition to Section 2.4	Manager of Accounting/Director of Finance	Director of Finance	Council	Nov 18, 2020
8.0	Update Table A & Annual update of Table B	Manager of Accounting/Director of Finance	Director of Finance	Council	March 24, 2021
9.0	Update Table A & Annual update of Table B	Manager of Accounting/Director of Finance	Director of Finance	Director of Finance	February 28, 2022



Version Number	Amendment Description	Amendment/Policy Editor	Amendment/Policy Owner	Approver	Approval Date
10.0	Update Table A & Annual update of Table B	Manager of Accounting/Director of Finance	Director of Finance	Director of Finance	March 2, 2023

CERTIFICATION

I, Kim Ramsay, Municipal Clerk for the Municipality of East Hants, hereby certify that this policy was duly approved.

Kim Ramsay
Municipal Clerk