

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Seniors can apply now to defer 2022 property tax payment

VICTORIA – B.C. homeowners aged 55+ can apply now to defer their 2022 property tax payments through the provincial government’s Property Tax Deferral Program.

“The Provincial Property Tax Deferral Program can serve as a financial lifeline for lower income seniors, yet many are not aware of it,” said Isobel Mackenzie, BC Seniors Advocate. “Through this program, the Province will pay the property tax to local government on behalf of the homeowner and save some seniors thousands of dollars each year. Our office recently conducted a survey of low-income seniors and found that while almost half were homeowners, less than 15% of those surveyed used the Property Tax Deferral Program despite struggling to pay other household expenses.”

The application window for seniors to apply to defer property taxes is between May 1 and December 31, 2022, for this tax year. The property tax notice from local governments, often sent in early June each year, contains the property information required to complete the online application process. Applying early may help homeowners avoid any missed payment penalties that could be levied by local governments if property taxes aren’t paid by the July 4 deadline. The Province also encourages homeowners to use the eTaxBC application to view the status of their application well in advance of the tax deadline to help ensure they don’t face any late penalties.

“The majority of BC seniors live on an income that is less than what a minimum wage job would pay, and while they may own their home, they struggle to pay bills each month. The Property Tax Deferral Program will leave seniors with more money to cover other necessities such as food, transportation and medical costs. I would encourage any senior who is struggling financially and who is eligible for the program to apply,” stated Mackenzie.

The Monitoring Seniors Services 2021 report from the Office of the Seniors Advocate shows that 65,505 B.C. seniors deferred their property taxes in 2020/21. The average homeowner deferred \$4,297 in 2020/21 and paid only \$51.56 in interest using this program. The report also showed that while the value of deferred taxes under the program is growing each year, there were 15% fewer new users in 2020/21 compared to the previous year.

The Office of the Seniors Advocate is an independent office of the provincial government with a mandate of monitoring seniors’ services and reporting on systemic issues affecting seniors. The office also provides information and referral to seniors and their caregivers by calling toll free 1 877 952-3181, BC211, via email at info@seniorsadvocatebc.ca, Canada Post and the OSA web site <https://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/>.



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Learn more:

- To speak with someone about the Property Tax Deferral Program, call toll-free 1-888-355-2700 or 250-387-0555.
- Provincial property tax deferral program – information, eligibility criteria and online application: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/taxes/property-taxes/annual-property-tax/defer-taxes>
- Sign-up for eTaxBC: <https://www.etax.gov.bc.ca/btp/eservices/>

Media contact:

OSA Communications
250 213-2024
osa.comms@gov.bc.ca
www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca