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HOUSE BILL 2024

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State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Representatives Berg and Ramel

1 AN ACT Relating to providing housing safety, security, and  
2 protection by creating the primary residence property tax exemption;  
3 amending RCW 84.48.010; adding new sections to chapter 84.36 RCW;  
4 creating new sections; and providing a contingent effective date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that housing  
7 security is important to all Washingtonians.

8 (2) The legislature further finds that homeownership is the main  
9 mechanism for creating wealth for the middle class and working  
10 families and passing it on generationally.

11 (3) The legislature further finds that one's home is not simply  
12 an asset to build wealth, but also a critical tool for maintaining  
13 one's security and well-being, and Washington's tax code makes no  
14 distinction between one's home and other real property subject to  
15 property taxation, contributing to loss of property and displacement,  
16 particularly for those on fixed incomes.

17 (4) The legislature further finds that many Washingtonians are  
18 vulnerable to foreclosure by mortgage holders and other secured  
19 creditors, despite the homestead exemption limited in bankruptcy  
20 statute, RCW 6.13.030, which is a tool to protect heads of households

1 from having their homes confiscated and sold to satisfy debts from  
2 unsecured creditors.

3 (5) Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to prevent  
4 more displacement and loss of real property by exempting a portion of  
5 tax of one's principal place of residence to achieve the goal of  
6 making sure individuals can reside, raise their families, age in  
7 place, and stay in their communities, without fear of displacement  
8 due to crises or increase in land and home value assessment. The  
9 legislature intends to create a means of providing equity in the tax  
10 code by treating one's primary home, including community land trusts  
11 and cooperative ownership, differently than other property across  
12 Washington.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 84.36  
14 RCW to read as follows:

15 (1)(a) Subject to the conditions in this section, a portion of  
16 the assessed value of a residence is exempt from the state levy but  
17 not from property taxes levied by any local taxing district. Subject  
18 to the adjustments and limitations in this subsection (1), and for  
19 taxes levied for collection in 2028 and thereafter, the primary  
20 residence property tax exemption from the state levy is equal to the  
21 greater of \$100,000 assessed valuation or 60 percent of the county  
22 median residential assessed value for the most recent year the  
23 department collected data by county.

24 (b)(i) The department shall annually publish the county median  
25 residential assessed value rounded to the nearest \$1,000 by August  
26 1st for the most recent year for which the department collected data  
27 by county; and

28 (ii) The department shall adjust the percentage of county median  
29 residential assessed value exempted under (a) of this subsection if  
30 the state levy is expected to exceed the statutory maximum provided  
31 in RCW 84.52.065 to prevent a loss in funding for that year.

32 (c) The amount of the primary residence property tax exemption  
33 for a residence may not result in a tax reduction that exceeds the  
34 amount of state property taxes that would otherwise be levied on that  
35 residence.

36 (2) The primary residence property tax exemption is in addition  
37 to, and applied after, the exemption provided in RCW 84.36.379  
38 through 84.36.389.

1 (3) (a) (i) The primary residence property tax exemption must be  
2 claimed by filing an application with the department by April 1st of  
3 the calendar year prior to the first year for which the exemption  
4 will be received. The application shall be in a form and manner  
5 determined by the department.

6 (ii) A claimant filing an application with the department for a  
7 primary residence property tax exemption must include the claimant's  
8 address, social security number, parcel number, and any other  
9 information the department deems necessary as part of the  
10 application.

11 (b) The department shall provide the means for claimants to claim  
12 the primary residence property tax exemption for their residence  
13 online as prescribed by the department.

14 (c) By August 1st each year, the department shall provide each  
15 county assessor a list of all claimants filing an application in the  
16 current calendar year.

17 (d) As resources allow, the department shall work with assessors  
18 to verify claimants have applied for an exemption for only one  
19 residence. As resources allow, the department must notify claimants  
20 who appear to have applied for more than one residence or when the  
21 department is unable to confirm that the claimant applied for an  
22 exemption for only one residence. Such notification may be provided  
23 electronically and include a request for additional information  
24 needed to confirm that the claimant has applied for only one  
25 residence. The verification process under this subsection (3)(d) is  
26 not a prerequisite for approval of an application for the primary  
27 residence property tax exemption. The department is not required to  
28 verify every application.

29 (e) By August 1st each year, the department shall provide each  
30 county assessor a list of all claimants where the department has  
31 determined that a claimant may have applied for an exemption for more  
32 than one residence.

33 (f) A claimant or the claimant's designated agent or legal  
34 representative must sign the application attesting that the property  
35 for which the primary residence property tax exemption is sought is  
36 the claimant's principal place of residence within the meaning of  
37 subsection (6) of this section and to the truth of other information  
38 in the application. The signature requirements of this subsection  
39 (3)(f) may be met by an electronic signature. All signatures on an

1 application must be made under penalty of perjury as provided in  
2 chapter 9A.72 RCW.

3 (g) (i) A primary residence property tax exemption continues until  
4 the property is sold, transferred, or the claimant no longer  
5 qualifies due to change of use as a principal place of residence. A  
6 claimant granted a primary residence property tax exemption must  
7 immediately inform the department of any change in status affecting  
8 the claimant's entitlement to a primary residence property tax  
9 exemption.

10 (ii) If a homeowner sells or otherwise transfers the property,  
11 the new property owner must apply for the exemption, as required  
12 under this section.

13 (h) An individual may not claim a primary residence property tax  
14 exemption on behalf of a deceased individual.

15 (i) The department and the county assessor must protect the  
16 privacy and confidentiality of personal data under this subsection  
17 (3).

18 (4) If the claimant resides in a cooperative housing association,  
19 corporation, or partnership, the application must also be signed by  
20 the authorized agent of such cooperative. If the claimant holds a  
21 life estate in the residence for which the primary residence property  
22 tax exemption is claimed and the claimant is not shown on the tax  
23 rolls as the taxpayer for that residence, the remainderman or other  
24 person shown on the tax rolls as the taxpayer must also sign the  
25 application.

26 (5) Notice of the primary residence property tax exemption and  
27 where to obtain further information about the exemption must be  
28 included on or with property tax statements and revaluation notices  
29 for residential property. The department and each county assessor  
30 must publicize the qualifications and manner of making claims for the  
31 primary residence property tax exemption, including paid  
32 advertisements or notices as deemed appropriate in the sole  
33 discretion of the department and county assessors. The department and  
34 county assessors must make the primary residence property tax  
35 exemption information available in all languages required for voter  
36 ballot outreach at the state level.

37 (6) The following conditions apply to the primary residence  
38 property tax exemption:

39 (a) The residence must be occupied by the claimant as the  
40 claimant's principal place of residence as of the date of the signed

1 application under subsection (3) of this section. A claimant who  
2 sells, transfers, or is displaced from the claimant's residence may  
3 transfer the claimant's exemption status to a replacement residence,  
4 but no claimant may receive the primary residence property tax  
5 exemption on more than one residence in any calendar year. However,  
6 the confinement of the claimant to a hospital, nursing home, assisted  
7 living facility, or adult family home will not disqualify the claim  
8 of exemption if:

9 (i) The residence is temporarily unoccupied;

10 (ii) The residence is occupied by either a spouse or state  
11 registered domestic partner, a person financially dependent on the  
12 claimant for support, or both; or

13 (iii) The residence is rented for the purpose of paying the  
14 claimant's costs of a nursing home, hospital, assisted living  
15 facility, or adult family home.

16 (b) At the time of signing the application:

17 (i) (A) The claimant must have owned, in fee or by contract  
18 purchase, or have held a life estate in, the residence for which the  
19 primary residence property tax exemption is claimed; and

20 (B) The residence must have been located on a tax parcel with  
21 fewer than five residences; or

22 (ii) If the claimant resides in a cooperative housing  
23 association, corporation, or partnership, including a mobile home  
24 park cooperative or manufactured housing cooperative, the claimant  
25 must own a share in the cooperative representing the unit or dwelling  
26 in which the claimant resides or the lot on which the claimant's  
27 manufactured/mobile home or park model is situated.

28 (c) For purposes of this section, a residence owned by a marital  
29 community, state registered domestic partners, or cotenants is deemed  
30 to be owned by each spouse, domestic partner, or cotenant, and any  
31 lease for life or 99 years of a single-family dwelling unit or the  
32 land upon which it stands is deemed a life estate in the residence.

33 (d) (i) The assessed value of a dwelling owned by a cooperative  
34 housing association, corporation, or partnership must be reduced, for  
35 purposes of state property taxes levied on the dwelling, by the  
36 amount of the primary residence property tax exemption to which a  
37 claimant residing in that dwelling is entitled. The cooperative must  
38 pass the full amount of its property tax savings under this section  
39 to its members in proportion to each member's primary residence  
40 property tax exemption. The cooperative may meet its obligation under

1 this subsection (6)(d)(i) by reducing the amount owed by the members  
2 to the cooperative or, if no amount be owed, by making payment to the  
3 members.

4 (ii) A mobile home park cooperative or manufactured housing  
5 cooperative is entitled to any unused portion of the primary  
6 residence property tax exemption of its members. A mobile home park  
7 cooperative or manufactured housing cooperative receiving the unused  
8 portion of the primary residence property tax exemption of its  
9 members must pass the full amount of its property tax savings to its  
10 members in proportion to each member's unused primary residence  
11 property tax exemption. The cooperative may meet its obligation under  
12 this subsection (6)(d)(ii) by reducing the amount owed by the members  
13 to the cooperative or, if no amount be owed, by making payment to the  
14 members. For purposes of this subsection (6)(d)(ii), "unused portion  
15 of the primary residence property tax exemption" means the amount by  
16 which the exemption exceeds the assessed value of the manufactured/  
17 mobile home or park model owned by a member of the mobile home park  
18 cooperative or manufactured housing cooperative.

19 (e)(i) Where a claimant has a life estate in the single-family  
20 dwelling unit, the land upon which it sits, or both, which comprise  
21 the claimant's residence, and a remainderman or other person would  
22 have otherwise paid the state property tax exempted on the residence,  
23 or portion of the residence, as a result of the claimant's primary  
24 residence property tax exemption, such remainderman or other person  
25 must reduce the amount owed by the claimant to the remainderman or  
26 other person by the amount of the tax savings from the claimant's  
27 primary residence property tax exemption. If no amount is owed by the  
28 claimant to the remainderman or other person, the remainderman or  
29 other person must make payment to the claimant in the full amount of  
30 the tax savings from the claimant's primary residence property tax  
31 exemption.

32 (ii) Where a claimant has a life estate in a cooperative  
33 ownership or a community land trust, which comprise the claimant's  
34 residence, and a remainderman or other person would have otherwise  
35 paid the state property tax exempted on the residence, or portion of  
36 the residence, as a result of the claimant's primary residence  
37 property tax exemption, such remainderman or other person must reduce  
38 the amount owed by the claimant to the remainderman or other person  
39 by the amount of the tax savings from the claimant's primary  
40 residence property tax exemption. If no amount is owed by the

1 claimant to the remainderman or other person, the remainderman or  
2 other person must make payment to the claimant in the full amount of  
3 the tax savings from the claimant's primary residence property tax  
4 exemption.

5 (7) (a) (i) If the assessor, as part of its existing program of  
6 real property inspection or general administration of property tax  
7 assessments, finds that the claimant's residence does not meet the  
8 qualifications for the primary residence property tax exemption, the  
9 assessor must cancel the primary residence property tax exemption and  
10 notify the department.

11 (ii) If the assessor, as part of its existing program of real  
12 property inspection or general administration of property tax  
13 assessments, is unable to determine whether a property qualifies for  
14 the primary residence property tax exemption, the assessor must  
15 cancel the primary residence property tax exemption and notify the  
16 department.

17 (b) A cancellation under (a) of this subsection (7) is subject to  
18 appeal under the provisions of RCW 84.48.010 and in accordance with  
19 the provisions of RCW 84.40.038. If the assessor determines that the  
20 claimant had received the primary residence property tax exemption in  
21 error in prior years, the county treasurer must collect all state  
22 property taxes that would have been paid on the claimant's residence  
23 for the prior years had the primary residence property tax exemption  
24 not been claimed, not to exceed six years. Interest, but not  
25 penalties, applies to such taxes and is computed at the same rates  
26 and in the same way as interest is computed on delinquent taxes.  
27 Taxes and interest imposed under this subsection (7) (b):

28 (i) Must be extended on the tax roll;

29 (ii) Are due within 60 days after the date of the treasurer's  
30 billing for such taxes and interest; and

31 (iii) Constitute a lien on the real property to which the tax and  
32 interest applies as provided in chapter 84.60 RCW.

33 (8) The department may conduct audits of the administration of  
34 this section by the county assessors for the primary residence  
35 property tax exemption as the department considers necessary. The  
36 powers of the department under chapter 84.08 RCW apply to these  
37 audits.

38 (9) The department may adopt such rules in accordance with  
39 chapter 34.05 RCW, and prescribe such forms, as the department deems  
40 necessary and appropriate to implement and administer this section.

1 (10) For the purposes of this section:

2 (a) "Claimant" means an individual who is receiving a primary  
3 residence property tax exemption.

4 (b) "Community land trust" means a private, nonprofit  
5 organization created to acquire and hold land for the benefit of a  
6 community and provide secure affordable access to land and housing  
7 for community residents.

8 (c) "Cooperative ownership" means a type of residential housing  
9 where the corporation owns the housing units, and each resident is a  
10 shareholder in the corporation based in part on the relative size of  
11 the unit in which they reside.

12 (d) "Manufactured/mobile home," "manufactured housing  
13 cooperative," "mobile home park cooperative," and "park model" have  
14 the same meanings as in RCW 59.20.030.

15 (e) "Primary residence property tax exemption" means a tax  
16 exemption from the state property tax levy for a principal place of  
17 residence that meets the requirements of this section.

18 (f) "Principal place of residence" means a residence occupied for  
19 at least 184 days during the calendar year by the claimant.

20 (g) "Residence" means a single-family dwelling unit whether such  
21 unit is separate or part of a multiunit dwelling, including the land  
22 on which such dwelling stands, regardless of whether ownership of the  
23 single-family dwelling unit and the land on which the dwelling unit  
24 stands is vested in the same person. "Residence" includes:

25 (i) A single-family dwelling unit situated upon lands the fee of  
26 which is vested in or held in trust by the United States or any of  
27 its instrumentalities, a federally recognized Indian tribe, the state  
28 of Washington or any of its political subdivisions, or a municipal  
29 corporation;

30 (ii) A single-family dwelling unit consisting of a manufactured/  
31 mobile home or park model that has substantially lost its identity as  
32 a mobile unit by virtue of its being fixed in location and placed on  
33 a foundation with fixed pipe connections with sewer, water, or other  
34 utilities;

35 (iii) A single-family dwelling unit consisting of a floating home  
36 as defined in RCW 82.45.032.

37 (h) "State levy" means property taxes levied by the state under  
38 RCW 84.52.065.



1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 3.**    A new section is added to chapter 84.36

2    RCW to read as follows:

3        (1) The primary residence property tax exemption administration  
4    account is created in the state treasury. All receipts from direct  
5    appropriations from the legislature and any other moneys directed to  
6    the account from any other source must be deposited into the account.  
7    Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation.  
8    Expenditures from the account may be used only for the purposes  
9    provided in this section.

10        (2)(a) Funds deposited into the primary residence property tax  
11    exemption administration account must be distributed to each county  
12    to assist with the costs incurred by the counties in administering  
13    the primary residence property tax exemption in section 2 of this  
14    act.

15        (b)(i) Except as provided in (b)(ii) of this subsection and  
16    subject to appropriation by the legislature, each county is entitled  
17    annually to an amount equal to \$5.00 multiplied by the number of  
18    applications for the primary residence property tax exemption that  
19    the state processed in the most recent calendar year.

20        (ii) For the initial distributions in calendar year 2026 and 2027  
21    and subject to appropriation by the legislature, the distribution  
22    amount is equal to \$10.00 multiplied by the estimated number of  
23    primary residence property tax exemptions that the county will  
24    process in calendar year 2027. The department, with the assistance of  
25    the county assessors, must estimate the number of primary residence  
26    property tax exemptions that the state will process in calendar year  
27    2027.

28        (iii) If funds in the primary residence property tax exemption  
29    administration account are insufficient to make the full  
30    distributions under this subsection, the distributions to all  
31    counties must be reduced proportionately.

32        (3)(a) Distributions under subsection (2) of this section must be  
33    made by the state treasurer annually by August 1st, beginning August  
34    1, 2026, and by August 1st each year thereafter. By July 25th of each  
35    year, the department must certify to the state treasurer the amounts  
36    to be distributed under this section. Once finalized, no changes may  
37    be made to the certification for any reason.

38        (b) By June 1, 2026, and by June 1st each year thereafter, each  
39    county assessor must submit to the department any necessary data from  
40    the previous assessment year in order to complete the estimate under

1 this subsection (3) for the first year of the exemption and every  
2 year thereafter. The data required by this subsection (3) must be  
3 provided in a form and manner prescribed by the department.

4 (4) The department's estimates and certifications required under  
5 this section may not be overturned by a court except upon a showing  
6 of willful misconduct by clear, cogent, and convincing evidence.

7 (5) All distributions to counties from the primary residence  
8 property tax exemption administration account constitute increases in  
9 state distributions of revenue to political subdivisions for purposes  
10 of state reimbursement for the costs of new programs and increases in  
11 service levels under RCW 43.135.060.

12 **Sec. 4.** RCW 84.48.010 and 2017 c 155 s 1 are each amended to  
13 read as follows:

14 (1) Prior to July 15th, the county legislative authority must  
15 form a board for the equalization of the assessment of the property  
16 of the county. The members of the board must receive a per diem  
17 amount as set by the county legislative authority for each day of  
18 actual attendance of the meeting of the board of equalization to be  
19 paid out of the current expense fund of the county. However, when the  
20 county legislative authority constitutes the board they may only  
21 receive their compensation as members of the county legislative  
22 authority. The board of equalization must meet in open session for  
23 this purpose annually on the 15th day of July or within (~~fourteen~~)  
24 14 days of certification of the county assessment rolls, whichever is  
25 later, and, having each taken an oath fairly and impartially to  
26 perform their duties as members of such board, they must examine and  
27 compare the returns of the assessment of the property of the county  
28 and proceed to equalize the same, so that each tract or lot of real  
29 property and each article or class of personal property must be  
30 entered on the assessment list at its true and fair value, according  
31 to the measure of value used by the county assessor in such  
32 assessment year, which is presumed to be correct under RCW  
33 84.40.0301, and subject to the following rules:

34 (a) They must raise the valuation of each tract or lot or item of  
35 real property which is returned below its true and fair value to such  
36 price or sum as to be the true and fair value thereof, after at least  
37 five days' notice must have been given in writing to the owner or  
38 agent.

1 (b) They must reduce the valuation of each tract or lot or item  
2 which is returned above its true and fair value to such price or sum  
3 as to be the true and fair value thereof.

4 (c) They must raise the valuation of each class of personal  
5 property which is returned below its true and fair value to such  
6 price or sum as to be the true and fair value thereof, and they must  
7 raise the aggregate value of the personal property of each individual  
8 whenever the aggregate value is less than the true valuation of the  
9 taxable personal property possessed by such individual, to such sum  
10 or amount as to be the true value thereof, after at least five days'  
11 notice must have been given in writing to the owner or agent thereof.

12 (d) They must reduce the valuation of each class of personal  
13 property enumerated on the detail and assessment list of the current  
14 year, which is returned above its true and fair value, to such price  
15 or sum as to be the true and fair value thereof; and they must reduce  
16 the aggregate valuation of the personal property of such individual  
17 who has been assessed at too large a sum to such sum or amount as was  
18 the true and fair value of the personal property.

19 (e) The board may review all claims for either real or personal  
20 property tax exemption, including the primary residence property tax  
21 exemption under section 2 of this act, as determined by the county  
22 assessor, and must consider any taxpayer appeals from the decision of  
23 the assessor thereon to determine (i) if the taxpayer is entitled to  
24 an exemption, and (ii) if so, the amount thereof.

25 (2) The board must notify the taxpayer and assessor of the  
26 board's decision within (~~forty-five~~) 45 days of any hearing on the  
27 taxpayer's appeal of the assessor's valuation of real or personal  
28 property.

29 (3) The clerk of the board must keep an accurate journal or  
30 record of the proceedings and orders of the board showing the facts  
31 and evidence upon which their action is based, and the record must be  
32 published the same as other proceedings of county legislative  
33 authority, and must make a true record of the changes of the  
34 descriptions and assessed values ordered by the county board of  
35 equalization. The assessor must correct the real and personal  
36 assessment rolls in accordance with the changes made by the county  
37 board of equalization.

38 (4) The county board of equalization must meet on the 15th day of  
39 July or within (~~fourteen~~) 14 days of certification of the county  
40 assessment rolls, whichever is later, and may continue in session and

1 adjourn from time to time during a period not to exceed four weeks,  
2 but must remain in session not less than three days. However, the  
3 county board of equalization with the approval of the county  
4 legislative authority may convene at any time when petitions filed  
5 exceed (~~(twenty-five)~~) 25, or (~~(ten)~~) 10 percent of the number of  
6 appeals filed in the preceding year, whichever is greater.

7 (5) No taxes, except special taxes, may be extended upon the tax  
8 rolls until the property valuations are equalized by the department  
9 of revenue for the purpose of raising the state revenue.

10 (6) County legislative authorities as such have at no time any  
11 authority to change the valuation of the property of any person or to  
12 release or commute in whole or in part the taxes due on the property  
13 of any person.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** This act takes effect January 1, 2026, if  
15 the proposed amendment to Article VII of the state Constitution  
16 (Senate Joint Resolution No. . . . (S-0811/25)), providing for a  
17 residential real property tax exemption, is validly submitted to and  
18 is approved and ratified by the voters at the next general election.  
19 If the proposed amendment is not approved and ratified, this act is  
20 void in its entirety.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** This act does not affect any existing  
22 right acquired or liability or obligation incurred under the sections  
23 amended or repealed or under any rule or order adopted under those  
24 sections, nor does it affect any proceeding instituted under those  
25 sections.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** This act applies to taxes levied for  
27 collection in 2028 and thereafter.

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