

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Thousands of Montanans Could be Eligible for Property Tax Relief

Helena - The Montana Department of Revenue estimates that thousands of Montanans could be eligible for property tax relief, but do not submit the annual applications required.

The Property Tax Assistance Program (PTAP) provides property tax relief to anyone who meets the qualifications, and there is no age restriction. In order to qualify for this program, taxpayers must own and occupy their home as their primary residence for at least seven months during the preceding calendar year, and meet the income requirements which range from \$0 to \$20,809 for a single person and \$0 to \$27,745 for households with more than one owner occupant. Currently the department receives about 18,000 PTAP applications annually, but has identified up to 47,000 additional property owners who may be eligible for this property tax relief program.

Depending upon their qualifying income, taxpayers may be entitled to a 30 to 80 percent property tax reduction on their primary residence. If approved, the benefit would apply to the first \$100,000 of taxable market value of the residential property, which may include land up to five acres. In some cases, that reduction amounts to hundreds of dollars.

In addition to PTAP, eligible Montanans can apply for the Disabled American Veteran (DAV) and the Elderly Homeowner/Renter Tax Credit (2EC), if applicable. All have an application deadline of April 15, 2013.

DAV provides property tax assistance to qualifying disabled veterans that are honorably discharged from active service and rated 100 percent disabled or are paid at the 100 percent disabled rate by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs for a service-connected disability. A veteran's surviving spouse can also receive the reduction if the veteran died while on active duty or died as a result of a service-connected disability. Other eligibility requirements include they must own and occupy their home as their primary residence and meet the income requirements which range from \$0 to \$47,865 for a single person, \$0 to \$55,229 for a married couple, or \$0 to \$41,729 for a surviving spouse.

The 2EC is a refundable income tax credit of up to \$1,000 available to taxpayers based on household income, and is for anyone age 62 or older as of December 31, 2012. To qualify, applicants must reside in Montana for nine months or more of the period, they need to occupy one or more dwellings in Montana as an owner, renter or lessee for six months or more, and their household income must be less than \$45,000.

"The tax relief programs are great and we encourage Montanans to take advantage of them," said revenue director Mike Kadas. "These important programs offset tax costs so that you can spend your money on other necessities for your family such as food, heating, clothing and medicine."

For applications, taxpayers can contact their local Department of Revenue office. For additional questions, more information about qualifications, or a listing of other important deadlines for property owners, please visit our website at www.revenue.mt.gov or phone our call center at 1-866-859-2254, or 444-6900 if calling from a local Helena number.

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