



# AROUND *the* HOUSE A NEWSLETTER FOR HOMEOWNERS & HOMEBUYERS

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## Philadelphia homeowners may see an increase in property taxes for 2023

The City of Philadelphia has completed its reassessment of all properties in the city. Written notices were to be mailed to homeowners in late August. The city says that most properties will see an increase in their taxes for 2023. You can check your home's new value online at [property.phila.gov](http://property.phila.gov).

Mayor Jim Kenney and the Philadelphia City Council have agreed to a [package of relief measures](#). These measures will ensure that the general fund revenues resulting from new assessments are put directly back into the hands of taxpayers. A new law signed by Kenney commits to \$298 million in new homeowner and rent relief over five years.

There are tax relief programs available for homeowners. From the Homestead Exemption to LOOP to the Senior Citizen Real Estate Tax Freeze and more. These programs are managed by the city's [Department of Revenue](#). The city also offers many [Real Estate Tax relief programs](#) for homeowners.

Understandably, receiving an increase in your property taxes can be stressful. So be sure to check out the tax relief programs available to see if you qualify, and don't delay. Usually, the more quickly you act to understand your situation, the more options you'll have to address any changes to your tax obligations.

## PHFA Counseling Division awarded \$1.6 million to support the agency's housing counseling network across the state

The PHFA Housing Counseling Division was recently awarded \$1.6 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to support the housing counseling agencies in our statewide network. Nationwide, this was the highest award allocated to a housing finance agency. The award provides critical funding for our housing counseling agencies that are performing very important services for individuals and families across the state.

Housing counselors provide guidance and advice to help families and individuals improve their housing conditions and meet the responsibilities of homeownership and personal money management.

**Here's why this is important for you:** Some of the things they could help you with include financial education and coaching, foreclosure assistance and mitigation, credit report analysis and repair, budgeting for mortgage payments, and improving your money management skills, to name a few.

For more information or to locate a housing counseling agency near you, please visit our website at [PHFA.org](http://PHFA.org) and click on the "Counseling" link.

## Utility and other assistance available in Pennsylvania

Do you need help paying utility bills, help with health care, or other assistance? [COMPASS](#) is an online tool for residents of Pennsylvania to apply for, access, and manage many health and human service programs available across the state.



The website offers programs that could help you with health care needs, food and nutrition needs, and home and community-based service referrals. Other programs available include cash assistance, help with utilities, childcare and long-term care services, just to name a few. This portal allows you to apply for benefits, access your benefits, and manage your benefits, all in one place.

So if you're having difficulty meeting any of your monthly bills or are in need of other services, check out [COMPASS](#) to see if you qualify.

### It's beginning to look a lot like...

Yes, we know that the holidays are a couple of months off, but they will be here before we know it. This is the perfect time to put a holiday spending plan in place in order to prevent a credit card hangover in January. Here are a few things you can do now to prepare.



1. Gifts – Set your spending limit now and decide how much for each recipient. Make a list and check it twice! Don't discount the value of a homemade gift or greeting cards. Prepare those gifts now, if possible, to avoid last minute, budget-busting replacements.
2. Entertaining – Look for sales on supplies for gatherings, for example snacks, beverages, paper-goods, and stocking stuffers. Buying these items at full-price or on an impulse can take a big bite out of a budget.
3. Layaways – Many major retailers have layaway programs, which entail a deposit and scheduled incremental payments until the purchase is paid in full and you can bring home the item. There may be service, cancellation, and restocking fees. Keep in mind that you may miss out on future sales of the item or receive refunds in the form of store credit only. With any financing or payment options, read the fine print to avoid disappointment later.
4. Christmas Clubs – Even if the holidays are right around the corner, a \$25 weekly deposit can add up in a month or two!
5. Start planning for next year – See numbers one through four!



**The best part of preparing early is less stress and enjoying more! Happy pre-Holidays!**

## Pennsylvania Homeowner Assistance Fund

The Pennsylvania Homeowner Assistance Fund, or PAHAF, is a housing-related program funded by the U.S. Department of the Treasury to assist Pennsylvania homeowners facing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program provides financial assistance to address mortgage delinquencies and avoid default, displacement, and foreclosure for eligible Pennsylvania homeowners.



**Check out the [PAHAF website](#), or contact the PAHAF call center at 888-987-2423, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., for more information or to begin the application process.**