



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY  
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

RACHAEL EUBANKS  
STATE TREASURER

**Bulletin 17 of 2020**  
**October 20, 2020**  
**Procedural Changes for 2021**

**TO:** Assessing Officers and County Equalization Directors  
**FROM:** State Tax Commission  
**SUBJECT:** Procedural Changes for the 2021 Assessment Year

The purpose of this Bulletin to provide information on statutory changes, procedural changes and reminders for the 2021 assessment year.

**A. Inflation Rate Used in the 2021 Capped Value Formula**

The inflation rate, expressed as a multiplier, to be used in the 2021 Capped Value Formula is 1.014.

The 2021 Capped Value Formula is as follows:

$$\text{2021 CAPPED VALUE} = (\text{2020 Taxable Value} - \text{LOSSES}) \times 1.014 + \text{ADDITIONS}$$

The formula above does not include 1.05 because the inflation rate multiplier of 1.014 is lower than 1.05.

**B. Federal Poverty Guidelines Used in the Determination of Poverty Exemptions for 2021**

MCL 211.7u, which deals with poverty exemptions, was significantly altered by PA 390 of 1994 and was further amended by PA 620 of 2002.

Local governing bodies are required to adopt guidelines that set income levels for their poverty exemption guidelines and those income levels **shall not be set lower** by a city or township than the federal poverty guidelines updated annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This means, for example, that the income level for a household of 3 persons **shall not** be set lower than \$21,720 which is the amount shown on the following chart for a family of 3 persons. The income level for a family of 3 persons may be set higher than \$21,720. Following are the federal poverty guidelines for use in setting poverty exemption guidelines for 2021 assessments:

Size of Family Unit	Poverty Guidelines
1	\$12,760
2	\$17,240
3	\$21,720
4	\$26,200
5	\$30,680
6	\$35,160
7	\$39,640
8	\$44,120
For each additional person	\$4,480

**Note:** PA 390 of 1994 states that the poverty exemption guidelines established by the governing body of the local assessing unit shall also include an asset level test. An asset test means the amount of cash, fixed assets or other property that could be used, or converted to cash for use in the payment of property taxes. The asset test should calculate a maximum amount permitted and all other assets above that amount should be considered as available. Please see STC Bulletin 6 of 2017 for more information on poverty exemptions.

**Note:** PA 135 of 2012 changed the requirements for filing documentation in support of a poverty exemption to allow an affidavit (Treasury Form 4988) to be filed for all persons residing in the residence who were not required to file federal or state income tax returns in the current year or in the immediately preceding year. This does include the owner of the property who is filing for the exemption.

### C. Sales Studies

Equalization study dates are as follows for 2021 equalization:

Two Year Study: April 1, two years prior through March 31, current year

Single Year Study: October 1, preceding year through September 30, current year

For 2020 studies for 2021 equalization the dates are as follows:

Two Year Study: April 1, 2018 through March 31, 2020

Single Year Study: October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020

Note that the time period revisions apply to all equalization studies, that is: sales ratio studies, land value studies and economic condition factor studies for appraisals. Also note that the revised time period for two-year studies applies to all real property classifications.

Please be advised that the above sale study dates **are not** the same as the valuation date used in appeals before the Michigan Tax Tribunal. Evidence presented in a Tax Tribunal appeal should reflect the value of the property as of tax day (December 31). This means that sales occurring *after* March 31, 2020 and September 30, 2020 should still be considered and included when submitting evidence in a Tax Tribunal appeal involving the 2021 tax year.