



**TOWN OF HUBBARDSTON
COUNCIL ON AGING
7 Main Street Unit 3
Hubbardston, MA 01452
Tel.: (978) 928-1400 x 211 Fax: (978) 928-3392
coa@hubbardstonma.us**

October 4, 2023

Dear Hubbardston Senior:

Enclosed please find information about Hubbardston's Senior Tax Work-Off Program. This valuable program offers seniors an opportunity to reduce their property taxes by volunteering their time and talents to support our community.

Enclosed you'll find two important documents:

- Program Information and Procedures - This comprehensive guide outlines all the details you need to know about how the program works. Please review it closely to get a full understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and procedures involved with participating.
- Program Application Form - If you'd like to apply, simply fill out this application. The program staff is happy to help if you have any questions!

The 2023-2024 program year runs from October 2, 2023 through September 30, 2024. You're welcome to submit an application any time to join.

Please take a close look at these materials to see if you'd like to take advantage of this win-win opportunity. We'd love to have you share your skills and wisdom with us while reducing your tax burden.

If anything is unclear or you need any help at all, don't hesitate to call the Council on Aging at (978) 928-1400 extension 211. They'll be delighted to answer your questions and guide you through the process.

Wishing you the very best,

The Council on Aging



TOWN OF HUBBARDSTON

SENIOR CITIZEN PROPERTY TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM

PROGRAM INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES

The Senior Citizen Property Tax Work-Off Program was established for Hubbardston residents under the provisions of Massachusetts G.L. Chapter 59 §5K.

Eligibility for the Program: The program is open to all Hubbardston property owners sixty (60) years of age or over whose primary residence is Hubbardston and who meet the specified income requirements, which are based on the Worcester County Median Low Income limits for HUD programs. The program is limited to ten participants each year. A person may participate in this program for more than one year as long as he or she meets the eligibility requirements and there is appropriate work available. A new application must be submitted each year.

Benefits of the Program: Eligible participants can receive an abatement of up to \$1,500.00 per year on their real estate taxes by working as volunteers for the Town in a variety of capacities. The abatement is calculated at \$15.00 per hour for each volunteer hour worked under the program. A maximum of 100 hours in order to qualify for an abatement. This abatement program is in addition to any other personal exemption allowed under other statutes, such as elderly or veteran exemptions or property tax deferrals.

Administration of the Program: The program is administered by the Council on Aging with assistance from the Assessors' Office, Tax Collector, and Town Administrator.

Program Procedures:

- 1) Applications may be obtained in person from the Council on Aging Director or the Selectmen's Office, or printed from www.hubbardstonma.us or mailed to anyone calling the Council on Aging at (978) 928-1400 x211. Program information and applications are available by October 3, 2022 for all eligible participants as described above who have completed and returned the Town Census to the Town Clerk. Applications may be submitted either by mail (address is on application form) or in person to the Council on Aging.
- 2) When an application is submitted, the Council on Aging:

- a) Reviews income eligibility, *which is confidential information*.
 - b) Reviews skills and experience.
 - c) Checks requests for assistance that have been submitted by Town departments to see if an appropriate position is available.
 - d) Sets up an interview for the applicant with the Town department that has requested a volunteer.
 - e) Sends a letter to the applicant notifying him or her of a placement in a Town department where they will perform their volunteer work. The letter will include the approximate start and end date of the work, estimated number of hours, and the hourly wage rate. An applicant may refuse the first offer of a volunteer position.
 - f) Confirms with the Town department that the volunteer has accepted the position and notifies the department of the volunteer's available start date.
- 3) The Town department then calls the applicant to arrange a schedule for the volunteer work. The department is responsible for any training that is required.
 - 4) Once the volunteer work is completed, the department, in conjunction with the volunteer, completes a timesheet form and submits it to the Council on Aging. A copy of this timesheet is given to the volunteer.
 - 5) The Council on Aging fills out a "Certificate of Completion of Volunteer Services" and submits it to the Assessors' office for processing. The Assessors review the Certificate and, if all documentation is complete, grant a real estate tax abatement in an amount equal to \$15.00 times the number of hours of work that have been performed, not to exceed \$1,500.
 - 6) Dates:
 - The Program Year runs from October 1 through September 30.
 - Certificate of Completion of Volunteer Services must be submitted to the Assessors' Office by October 15 to qualify for abatement on the upcoming Actual (not Preliminary) real estate tax bill. This bill will usually be the 3rd Quarter bill, but could be the 4th Quarter bill if the tax rate is set after December 31.

(Example: work completed by September 30, 2023 will be eligible for credit against the actual real estate tax bill for FY24)
 - 7) **IMPORTANT: PARTICIPANTS SHOULD PAY THEIR TAX BILLS BY THEIR DUE DATES.**
 - 8) Applications of eligible participants who are not placed in a volunteer position will be retained and may be reviewed again later in the program year to determine whether a job opportunity has developed.
 - 9) In the event there are more applications than there are funds available, applications will be pre-screened for placement and those applications will then be subject to a lottery process for final acceptance.

If more program information is needed, please contact the Council on Aging at 978-928-1400 x 211, by email at coa@hubbardstonma.us or to 7 Main St Unit 3, Hubbardston, MA 01452. For questions on the abatement_process, please contact the Assessors' Office at 978-928-1400 x 203.

Town of Hubbardston Senior Citizen Property Tax Work-Off Program

Dear Program Participant;

Under the regulations of the Internal Revenue Service, any individual participating in the Senior Tax Work Off Program which provides a reduction in property tax in return for services must have federal tax withheld. This includes both federal income and Medicare taxes. The only legal way to do this is to have program participants as special employees of the Town of Hubbardston for your active work period. In no instance will the amount earned be considered taxable for the purpose of Massachusetts taxes, nor for workers compensation or unemployment insurance.

One important note: If you remain an active employee, state law dictates that you cannot continue to work as a volunteer for the Town in the same position in which you were paid as a Senior Tax Work Off Program participant. If you have resigned from the program after completing your hours each year you are no longer a special town employee and are free to volunteer as you wish.

With these requirements, the following forms need to be filled out and submitted to the Treasurer's office:

- Federal W- 4
- State M-4
- I-9 Employment Eligibility Form
- Social Security Disclosure
- Conflict of Interest On Line Training Certificate of Completion
- Employee Information Form

Senior Citizen Property Tax Work Off Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do I have to become a town employee to get the tax deduction?

Yes, state law requires federal taxes and Medicare be withheld from the funds you earn under the program. The only way to deduct these taxes is to designate you as a town employee for the period that you work the program hours.

2. Will I be receiving a paycheck from the Town?

No, the funds will be applied directly to your tax bill as a credit.

3. Will there be deductions from my tax credit?

Yes, your credit will be up to \$1,500. minus the amount withheld for federal tax, Medicare



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Senior Tax Relief Work Program

**APPLICATION
Section 1**

Name _____ Telephone # _____

Address _____ Email _____

Email _____

Date of Birth _____

1. Application will be considered only when filled out completely and accompanied by a copy of the applicant's most recent property tax bill.
2. Eligibility is subject to age and residency conditions, as well as income guidelines established by the Council on Aging and the ability of the Town to place the applicant in available positions.
3. Recommendations for placement are made by the Council on Aging based on the skill and interests of the applicants and the needs of the various departments. While we do our best to place applicants based on preferences, it may be impossible for all applicants to obtain their **first** choice.
4. A Certificate of Completion will be submitted to the Assessors by the Council on Aging upon approval of the Department Head. The Assessors will review the certificate and process the abatement. Abatements may not exceed \$1,500 per tax year.
5. Applicants must submit documentation of proof of income.
6. Return application to: Council on Aging 7 Main St Unit 3 Hubbardston, MA 01452

**HUBBARDSTON COUNCIL ON AGING
SENIOR TAX WORK –OFF PROGRAM**

APPLICATION- Section 2

Eligibility Requirements

Please answer the following questions:

I am over age sixty (60)..... Yes No

I and/or my spouse own the home in which I/we reside Yes No

I am a Hubbardston resident Yes No

I meet the financial guidelines listed below:

Number in Family:	1 Person	2 Persons	3 Persons
Income	\$60,900	\$69,600	\$78,300.

2023 Housing Income Limits

My gross receipts from all sources of income in the preceding calendar year (including social security, pensions, other retirement allowances, wages, salaries, other compensation, net profit from business or profession, interest and dividends, rental income, capital gains, etc.) Please attach 1040 page 1 or Social Security statement. Applications will be considered incomplete without proof of income eligibility.

\$ _____

Please list any unusual expenses that affect your ability to meet living costs:

All information submitted is confidential and not public record.

APPLICATION

Section 3

Job placements will be available in a variety of town departments.

Please indicate in which areas you would prefer to work.

Town Offices Senior Center Police Dept. Library
 DPW Cemetery Parks Other

Please list past experience and types of skills that might qualify you as a participant in the program:

Do you have a Driver's License? Yes No

Do you have any medical restrictions that might impact a working assignment? Please explain. (The Town of Hubbardston will make reasonable accommodations for participants who may be physically or mentally challenged.)

Do you wish to have an approved representative to provide the Town the services if you are physically unable? Yes No

Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone: _____

If I qualify for the Senior Tax Relief Work- Off Program, I understand that I may earn a maximum of \$1,500. which will be in the form of an abatement to be applied to the real estate tax obligations for the property at which I reside, and I am legally responsible for paying property taxes. I certify under the pains and penalty of perjury that, to the best of my knowledge, the information provided in this application is true and accurate.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

For Office Use Only:

Disposition of Application Granted Denied

Placement: _____

Reason for Denial: _____

Staff Signature: _____

Date: _____