

WAC 458-14-056 Petitions—Time limits—Waiver of filing deadline for good cause. (1) **Introduction.** This rule explains how the owner or person responsible for the payment of property taxes may petition the board of equalization for a change in the assessed valuation of their property as described in RCW 84.40.038.

(a) Definitions. The definitions in WAC 458-14-005 apply to this rule.

(b) Other rules to reference. Readers may want to refer to other rules for additional information, including:

(i) WAC 458-14-015 Jurisdiction of county boards of equalization.

(ii) WAC 458-14-066 Requests for valuation information—Duty to exchange documentary information—Time limits.

(iii) WAC 458-14-076 Hearings on petitions—Withdrawal.

(2) **Filing petition - Time limits.** The method for appealing a county assessor's determination as to the valuation of property or to any other types of county assessor determinations is by submitting a properly completed and timely filed taxpayer petition to the county board of equalization.

A taxpayer's petition for review of the assessed valuation of property by the assessor or for review of any of the types of appeals listed in WAC 458-14-015 must be filed in duplicate with the board. Petition forms are available from the clerk of the board and from the assessor's office.

The deadline for filing the petition with the board must be the later of:

(a) July 1st of the year of assessment or determination;

(b) Thirty days, or up to sixty days if a longer time period was established by the county legislative authority, from the date the assessment, change of value notice, or other notice was mailed; or

(c) Thirty days, or up to sixty days if a longer time period was established by the county legislative authority, from the date the assessor electronically:

(i) Transmitted the assessment, change of value notice, or other notice; or

(ii) Notified the owner or person responsible for payment of taxes that the assessment, change of value notice, or other notice was available to be accessed by the owner or other person.

(3) **Late filing of petition - Waiver of filing deadline.** No late filing of a petition will be allowed except as provided in this subsection. The board may waive the filing deadline if the petition is filed within a reasonable time after the filing deadline and the petitioner shows good cause, as defined in this subsection, for the late filing. However, the board must waive the filing deadline for the circumstance described under (g) of this subsection if the petition is filed within a reasonable time after the deadline.

A petition that is filed after the deadline without a showing of good cause must be dismissed unless, after the taxpayer is notified by the board that the petition will be dismissed because of the late filing, the taxpayer promptly shows good cause for the late filing. The board must decide a taxpayer's claim of good cause without holding a public hearing on the claim and must promptly notify the taxpayer of the decision, in writing. The board's decision regarding a waiver of the filing deadline is final and not appealable to the state board of tax appeals. Good cause may be shown by documentation of one or more of the following events or circumstances:

(a) The taxpayer was unable to file the petition by the filing deadline because of a death or serious illness of the taxpayer or of a member of the taxpayer's immediate family occurring at or shortly before the time for filing. For purposes of this subsection, the term "immediate family" includes, but is not limited to, a grandparent, parent, brother, sister, spouse, domestic partner, child, grandchild, or domestic partner's child or grandchild.

(b) The taxpayer was unable to file the petition by the filing deadline because of the occurrence of all of the following:

(i) The taxpayer was absent from his or her home or from the address where the assessment notice or change of value notice is normally received by the taxpayer. If the notice is normally mailed by the assessor to a mortgagee or other agent of the taxpayer, the taxpayer must show that the mortgagee or other agent was required, pursuant to written instructions from the taxpayer, to promptly transmit the notice and failed to do so;

(ii) The taxpayer was absent (as described in (b)(i) of this subsection) for more than fifteen of the days allowed in subsection (2) of this rule prior to the filing deadline; and

(iii) The filing deadline is after July 1st of the assessment year.

(c) The taxpayer was unable to file the petition by the filing deadline because the taxpayer reasonably relied upon incorrect, ambiguous, or misleading written advice as to the proper filing requirements by either a board member or board staff, the assessor or assessor's staff, or the property tax advisor designated under RCW 84.48.140, or his or her staff.

(d) The taxpayer was unable to file the petition by the filing deadline because of a natural disaster such as a flood or earthquake occurring at or shortly before the time for filing.

(e) The taxpayer was unable to file the petition by the filing deadline because of a delay or loss related to the delivery of the petition by the postal service. The taxpayer must be able to provide documentation from the postal service of the delay or loss.

(f) The taxpayer is a business and was unable to file the petition by the filing deadline because the person employed by the business, responsible for dealing with property taxes, was unavailable due to illness or unavoidable absence.

(g) The taxpayer was not sent a change of value notice under RCW 84.40.045 for the current assessment year and can demonstrate the property value did not change from the previous assessment year.

(4) **Mailing of petition.** If a petition is filed by mail it must be postmarked no later than the filing deadline. If the filing deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, the petition must be filed on or postmarked no later than the next business day.

(5) **Completed petition.** A petition is properly completed when all relevant questions on the form provided or approved by the department have been answered and the answers contain sufficient information or statements to apprise the board and the assessor of the reasons for the appeal.

A petition that merely states the assessor's valuation is too high or the property taxes are excessive, or similar types of statements, is not properly completed and will not be considered by the board. If, at the time of filing the petition, the taxpayer does not have all the documentary evidence available which he or she intends to present at the hearing, the petition will be considered properly completed for purposes of preserving the taxpayer's right of appeal, if

it is otherwise fully and properly filled out. However, any comparable sales, valuation evidence, or other documentary evidence not submitted at the time the petition is filed must be provided by the taxpayer to the assessor and the board at least twenty-one business days, excluding legal holidays, prior to the board hearing.

A copy of the completed petition must be provided to the assessor by the clerk of the board. Any petition not fully and properly completed cannot be considered by the board and a notice of the board's rejection of the petition must be promptly mailed to the taxpayer. WAC 458-14-066 provides an explanation of the availability, use and exchange of valuation and other documentary information prior to the hearing before the board.

(6) **Pending appeal.** If the taxpayer has an appeal pending with the board, the state board of tax appeals, or with a court of law, and the assessor notifies the taxpayer of a change in property valuation, then the taxpayer is required to file a timely petition with the board in order to preserve the right to appeal the change in valuation.

Example. A taxpayer appeals a decision of the board to the board of tax appeals regarding a value for the 2013 assessment year. The appeal is pending when the assessor issues a change in value notice for the 2014 assessment year, so the taxpayer must still file a timely petition appealing the valuation for the 2014 assessment year in order to preserve his or her right to appeal the 2014 assessed value.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 84.08.010, 84.08.070, and 84.48.200. WSR 18-24-109, § 458-14-056, filed 12/4/18, effective 1/4/19. Statutory Authority: RCW 84.08.010, 84.08.070, 84.08.080, 84.48.200, 84.52.0502, and 84.55.060. WSR 15-03-087, § 458-14-056, filed 1/21/15, effective 2/21/15. Statutory Authority: RCW 84.08.010, 84.08.070, 84.48.080, 84.48.200, 84.52.0502, 84.55.060. WSR 14-14-023, § 458-14-056, filed 6/23/14, effective 7/24/14. Statutory Authority: 2009 c 521. WSR 10-07-133, § 458-14-056, filed 3/23/10, effective 4/23/10. Statutory Authority: RCW 84.08.010, 84.08.070, and 84.48.200. WSR 06-13-034, § 458-14-056, filed 6/14/06, effective 7/15/06; WSR 95-17-099, § 458-14-056, filed 8/23/95, effective 9/23/95; WSR 90-23-097, § 458-14-056, filed 11/21/90, effective 12/22/90.]