

# Roadmap to NEBRASKA PROPERTY TAXES

## General Assessment Overview

Nebraska's assessment date is **January 1**, and assessors must reassess properties annually. However, for many properties, values usually remain fairly consistent for four to five years before experiencing a major adjustment, depending on market trends, volatility, and other conditions that effect property values.

Nebraska mandates that real property must be assessed at 100% of "actual value," meaning the market value as determined via the course of trade on the open market and through professionally accepted appraisal techniques. Assessors must offer good faith valuations when determining the assessments of property within the jurisdiction.

Property taxes must be levied proportionately and with uniformity to all property within the same class. Given this criteria, when a property transfers, it is common for the assessor to pick up between 80–90% of the sale price for assessment purposes. Assessing at the point of sale would violate the statutory requirement for uniformity.

Assessors in the major jurisdictions tend to employ all three valuation approaches: Income, Cost, and Sales. Additionally, each property type is assigned to different property classes. To ensure equalization of property values, the Tax Equalization and Review Commission has the authority to adjust the valuation classes or subclasses. If necessary, this typically happens between early April and May 15.

## Assessment Notices

When a property experiences a change in value, assessors must send property valuation change notices to property owners by June 1. Notices are not sent if the property value does not change.

Differing from the rest of the state, Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy county values are available in January, and informal discussions with the assessors are permitted during February.

## Property Tax Appeals

Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy counties allow for informal discussions throughout February. Informal discussions for the rest of the state begin once value notices are issued.

Property owners unable to resolve valuation differences informally may file a formal appeal to the **County Board of Equalization (BOE) by June 30**. Appeals must be submitted in writing. By law, the assessor's value is assumed correct unless evidence proving otherwise is presented. Decision notices are issued around August 10.

Aggrieved taxpayers can then appeal to the **Nebraska Tax Equalization and Review Commission**, a quasi-judicial state agency, in writing by **September 10**. Documentation from the County BOE must be provided with the appeal form, and the fee to file varies based on the property's value. Appeals can be based on market value or the comparison of assessments with similar properties. A property owner can choose to first discuss the appeal during an informal single commissioner hearing or to move to a formal hearing by a panel of the commission.

If a property owner is not satisfied with the final decision of the Commission, the property owner may appeal to the Nebraska Court of Appeals.

### Personal Property

Owners of tangible personal property as of January 1 must file a Personal Property Return on or before **May 1** with the county assessor where the property is located.

Property brought into the state between January 1 and July 1 may need to be listed and assessed under certain circumstances. All depreciable tangible personal property used in a trade or business, which has a Nebraska net book value greater than zero, is taxable except licensed motor vehicles, inventory held for resale, and certain rental equipment.

Returns filed after the May 1 deadline will incur a 10% penalty. In cases where the taxpayer fails or refuses to file a return or fails to list all taxable personal property, an additional penalty will be applied.

### Tax Bills

**Taxes are due in arrears in two installments.** For most of the state, first installment property tax bills must be paid by April 30 and the second installment by August 31. **Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy counties must be paid on or before March 31 and July 31.**

Relative to personal property, taxpayers must notify the assessor of any sales and pay any taxes that are due or will become due during the year of the sale. Failure to receive a notice of value or tax bill does not absolve the taxpayer from any payments that are due. The county assessor will certify the total taxable value for each property on or before August 20 to allow for county rate setting. The total property tax due is determined by multiplying the property’s taxable value by the total consolidated tax rate for the county.

### Nebraska Tax Calendar

#### Real Estate

Assessment Date	Jan 1
Tax Bills Issued	May
Appeal Deadline	Jun 30
Tax Bills Due (in arrears)	Apr 30 (First Installment) Aug 31 (Second Installment)
<b>Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties:</b>	
	Mar 31 (First Installment) Jul 31 (Second Installment)

#### Personal Property

Assessment Date	Jan 1
Tax Bills Issued	May 1
Appeal Deadline	Jun 30
Tax Bills Due (in arrears)	Apr 30 (First Installment) Aug 31 (Second Installment)
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