Dream Living Florida

AT COMPASS · ST. PETERSBURG

AMENDMENT 3 · 2026

Florida's New *Homestead* Exemption

What St. Pete homeowners, buyers, downsizers and newcomers need to know before their next move.



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AT A GLANCE

Florida property taxes just changed

On November 3, 2026, Florida voters approved Amendment 3 with about 62% of the vote (60% was required). It is the biggest change to the homestead exemption in decades, and it affects anyone who owns, or plans to own, a home here. Results are unofficial until certified by the state.

$150K	$250K	5%
NON-SCHOOL EXEMPTION, 2027	NON-SCHOOL EXEMPTION, 2028	NEW CAP ON NON-HOMESTEAD

The short version

- [ ] **Bigger exemption.** The homestead exemption for non-school property taxes grows to up to $150,000 in 2027 and up to $250,000 in 2028.
- [ ] **Timing matters.** Florida residents by December 31, 2026 qualify for the larger amounts. New residents after that start at $50,000 for their first four years.
- [ ] **Save Our Homes stays.** The 3% (or CPI) cap on homestead assessment increases and portability do not change.
- [ ] **Second homes and rentals** get a lower 5% cap on yearly assessment increases for non-school taxes, down from 10%.
- [ ] **School taxes are not changing.** Only the first $25,000 stays exempt from school taxes.

WHY THIS MATTERS

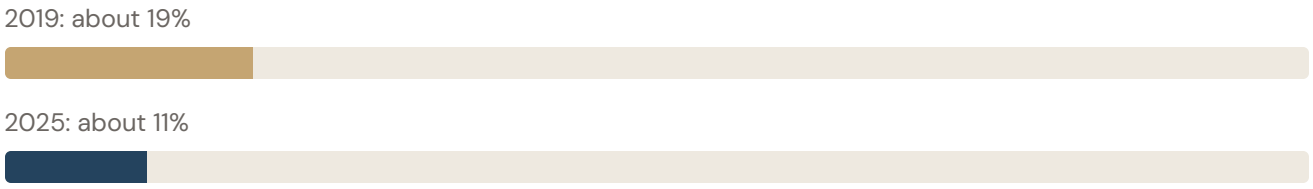
Our exemption hasn't kept up with home prices

For years, Florida homeowners have had a homestead exemption of about $50,000: the original $25,000, plus a second $25,000 voters added in 2008 for non-school taxes. That was a meaningful break when home prices were lower. Today, it barely makes a dent.

$270K	$445K	+65%
PINELLAS MEDIAN SINGLE-FAMILY PRICE, 2019	PINELLAS MEDIAN SINGLE-FAMILY PRICE, 2025	INCREASE IN ABOUT SIX YEARS

What $50,000 covers today

Share of a median-priced Pinellas home's value covered by a $50,000 exemption:



Prices in St. Pete and across Tampa Bay climbed sharply after 2020, while the exemption stayed nearly flat. Florida did add a small inflation adjustment starting in 2025, bringing the 2026 total to about $51,411, but that is a few hundred dollars, not a catch-up. Amendment 3 is the first big reset in nearly two decades.

> **Quick illustration:** percentages above are simple math on median sale prices and are for perspective only. Your exemption applies to your home's assessed value, which is often lower than market value thanks to Save Our Homes.

Median prices: Pinellas REALTOR Organization, 2019 and 2025 year-to-date single-family statistics.

SECTION ONE

What changes, and when

The homestead exemption has two parts: one for school taxes and one for everything else (county, city and other local taxes). Amendment 3 expands the second part.

	2026 (CURRENT)	2027	2028
School taxes	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000
Non-school taxes	About $26,411*	Up to $150,000	Up to $250,000
Non-homestead cap	10% per year	5% per year**	5% per year**

*Today's second exemption is adjusted for inflation each year. **Applies to non-school taxes only. Starting in 2029, the maximum exemption is set to adjust for inflation (CPI).

What it could save you

The Pinellas County Property Appraiser published an illustration using the 2025 countywide average non-school tax rate:

~$1,203
ESTIMATED YEARLY SAVINGS, 2027

~$2,423
ESTIMATED YEARLY SAVINGS, 2028

> These are estimates for a homestead that receives the full exemption, and assume tax rates stay the same. Your savings depend on your home's value, where you live and what local governments decide about tax rates.

SECTION TWO

Who qualifies, and why timing matters

Your residency date is the big one. It decides whether you get the larger exemption right away.

01

Florida resident by Dec. 31, 2026

You are eligible for the larger exemption starting in 2027. If you are a resident by this date but buy your home later, you still qualify for the larger amount when you apply for homestead.

02

New resident on or after Jan. 1, 2027

You start with a $50,000 non-school exemption (adjusted for inflation starting in 2028). After four years of keeping a Florida homestead exemption, you become eligible for the larger exemption, applied on January 1 of year five.

03

Already homesteaded

You do not need to do anything extra to keep your current homestead. Watch for the larger exemption on your August 2027 TRIM notice.

Thinking about moving to St. Pete? Establishing Florida residency before December 31, 2026 could make a real difference for years to come. Talk with the Property Appraiser or a tax professional about what counts as residency for your situation.

SECTION THREE

What it means for your next move

How Amendment 3 may play out depending on where you are in life.

Buying your first home

If you live in Florida now and buy later, you can still qualify for the larger exemption when you buy and file. Own and live in the home on January 1, then file by March 1.

Relocating to Tampa Bay

Residency before December 31, 2026 qualifies you for the larger amounts. Moving later means starting at $50,000 for your first four years.

Downsizing or right-sizing

Portability is not changing, so you can still carry your Save Our Homes savings to your next Florida homestead. The larger exemption can make a new purchase more affordable to own.

Already homesteaded

Your Save Our Homes cap stays in place. The bigger exemption starts January 1, 2027 and shows up on the August 2027 TRIM notice.

Second homes, rentals and investors

Non-homestead property is not eligible for the homestead exemption, but the yearly cap on assessment increases drops from 10% to 5% for non-school taxes. That means slower increases in assessed value.

SECTION FOUR

What Amendment 3 does not change

A bigger exemption is great news, but it is not the whole picture of what it costs to own a home here.

- [ ] **School taxes stay.** Only the first $25,000 of value is exempt from school taxes.
- [ ] **Tax rates are not frozen.** Local governments still set rates every year and may adjust them.
- [ ] **Assessments still apply.** Non-ad valorem charges like fire, stormwater or trash fees are not reduced by exemptions.
- [ ] **Save Our Homes and portability** stay the same.
- [ ] **Other exemptions stay.** Senior, veteran, disability and widow or widower exemptions are unchanged.
- [ ] **Insurance and flood costs still matter**, often as much as taxes in coastal Pinellas.
- [ ] **Some details are still coming.** The Legislature will pass laws to carry out parts of the amendment.
- [ ] **Property taxes do not go away.** This reduces them, it does not eliminate them.

> **My advice:** when you compare homes, look at the full monthly picture: mortgage, taxes after exemptions, homeowners and flood insurance, and HOA or condo fees. I'm happy to run those numbers with you for any home you are considering.

SECTION FIVE

Key dates every homeowner should know

DATE	WHAT HAPPENS
Dec. 31, 2026	Be a permanent Florida resident by this date to qualify for the larger exemption amounts.
Jan. 1, 2027	The larger exemption takes effect. You must own and live in your home as your permanent residence on January 1 to qualify for that year.
March 1, 2027	Deadline to file for homestead exemption for the 2027 tax year. Miss it and you generally wait a year.
August 2027	TRIM notices arrive showing your estimated 2027 taxes with the new exemption.
November 2027	2027 tax bills are mailed.
Jan. 1, 2028	The exemption grows to up to $250,000 for eligible homesteads.

Ready to file? Turn the page for a step-by-step walkthrough of the Pinellas County Property Appraiser website, plus where to file if you live in another Florida county.

SECTION SIX

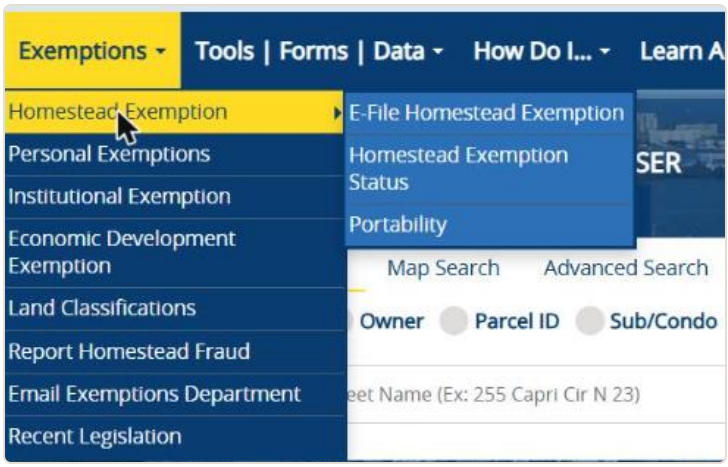
How to apply for homestead in Pinellas

You can file online in about 15 minutes. Here is exactly where to go on the Pinellas County Property Appraiser website.

01

Go to pcpao.gov

Hover over **Exemptions**, then **Homestead Exemption**, and click **E-File Homestead Exemption**.



Scan to file

Opens the Pinellas homestead e-file page

02

Read the requirements and start your application

Wait about 30 days after closing so your deed is recorded, then file for homestead and any other exemptions you qualify for.



Screenshots from pcpao.gov, November 2026. The site may change over time.

What you will need to file

Proof of residency

- [ ] Florida driver license or ID showing your home address
- [ ] Florida vehicle registration showing your home address
- [ ] Pinellas voter information card, if registered
- [ ] Permanent Resident Card, if applicable

Information for you and your spouse

- [ ] Dates of birth and Social Security numbers
- [ ] Purchase date and move-in date
- [ ] Prior address and any other property you own
- [ ] Mailing address from your last tax return

New to Florida? The Property Appraiser asks new residents to file in person, bringing their former state license and registration. Your application is approved once you have a Florida driver license and vehicle registration.

Live in another Florida county?

Homestead is filed with the property appraiser in the county where your home is located. Same rules, same March 1 deadline.

COUNTY	PROPERTY APPRAISER WEBSITE
Hillsborough	hcpafl.org
Pasco	pascopa.gov
Manatee	manateepao.gov
Sarasota	sarasotapropertyappraiser.gov

Any Florida county

Florida Dept. of Revenue list of all 67 county property appraisers



LET'S TALK

Let's map out your move

Buying, selling, downsizing or relocating to St. Pete? I'll help you understand how Amendment 3 fits into your plans and run the real numbers on any home you are considering.

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Sources: Pinellas County Property Appraiser (pcpao.gov), Florida Department of Revenue, Pinellas REALTOR Organization market statistics, and election results reported November 4, 2026. Results are unofficial until certified, and some details depend on implementing legislation. This guide is general information, not tax or legal advice. Verify your situation with the Pinellas County Property Appraiser or a tax professional.