

SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM

BELMONT SELECT BOARD POLICY

Approved May 19, 2025

I. PURPOSE

The Select Board has been duly authorized by the 2005 Annual Town Meeting to provide an opportunity for certain persons over the age of 60 to provide services to the Town of Belmont in exchange for compensation which is to be applied to the real property tax obligation of said person. This policy establishes the terms and conditions of this Senior Tax Work-off Program.

II. ELIGIBILITY

Participants in this program must be over the age of 60 when submitting their application; be domiciled and reside in Belmont; and be an owner of the property to which a reduction in real estate taxes may be granted. If said property is subject to a trust, the participant must be a trustee of the trust. In the case of joint or multiple owners, each may be allowed to provide service. The combined total reduction per fiscal year shall not exceed \$2,000 per household.

- A. A taxpayer seeking to participate in the program shall file an application, substantially in the form accompanying this policy. Said application must be filed each year the applicant wishes to participate in the Senior Tax Work-off Program.
- B. A copy of the most recent federal income tax return shall be provided by the applicant, unless otherwise on file with the Town. The household income of an applicant from all sources, taxable and non-taxable, shall mirror the limits used for the Deferred Tax limits established by the Department of Revenue each year for Clause 41A.
 - For work performed in 2025, the 2023 tax returns are used, and the limits established are \$69,000 for Single filers and \$103,000 for Married couples.
 - In 2026, the 2024 tax returns will be used, and the limits will be updated to \$72,000 for Single filers and \$109,000 for Married couples.
- C. The administration of this program shall be under the direction of the Community Services Department, in collaboration with other affected departments and subject to the oversight of the Town Administrator and Assistant Town Administrator/Finance Director.

III. CALCULATION OF TAX REDUCTION

The hourly rate to be credited for services rendered to the Town shall be \$15.00 per hour, or the state minimum wage, whichever is higher; the total per household for all participants shall not exceed the amounts stipulated in Section II of this policy, including all withholdings.

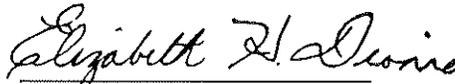
IV. OTHER PROVISIONS

- A. *Treatment of Compensation.* The amount of compensation the resident receives under this program is considered income for purposes of federal income tax withholding. Participants in this program agree to sign over payments, which will be applied to the participant's property tax bill.

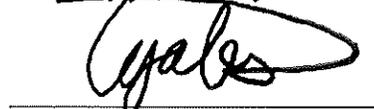
- B. *Status of Senior Tax Work-off Participants.* Taxpayers performing services under this program are considered employees for purposes of municipal tort liability. Municipalities will therefore be liable for damages for injuries to third parties and for indemnification of the participant to the same extent as they are in the case of injuries caused by regular municipal employees.
- C. *Safety of Participants and Suitability for Work.* For the mutual protection of the participant and the interests of the Town, individuals shall be assigned positions for which they are physically qualified and that match the skills and job requirements needed by the participating departments. In case of doubt about physical capacity, a doctor's certificate shall be obtained stating that the applicant is able to perform the duties to be assigned.
- D. *Payroll Processing.* All applicants participating in this program should be directed to the Human Resources Department to complete the necessary payroll and personnel forms. These forms are completed the first time the individual participates in this program, and reviewed annually to ensure no updates are needed.
- E. The Town Administrator shall be authorized to waive any minor informalities in these regulations provided that the general intent of the program is met.
- F. Senior Tax Work-off Program Policy shall be reviewed every three years at a minimum.

We hereby approve the Senior Tax Work-off Program policy as outlined herein.

BELMONT SELECT BOARD


Elizabeth Dionne, Chair


Matt Taylor, Vice Chair


Taylor Yates, Member

ATTACHMENT A – ENABLING STATE STATUTE, MGL CH. 59, SECTION 5K

In any city or town which accepts the provisions of this section, the board of selectmen of a town or in a municipality having a town council form of government, the town council or the mayor with the approval of the city council in a city may establish a program to allow persons over the age of 60 to volunteer to provide services to such city or town. In exchange for such volunteer services, the city or town shall reduce the real property tax obligations of such person over the age of 60 on his tax bills and any reduction so provided shall be in addition to any exemption or abatement to which any such person is otherwise entitled and no such person shall receive a rate of, or be credited with, more than the current minimum wage of the commonwealth per hour for services provided pursuant to such reduction nor shall the reduction of the real property tax bill exceed \$2,000 in a given tax year. It shall be the responsibility of the city or town to maintain a record for each taxpayer including, but not limited to, the number of hours of service and the total amount by which the real property tax has been reduced and to provide a copy of such record to the assessor in order that the actual tax bill reflect the reduced rate. A copy of such record shall also be provided to the taxpayer prior to the issuance of the actual tax bill. Such cities and towns shall have the power to create local rules and procedures for implementing this section in any way consistent with the intent of this section.

In no instance shall the amount by which a person's property tax liability is reduced in exchange for the provision of services be considered income, wages, or employment for purposes of taxation as provided in chapter 62, for the purposes of withholding taxes as provided in chapter 62B, for the purposes of workers' compensation as provided in chapter 152 or any other applicable provisions of the General Laws, but such person while providing such services shall be considered a public employee for the purposes of chapter 258, but such services shall be deemed employment for the purposes of unemployment insurance as provided in chapter 151A.

A city or town, by vote of its legislative body, subject to its charter, may adjust the exemption in this clause by: (1) allowing an approved representative, for persons physically unable, to provide such services to the city or town; or (2) allowing the maximum reduction of the real property tax bill to be based on 125 volunteer service hours in a given tax year, rather than \$2,000.

