

APPEALS PROCESS

Summary only!

It is the desire of the Board of Assessors to avoid appeals whenever possible. If there are serious concerns over the valuation of property, the owner should call or come by the office to discuss his/her property with a professional staff appraiser.

BOARD OF ASSESSORS (BOA)

PROPERTY OWNER IS MAILED AN ASSESSMENT NOTICE

Property owner files a written appeal within 45 days of Notice Date. Appeal letter must state Owner's election to appeal to Board of Equalization, Hearing Officer, or Binding Arbitration. Whitfield County has adopted a written Policy that Appeals must be received in hand by Office Personnel no later than 5:00 pm on the date stated on assessment notice as the last date to Appeal. At this time, Whitfield County's policy does not allow for Electronic filing of Appeals. A Postmark will not be considered a Timely Filing.

By mutual written agreement, certain appeals may be sent directly to Superior Court.

Taxpayers and BOA may mutually agree to a value and terminate an appeal at any point.

BOARDS OF EQUALIZATION (BOE) (No cost unless taxpayer hires agent)	HEARING OFFICER (No cost unless taxpayer hires agent) Limited to Non-homesteaded real property in excess of \$1 million!	ARBITRATION (BINDING) (Loser pays cost of Arbitration) Limited to Real Property Valuation Only!
<p>Property Owner may appeal based on taxability, uniformity, value, and denial of exemptions.</p> <p>BOA acknowledges receipt of appeal and furnishes Value Review Worksheet to be completed and returned by the taxpayer (optional) within 15 days.</p> <p>Staff Appraiser reviews property value and any owner concerns mentioned in letter of appeal. BOA reviews appeal, renders decision, and notifies property owner in writing within 180 days.</p> <p>If BOA changes the value, the Property Owner (If Dissatisfied) may appeal to Board of Equalization (BOE) within 30 days after notification.</p> <p>If BOA does not change value, appeal is automatically forwarded to BOE.</p> <p>Property owner is notified in writing of BOE Hearing date.</p> <p>Property owner and/or authorized agent may appear to present case (Letter of Authorization must be provided by Owner before hearing).</p> <p>BOE must render decision at conclusion of hearing and notify property owner and BOA in writing.</p> <p>Either party may appeal to Superior Court within 30 days of the BOE Decision.</p> <p>Other provisions apply</p>	<p>Taxpayer must state grounds for appeal which are limited to value or uniformity.</p> <p>Hearing Officers must be either state certified general real property appraiser or state certified residential real property appraiser and be approved by the GA Real Estate Commission and the GA Real Estate Appraisers Board. Hearing Officer shall be paid a minimum of \$25/hour by the County Governing Authority. Hearing Officers must attend required training at his/her expense.</p> <p>BOA has up to 90 days to review the appeal and notify the taxpayer of its decision.</p> <p>Taxpayer has 30 days to notify the BOA if he/she is not satisfied with its decision.</p> <p>BOA has 30 days to send the appeal to the Clerk of Superior Court for scheduling a hearing. If the Clerk cannot find a Hearing Officer, the appeal shall be moved to the BOE.</p> <p>At the conclusion of the hearing, the Hearing Officer shall notify both parties of the decision verbally and shall send the decision in writing.</p> <p>Either party may appeal to Superior Court within 30 days of this decision.</p> <p>Other provisions apply</p>	<p>Within 45 days of filing the notice of appeal to binding arbitration, the property owner, at his/her expense must provide the BOA with a certified Appraisal prepared by qualified appraiser.</p> <p>Within 10 days of receiving the taxpayer's appeal to Binding Arbitration, the BOA must send an acknowledgement to the taxpayer stating the taxpayer's responsibility to provide a certified appraisal, the amount of the filing fee and that the payment must be made within 45 days. Failure to provide the certified appraisal and filing fee within 45 days shall terminate the appeal unless the taxpayer within such 45 days elects in writing to have the appeal moved to the BOE process.</p> <p>Within 45 days of receiving the taxpayer's certified appraisal, the BOA must accept or reject the taxpayer's certified appraisal. If the BOA accepts the Certified Appraisal it shall become the final value. If the BOA rejects the certified appraisal, it must within 45 days certify the appeal to the Clerk of Superior Court. If the BOA neither accepts nor rejects the certified appraisal within 45 days, the certified appraisal shall become the final value.</p> <p>Within 15 days of filing the appeal with the Clerk of Superior Court, the Chief Judge shall issue an order authorizing the arbitration.</p> <p>Within 30 days of his/her appointment by the Clerk of Superior Court, the Arbitrator shall schedule the time and location of the hearing.</p> <p>At the conclusion of the hearing, the arbitrator shall render a decision regarding the value of the property by choosing either the value presented by the BOA or the value presented by the taxpayer.</p> <p>The "loser" must pay the cost of the arbitrator. Provisions of binding arbitration may be waived at any time by written consent of both parties.</p> <p>The decision of the arbitrator is final and is not appealable to Superior Court.</p> <p>Other provisions apply</p>

SUPERIOR COURT

THE APPEAL TO SUPERIOR COURT IS A JURY TRIAL AND APPELLANT MAY WITH TO CONSIDER ENGAGING AN ATTORNEY.

APPEAL MUST BE FILED WITH BOARD OF ASSESSORS BY THE OWNER OR HIS/HER ATTORNEY.

APPELLANT PAYS FILING FEE (Currently \$213.50 but is subject to change)

This is a summary of appeals processes. It is for information only and is not intended to be a statement of law. Taxpayers should review the applicable law, including O.C.G.A. § 48-5-311, for statutory terms, conditions and requirements related to appeals processes.

CERTAIN PROVISIONS ARE EFFECTIVE JAN 1, 2011

June 13, 2013