

§578. Assessment of tax

1. Organized areas. The municipal assessors or chief assessor of a primary assessing area shall adjust the State Tax Assessor's 100% valuation per acre for each forest type of their county by whatever ratio, or percentage of current just value, is applied to other property within the municipality to obtain the assessed values. Forest land in the organized areas, subject to taxation under this subchapter, must be taxed at the property tax rate applicable to other property in the municipality.

The State Tax Assessor shall determine annually the amount of acreage in each municipality that is classified and taxed in accordance with this subchapter. Each municipality is entitled to annual payments distributed in accordance with this section from money appropriated by the Legislature if it submits a completed annual return in accordance with section 383. The State Tax Assessor shall pay any municipal claim found to be in satisfactory form by October 15th of the year following the submission of the annual return. The total municipal reimbursement appropriation is calculated on the basis of 90% of the tax lost as a result of this subchapter. For purposes of this section, "classified forest lands" means forest lands classified pursuant to this subchapter as well as all areas identified as forested land within farmland parcels that are transferred from tree growth classification on or after October 1, 2011. For the purposes of this section, "tax lost" means the tax that would have been assessed, but for this subchapter, on the classified forest lands if they were assessed according to the current regional per acre undeveloped land value as determined for state valuation purposes, or according to the current local per acre undeveloped land value as determined for state valuation purposes, whichever is less, minus the tax that was actually assessed on the same lands in accordance with this subchapter, and adjusted for the aggregate municipal savings in required educational costs attributable to the reduction in state valuation as a result of this subchapter. A municipality that fails to achieve the minimum assessment ratio established in section 327 loses 10% of the reimbursement provided by this section for each one percentage point the minimum assessment ratio falls below the ratio established in section 327.

A. [PL 2007, c. 438, §16 (RP).]

B. [PL 2007, c. 438, §16 (RP).]

C. The State Tax Assessor shall distribute reimbursement under this section to each municipality in proportion to the product of the reduced tree growth valuation of the municipality multiplied by the property tax burden of the municipality. For purposes of this paragraph, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

(1) "Property tax burden" means the total real and personal property taxes assessed in the most recently completed municipal fiscal year, except the taxes assessed on captured value within a tax increment financing district, divided by the latest state valuation certified to the Secretary of State.

(2) "Undeveloped land" means rear acreage and unimproved nonwaterfront acreage that is not:

- (a) Classified under the laws governing a current use program;
- (b) A base lot; or
- (c) Wasteland.

(3) "Average value of undeveloped land" means the current regional per acre undeveloped land value as determined for state valuation purposes, or the current local per acre undeveloped land value as determined for state valuation purposes, whichever is less.

(4) "Reduced tree growth valuation" means the difference between the average value of undeveloped land and the average value of classified forest lands times the total number of acres of classified forest lands. [PL 2021, c. 630, Pt. C, §3 (AMD).]

[PL 2021, c. 630, Pt. C, §§2, 3 (AMD).]

2. Unorganized territory. The State Tax Assessor shall adjust the 100% valuation per acre for each type for each county by such ratio or percentage as is then being used to determine the state valuation applicable to other property in the unorganized territory to obtain the assessed values. Commencing April 1, 1973, forest land in the unorganized territory subject to taxation under this subchapter shall be taxed at the same property tax rate as is applicable to other property in the unorganized territory, which rate shall be applied to the assessed values so determined. Upon collection by the State Tax Assessor, such taxes shall be deposited in the Unorganized Territory Education and Services Fund in accordance with section 1605.

[PL 1981, c. 706, §8 (AMD).]

3. Divided ownership. In cases of divided ownership of land and the timber and grass rights thereon, the assessor shall apportion 10% of the valuation to the land and 90% of the valuation to the timber and grass rights.

[PL 1973, c. 308, §9 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1971, c. 616, §8 (NEW). PL 1973, c. 308, §§7-9 (AMD). PL 1973, c. 460, §18 (AMD). PL 1975, c. 501 (AMD). PL 1977, c. 282 (AMD). PL 1977, c. 720, §3 (AMD). PL 1981, c. 364, §20A (AMD). PL 1981, c. 517, §§10,11 (AMD). PL 1981, c. 706, §§7,8 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 852, §1 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 861, §40 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 876, §3 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 857, §76 (AMD). PL 1993, c. 452, §4 (AMD). PL 1997, c. 24, §C4 (AMD). PL 1997, c. 24, §C18 (AFF). PL 1999, c. 708, §21 (AMD). PL 2005, c. 457, §CCC1 (AMD). PL 2007, c. 438, §16 (AMD). PL 2007, c. 639, §1 (AMD). PL 2009, c. 213, Pt. O, §1 (AMD). PL 2011, c. 404, §1 (AMD). PL 2017, c. 170, Pt. B, §4 (AMD). PL 2017, c. 288, Pt. A, §37 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 398, Pt. J, §1 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 630, Pt. C, §§2, 3 (AMD).

The State of Maine claims a copyright in its codified statutes. If you intend to republish this material, we require that you include the following disclaimer in your publication:

All copyrights and other rights to statutory text are reserved by the State of Maine. The text included in this publication reflects changes made through the Second Regular Session of the 131st Maine Legislature and is current through January 1, 2025. The text is subject to change without notice. It is a version that has not been officially certified by the Secretary of State. Refer to the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated and supplements for certified text.

The Office of the Revisor of Statutes also requests that you send us one copy of any statutory publication you may produce. Our goal is not to restrict publishing activity, but to keep track of who is publishing what, to identify any needless duplication and to preserve the State's copyright rights.

PLEASE NOTE: The Revisor's Office cannot perform research for or provide legal advice or interpretation of Maine law to the public. If you need legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.