



2026

**Commerce Township
Poverty Exemption
Application**

Section 211.7u(1) of the Michigan General Property Tax Act indicates that “the principal residence of persons who, in the judgment of the supervisor and board of review, by reason of poverty, are unable to contribute toward the public charges is eligible for exemption in whole or in part from taxation under this act.”

The Commerce Township Board of Trustees adopts a policy which includes an asset and income test. The Board of Review shall follow the Commerce Township policy when granting or denying an exemption. If a person meets all eligibility requirements, the Board of Review must grant a full exemption equal to a 100% reduction in taxable value or a partial exemption equal to a 50% reduction in taxable value.

A taxpayer who files for a poverty exemption at the March Board of Review is not prohibited from also filing a valuation appeal at the March Board of Review. A taxpayer may also file a poverty exemption application with the July or December Board of Review if not previously denied in the same year. Poverty exemption denials may be appealed to the Michigan Tax Tribunal.

The following policy and guidelines were adopted at the January 13, 2026 Commerce Township Board of Trustees meeting. The income levels used are the federal poverty guidelines published in the prior calendar year in the Federal Register by the United States Department of Health and Human Services. The income levels are updated annually.

Requirements:

1. All applicants must annually file a completed application form and all required documentation with the Commerce Township Assessing Department. The application and supporting documentation must be submitted on or after January 1, 2026, but before the December Board of Review. Handicapped or disabled applicants may call the Assessing Department at (248)-960-7077 to make arrangements for assistance.
2. All applicants must provide a complete, signed Federal Income Tax return and State Income Tax return, including the Homestead Property Tax Credit (MI-1040CR), that were filed in the immediately preceding year or in the current year **for all persons** residing in the principal residence. If the applicant(s) is not required to file a Federal or State Income Tax return, a signed Poverty Exemption Affidavit must be provided along with the Homestead Property Tax Credit (MI-1040CR).
3. In accordance with PA 390 of 1994, the applicant must meet the “Asset Guidelines” adopted by the Commerce Township Board of Trustees (attached).
4. The applicant must meet the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (attached).
5. ***Failure to meet the requirements or submission of an incomplete application will result in a denial of the poverty exemption.***

Asset Guidelines Used in the Determination of Poverty Exemptions for 2026

As required by PA 390 of 1994, all guidelines for poverty exemptions as established by the governing body of the local assessing unit **SHALL** also include an asset level test. The purpose of an asset test is to determine the resources available (cash and fixed assets and property that could be converted to cash) that could be used to pay property taxes in the year the poverty exemption is filed.

The following asset test shall apply to all applications for poverty exemption:

- The applicant shall not have **total** assets exceeding \$300,000 including the value of the principal residence.

Assets greater than what is stated above will result in a denial of the poverty exemption.

All asset information, as requested in the Application for Poverty Exemption, must be completed in total. The Board of Review may request additional information and verification of assets if they determine it to be necessary and may deny an application if the assets are not properly identified.

Per Commerce Township Code of Ordinance 2-308(d)(1); In considering whether a principal residence of a person is eligible for an exemption, the board of review shall consider a person's specific asset level as well as total household assets. Assets shall include:

- a) Real estate and real property, including the principal residence;
- b) Savings owned by a person and his or her spouse including savings accounts, postal savings, credit union shares, certificates of deposit, cash, stocks, bonds or similar investments;
- c) Life insurance held by a person or his or her spouse;
- d) Vehicles, including but not limited to, cars, trucks, and recreational vehicles*; and
- e) Other assets, including but not limited to, coin collections, antiques, silver, jewelry, and other collectible items.

* *Recreational vehicles include snowmobiles, boats, camping trailers, travel trailers, motor home, jet ski, motorcycles, off road vehicles, or anything which may be considered a recreational vehicle.*

Income Guidelines Used in the Determination of Poverty Exemptions for 2026

Local governing bodies are required to adopt guidelines that set income levels for their poverty exemptions and those income levels **shall not be set lower** by a city or township than the federal poverty guidelines updated annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This means, for example, that the income level for a household of 3 persons **shall not** be set lower than \$39,975 which is the amount shown on the following chart for a family of 3 persons.

Below are the federal poverty guidelines updated annually in the federal register by the US Department of Health and Human Services which were adopted in 2025. In Section 2-309 of the Commerce Township code of ordinances; an applicant is subject to 150% of the adopted federal poverty guidelines. Those amounts can be found below:

Size of Family	Federal Poverty Guidelines	Commerce Township Poverty Limit
1	\$15,650	\$23,475
2	\$21,150	\$31,725
3	\$26,650	\$39,975
4	\$32,150	\$48,225
5	\$37,650	\$56,475
6	\$43,150	\$64,725
7	\$48,650	\$72,975
8	\$54,150	\$81,225
For each Additional Person	\$5,500	

The income guidelines shall include, but are not limited to, the annual income for the person claiming the exemption and all persons living in the principal residence.

Income includes:

- Money, wages, salaries before deductions, and regular contributions from persons not living in the residence
- Cryptocurrency in all forms
- Net receipts from non-farm and farm self-employment (receipts from a person's own business, professional enterprise, or partnership, after business expense deductions)
- Regular payments from social security, railroad retirement, unemployment, worker's compensation, veteran's payments, public assistance, and supplemental security income (SSI)
- Alimony, child support, military family allotments
- Private and governmental retirement and disability pensions, regular insurance, annuity payments
- College or university scholarships, grants, fellowships, and assistantships
- Dividends, interest, and net income from rentals, royalties, estates, trusts, gambling or lottery winnings

The Board of Review, in addition to considering the federal poverty income standards, may award an exemption if an applicant's household income is reduced below one and one-half times the federal poverty income standards, by reason of:

- (1) Any expenses relating to illness of the applicant, or other persons residing in the homestead who are claimed as exemptions on the applicant's federal income tax return.
- (2) Any medical expenses incurred and paid by the applicant within the last year without government assistance and which were not covered by insurance.

Meeting the income levels of the Township policy does NOT guarantee the approval of a poverty exemption. Income and assets are reviewed by the Board of Review in the decision making process.

Reduction Calculation

Public Act 253 of 2020 amended MCL 211.7u related to poverty exemptions. PA 253 of 2020 lists the specific percentage reductions in taxable value that may be used by the Board of Review in granting a poverty exemption.

Consistent with MCL 211.7u(5), Commerce Township Ordinance 2-312 states that if a person claiming the poverty exemption meets all eligibility requirements, the Board of Review shall grant the poverty exemption as follows:

1. A full exemption equal to a 100% reduction in taxable value for the year in which the exemption is granted.
2. A partial exemption equal to a 50% reduction in taxable value for the year in which the exemption is granted.

No other method of calculating taxable value may be utilized, except for those percentage reductions specifically authorized in the ordinance consistent with the statute, or any other percentage reduction approved by the State Tax Commission.

The following depicts the taxable value reduction granted to the eligible applicant for 2026 poverty exemptions:

Household Size	Fed. Income Limit	100% Exemption			50% Exemption		
		Applicant Income			Applicant Income		
1	\$23,475	\$0	-	\$5,869	\$5,870	-	\$23,475
2	\$21,150	\$0	-	\$5,288	\$5,289	-	\$21,150
3	\$26,650	\$0	-	\$6,663	\$6,664	-	\$26,650
4	\$32,150	\$0	-	\$8,038	\$8,039	-	\$32,150
5	\$37,650	\$0	-	\$9,413	\$9,414	-	\$37,650
6	\$43,150	\$0	-	\$10,788	\$10,789	-	\$43,150
7	\$48,650	\$0	-	\$12,163	\$12,164	-	\$48,650
8	\$54,150	\$0	-	\$13,538	\$13,539	-	\$54,150

Income greater than what is stated above, per household size, will result in a denial of the poverty exemption.

APPLICANT CERTIFICATION

Please initial EACH applicable statement:

_____ **I/We declare that the statements made herein are complete, true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge. Any willful misstatements or misrepresentations made on this form may constitute perjury, which, under the law, is a felony punishable by fine or imprisonment.**

_____ **I/We also understand that this application will be DENIED if the information contained within is found to be false or incomplete.**

_____ **I/We understand that if any information contained herein is found to be false or incomplete, any and all relief granted by this application will be forfeited and placed back on the assessment roll with penalties and interest occurring on the additional tax liability in accordance with Section 211.119 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.**

_____ **I/We understand this application for exemption is ONLY for the tax year of 2026.**

_____ **I/We have received a copy of and understand the 2026 Poverty Exemption Policy and Guidelines.**

_____ **I/We certify that I/We DID file a State or Federal Income Tax Return (1040 or MI-1040) and Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit (MI-1040CR) for the tax year 2025 and included a copy with this application OR completed and included the Poverty Exemption Affidavit.**

_____ **I/We hereby authorize the Commerce Township Assessing Department to verify and or obtain information from any creditor, financial institution, government agency, insurance company or any other organization necessary for the purpose of this application of Poverty Exemption for the tax year of 2026.**

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Spouse Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of Preparer if other than applicant: _____
(Please Print)

WAIVER OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Parcel ID Number: _____

Property Address: _____

I (we), _____, hereby consent to the examination of all submitted documents as well as the tax returns and any other related financial documents required to determine eligibility for tax relief, including but not limited to all those listed below:

- Federal Income Tax Returns
- Michigan Income Tax Returns
- Principal Residence Exemption Form
- Social Security Administration Statements

by the Commerce Township Assessing Department staff, their designated agent, the members of the Commerce Township Board of Review, and the State of Michigan Tax Tribunal authority. I further consent to any discussion of the information contained in this application at a duly convened public meeting of the Commerce Township Board of Review. By signing this Waiver of Confidentiality, I understand and acknowledge that I am forever giving up any and all possible claims that I may have related to the disclosure of information contained in said tax returns and related documents, for which claims may arise pursuant to Internal Revenue Code Section 6103, and/or any other federal, state, or local statute or regulation. I certify that I have read and understand the contents of this document in its entirety and have signed it of my own free will.

Signature

Signature

Printed Name

Printed Name

Date

Date

Poverty Exemption Affidavit

This form is issued under authority of Public Act 206 of 1893; MCL 211.7u.

INSTRUCTIONS: When completed, this document must accompany a taxpayer's Application for Poverty Exemption filed with the supervisor or the board of review of the local unit where the property is located. MCL 211.7u provides for a whole or partial property tax exemption on the principal residence of an owner of the property by reason of poverty and the inability to contribute toward the public charges. MCL 211.7u(2)(b) requires proof of eligibility for the exemption be provided to the board of review by supplying copies of federal and state income tax returns for all persons residing in the principal residence, including property tax credit returns, or by filing an affidavit for all persons residing in the residence who were not required to file federal or state income tax returns for the current or preceding tax year.

I, _____, swear and affirm by my signature below that I reside in the principal residence that is the subject of this Application for Poverty Exemption and that for the current tax year and the preceding tax year, I was not required to file a federal or state income tax return.

Address of Principal Residence:

Signature of Person Making Affidavit

Date

CHECK LIST
2026 POVERTY EXEMPTION ATTACHMENTS
CHECK LIST PAGE 1 OF 3

Consistent with the Commerce Township code of ordinance Section 2-309. The following documentation is required:

- Provide Documents for applicant, spouse, and/or all others over the age of 18 that are residing in the home.
- Submit the most recent statement/document unless otherwise indicated.
- Please submit copies only, not originals. Anything submitted will not be returned.
- If one of the items below does not apply, please write “N/A” (not applicable) to indicate the applicant does not have anything to provide.
- This initialed checklist must be returned with the application forms.

Initial below when requested information is attached to the application:

_____ Valid Michigan Driver’s License or other legal form of photo identification for all persons in the household

_____ 2025 Federal Income Tax Return - fully complete, signed copy of what was filed with the IRS

_____ 2025 State Income Tax Return - fully complete, signed copy of what was filed with the State of MI

_____ If any of the applicants are not required to file a Federal or State Income Tax return, Form 4988, Poverty Exemption Affidavit (attached) must be provided for ALL persons that are not required to file income tax.

_____ Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit (MI-1040CR). This completed form is required regardless of your requirement to file income tax returns

CHECK LIST
2026 POVERTY EXEMPTION ATTACHMENTS
CHECK LIST PAGE 2 OF 3

_____ Current full credit report for all persons 18 years or older residing in the household. Reports that include only the credit score will not be accepted. Full credit reports are available at no cost to the applicant once per year from all three (3) of the following credit reporting bureaus: Equifax, Experian and TransUnion.

Free credit reports are available at www.annualcreditreport.com

_____ Bank and/or credit union monthly statements for the **prior 12 months (as of the date of application) of ALL checking and savings accounts**

_____ Social Security Benefit Statement

_____ Certificate of Deposit statement

_____ Stocks or bonds statement

_____ Child Support payment statement

_____ Alimony payment statement

_____ Insurance or annuity payment statement

_____ If home was purchased in the prior 5 years, a copy of the loan application and closing statement

_____ Most recent mortgage verification showing balance of loan plus principal and interest payment amounts

_____ Second mortgage or equity loan statement

CHECK LIST
2026 POVERTY EXEMPTION ATTACHMENTS
CHECK LIST PAGE 3 OF 3

_____ List and current value of other property currently owned by applicant (includes but not limited to vacant land, second home, rental property, building/property other than the residence)

_____ List of equipment, jewelry, antiques, artwork and current value

_____ State of Michigan car registration for all vehicles

_____ List of regular contributions OR gifts OR loans from persons not living in the residence (in the last 24 _____ months)

_____ List of dividends, interest, and net income from rentals or estates or trusts (in the last 24 months)

_____ List of money received from the sale of property such as stocks, cryptocurrency, bonds, a house, or a car (in the last 24 months)

_____ List of any expenses relating to illness of the applicant, or other persons residing in the homestead who are claimed as exemptions on the applicant's federal income tax return.

_____ List of any medical expenses incurred and paid by the applicant within the last year without government assistance and which were not covered by insurance.

Failure to provide a complete application will result in a denial of the poverty exemption.

Application and Affirmation for MCL 211.7u Poverty Exemption

This form is issued under the authority of the General Property Tax Act, Public Act 206 of 1893, MCL 211.7u.

MCL 211.7u of the General Property Tax Act, Public Act 206 of 1893, provides a property tax exemption for the principal residence of persons who, by reason of poverty, are unable to contribute toward the public charges. This application is to be used to apply for the exemption and must be filed with the Board of Review where the property is located. This application may be submitted to the city or township where the property is located in each year on or after January 1 but before the day prior to the last day of the board of review. Poverty Exemptions may be heard by the Board of Review during its March, July, and December sessions.

To be considered complete, this application must: 1) be completed in its entirety, 2) include information regarding all members residing within the household, and 3) include all required documentation as listed within the application. Please write legibly and attach additional pages as necessary.

PART 1: PERSONAL INFORMATION — Petitioner must list all required personal information.				
Petitioner's Name			Daytime Phone Number	
Age of Petitioner	Marital Status	Age of Spouse	Number of Legal Dependents	
Property Address of Principal Residence		City	State	ZIP Code
PART 2: REAL ESTATE INFORMATION				
List the real estate information related to your principal residence. Be prepared to provide a deed, land contract or other evidence of ownership of the property at the Board of Review meeting.				
Property Parcel Identification Number		Name of Mortgage Company		
Unpaid Balance Owed on Principal Residence	Monthly Payment	Length of Time at this Residence		
Property Description				
PART 3: AFFIRMATION OF OWNERSHIP, OCCUPANCY, AND INCOME STATUS (Check all boxes that apply.)				
<input type="checkbox"/> I own the property in which the exemption is being claimed.				
<input type="checkbox"/> The property in which the exemption is being claimed is used as my homestead. Homestead is generally defined as any dwelling with its land and buildings where a family makes its home.				
PART 4: ADDITIONAL PROPERTY INFORMATION				
List information related to any other property owned by you or any member residing in the household.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Check if you own, or are buying, other property. If checked, complete the information below.			Amount of Income Earned from other Property	
1	Property Address	City	State	ZIP Code
	Name of Owner(s)	Assessed Value	Date of Last Taxes Paid	Amount of Taxes Paid
2	Property Address	City	State	ZIP Code
	Name of Owner(s)	Assessed Value	Date of Last Taxes Paid	Amount of Taxes Paid

PART 5: EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION — List your current employment information.

Name of Employer			
Address of Employer	City	State	ZIP Code
Contact Person	Employer Telephone Number		

PART 6: INCOME SOURCES

List all income sources, including but not limited to: salaries, Social Security, rents, pensions, IRAs (individual retirement accounts), unemployment compensation, disability, government pensions, worker's compensation, dividends, claims and judgments from lawsuits, alimony, child support, friend or family contribution, reverse mortgage, or any other source of income, for all persons residing at the property.

Source of Income	Monthly or Annual Income (indicate which)

PART 7: CHECKING, SAVINGS AND INVESTMENT INFORMATION

List any and all savings owned by all household members, including but not limited to: checking accounts, savings accounts, postal savings, credit union shares, certificates of deposit, cash, stocks, bonds, or similar investments, for all persons residing at the property.

Name of Financial Institution or Investments	Amount on Deposit	Current Interest Rate	Name on Account	Value of Investment

PART 8: LIFE INSURANCE — List all policies held by all household members.

Name of Insured	Amount of Policy	Monthly Payments	Policy Paid in Full	Name of Beneficiary	Relationship to Insured

PART 9: MOTOR VEHICLE INFORMATION

All motor vehicles (including motorcycles, motor homes, camper trailers, etc.) held or owned by any person residing within the household must be listed.

Make	Year	Monthly Payment	Balance Owed

PART 10: HOUSEHOLD OCCUPANTS — List all persons living in the household.				
First and Last Name	Age	Relationship to Applicant	Place of Employment	\$ Contribution to Family Income

PART 11: PERSONAL DEBT — List all personal debt for all household members.					
Creditor	Purpose of Debt	Date of Debt	Original Balance	Monthly Payment	Balance Owed

PART 12: MONTHLY EXPENSE INFORMATION			
The amount of monthly expenses related to the principal residence for each category must be listed. Indicate N/A as necessary.			
Heating	Electric	Water	Phone
Cable	Food	Clothing	Health Insurance
Garbage	Daycare	Car Expense (gas, repair, etc.)	
Other (type and amount)	Other (type and amount)	Other (type and amount)	
Other (type and amount)	Other (type and amount)	Other (type and amount)	

NOTICE: Per MCL 211.7u(2)(b), federal and state income tax returns for all persons residing in the principal residence, including any property tax credit returns, filed in the immediately preceding year or in the current year must be submitted with this application. Federal and state income tax returns are not required for a person residing in the principal residence if that person was not required to file a federal or state income tax return in the tax year in which the exemption under this section is claimed or in the immediately preceding tax year.

PART 13: POLICY AND GUIDELINES ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The governing body of the local assessing unit shall determine and make available to the public the policy and guidelines used for the granting of exemptions under MCL 211.7u. In order to be eligible for the exemption, the applicant must meet the federal poverty guidelines published in the prior calendar year in the Federal Register by the United States Department of Health and Human Services under its authority to revise the poverty line under 42 USC 9902, or alternative guidelines adopted by the governing body of the local assessing unit so long as the alternative guidelines do not provide income eligibility requirements less than the federal guidelines. The policy and guidelines must include, but are not limited to, the specific income and asset levels of the claimant and total household income and assets. The combined assets of all persons must not exceed the limits set forth in the guidelines adopted by the local assessing unit.

The applicant has reviewed the applicable policy and guidelines adopted by the city or township, including the specific income and asset levels of the claimant and total household income and assets.

PART 14: LEGAL DESIGNEE INFORMATION (Complete if applicable.)

Legal Designee Name		Daytime Telephone Number	
Mailing Address	City	State	ZIP Code

PART 15: CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the best of my knowledge that the information provided in this form is complete, accurate and I am eligible for the exemption from property taxes pursuant to Michigan Compiled Law, Section 211.7u.

Printed Name	Signature	Date
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This application shall be filed after January 1, but before the day prior to the last day of the local unit's December Board of Review.

Decision of the March Board of Review may be appealed by petition to the Michigan Tax Tribunal by July 31 of the current year. A July or December Board of Review decision may be appealed to the Michigan Tax Tribunal by petition within 30 days of decision. A copy of the Board of Review decision must be included with the petition.

Michigan Tax Tribunal
PO Box 30232
Lansing MI 48909

Phone: 517-335-9760
Email: taxtrib@michigan.gov

Affirmation of Ownership and Occupancy to Remain Exempt by Reason of Poverty

This form is issued under the authority of Public Act 253 of 2020.

This form is to be used to affirm ownership, occupancy, and income status. MCL 211.7u(2) provides that, to be eligible for exemption under this section, a person shall, subject to subsection (6) and (8), annually affirm that the applicant owns and occupies, as a principal residence, the property for which an exemption is requested.

PART 1: OWNER INFORMATION — Enter information for the person owning and occupying the residence.			
Owner Name		Owner Telephone Number	
Mailing Address	City	State	ZIP Code
PART 2: LEGAL DESIGNEE INFORMATION (Complete if applicable.)			
Legal Designee Name		Daytime Telephone Number	
Mailing Address	City	State	ZIP Code
PART 3: HOMESTEAD PROPERTY INFORMATION — Enter information for property in which the exemption is being claimed.			
City or Township (check the appropriate box and enter name) <input type="checkbox"/> City <input type="checkbox"/> Township <input type="checkbox"/> Village		County	
Name of Local School District			
Parcel Identification Number		Year(s) Exemption Previously Granted by Board of Review	
Homestead Property Address	City	State	ZIP Code
PART 4: AFFIRMATION OF OWNERSHIP, OCCUPANCY, AND INCOME STATUS (Check all boxes that apply.)			
<input type="checkbox"/> I own the property in which the exemption is being claimed.			
<input type="checkbox"/> The property in which the exemption is being claimed is used as my homestead. Homestead is generally defined as any dwelling with its land and buildings where a family makes its home.			
<input type="checkbox"/> After establishing initial eligibility for the exemption, my income and asset status has remained unchanged and/or I receive a fixed income solely from public assistance that is not subject to significant annual increases beyond the rate of inflation, such as federal Supplemental Security Income or Social Security disability or retirement benefits.			
PART 5: CERTIFICATION			
I hereby certify to the best of my knowledge that the information provided on this form is true and I am eligible to receive an exemption from property taxes by reason of poverty pursuant to Michigan Compiled Law, Section 211.7u.			
Owner or Legal Designee Name (print)		Signature of Owner or Legal Designee	Date
Designee must attach a letter of authority.			
LOCAL GOVERNMENT USE ONLY (DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied (Attach appeal instructions and provide to owner.)		Tax Year(s) exemption will be posted to tax roll	
CERTIFICATION — I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this form is complete and accurate.			
Assessor Signature		Date Certified by Assessor	