

**2025 POVERTY EXEMPTION
POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR CITY OF WHITEHALL**

The following **policy and guidelines**, adopted by the City Council, shall be followed by the City of Whitehall Board of Review when considering **poverty exemptions** according to P.A. 390 of 1994, section 211.7u of the Michigan Compiled Laws (MCL).

Application Guidelines: To be eligible for a Poverty Exemption in the City of Whitehall;

1. The primary applicant must file form 5737 Application for Poverty Exemption and must also file form 5739 Affirmation of Ownership and Occupancy to Remain Exempt by Reason of Poverty.
2. The primary applicant must own and occupy the property as their principal residence and shall satisfy all requirements of P.A. 390 of 1994 (Principal Residential Exemptions) and State Tax Commission Bulletin No. 5 of 1995. Property placed in a trust does not qualify as owned for poverty exemption purposes. All owners and occupants are required to sign Waivers of Confidentiality, Authorizations to Inspect the Property and permission to interview the applicants and verify the application.
3. All owners and occupants must include signed Federal and State Income Tax Returns for the most recent filing period, including supporting schedules, if the applicant is required to file an income tax return. If the owner/occupants did not file Federal or State Tax Return, Michigan Department of Treasury Form 4988 must be filed.
4. Income and asset information is required for all owners and occupants of the property. Potential income and asset sources are (non-inclusive):

Income from all sources	Interest and dividends
Salaries & wages before deductions	Pensions
Net receipts from self-employment	Supplemental Security Income
Veteran payments	Net rental income
Royalties	Scholarships & grants
Unemployment compensation	Insurance
Workers' compensation	Retirement accounts
Alimony	Child support
Military family allotments	IRA/Keogh annuities
General assistance	New or reverse mortgage
Social Security	Stocks & bonds
Cash	Investments
Checking & savings accounts	Gifts
Money market accounts	Deferred compensation
Assets in trust accounts	Other real estate owned

5. Applicants must meet the Income Test and Asset Test to be eligible to apply to the Board of Review for an exemption of the property tax on their principal residence. Applications will be reviewed by the Board of Review in making a determination to grant or deny an exemption.

Income Test

Eligible applicants will not exceed the income levels listed below.

1. Total Annual Household Income shall not exceed the following amount applicable to the number of persons living in the household:

Number of Persons	Poverty Guidelines
1 (owner)	\$15,060
2	\$20,440
3	\$25,820
4	\$31,200
5	\$36,580
6	\$41,960
7	\$47,340
8	\$52,720
Each additional Person, add	\$5,380

2. Total Annual Household Income shall be based on Federal Poverty Income Guidelines and will be adjusted annually to agree to the federally established amount.

Asset Test

Eligible applicants will have total assets at or below the asset limit listed below for the claimant and household.

1. Meet asset levels of the following:
 - a) Liquid assets may not exceed \$2,500
 - b) Transportation - 1 per income provider
 - c) Recreational type vehicles - none
 - d) Total assets cannot exceed \$10,000 excluding your homestead

Evaluation Procedures

1. The Board of Review shall follow the above policy and guidelines when making poverty exemption decisions. The same standards shall apply to each claimant for the assessment year.
2. The applicant should be prepared to answer questions regarding their financial affairs, health, status of people living in the household, and any other question relevant to the exemption request.
3. All information is subject to verification. The verification process can be used to determine future ineligibility.

4. The Board of Review must agree as to the disposition of the poverty claim for the exemption to be granted.