Town of Stow

380 Great Road, Stow, MA 01775
Assessors: (978) 897-4597
COA: (978) 897-1880

Fiscal Year 2023 **PROPERTY TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM**

GOAL OF PROGRAM:

To offer Stow senior citizens and veterans a program to provide services to the town in exchange for a reduction in their tax bills. The work program ("fiscal year session") runs from October 1st, **2021** until September 30th, **2022**. All applications received will be reviewed and approved based on their skills that best match the needs of the Town Departments. The applicants will no longer be selected on a "first come first serve" basis. Not all participants will be chosen for positions within the Town. Interested participants must apply through the Assessors' Office.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- Seniors must be over 60 years of age and a resident of Stow. Veterans must have been honorably discharged (proof required). Proxy workers must be over 18 years of age. Taxpayers may receive abatements under the work-off program in addition to any property tax exemptions they may be eligible for under other statutes.
- The rate of pay cannot exceed the State minimum wage, which is currently **$13.50** per hour for calendar year 2021 and **$14.25** for calendar year 2022.
- The maximum yearly benefit per household is **$1,500** (which is approximately 105 to 111 hours, depending on the months worked.)
- Income limits for seniors (from **2020** tax return) are:
  One Person Household: Not to exceed **$84,550**
  Two Person Household: Not to exceed **$96,650**
  Income limits for veterans are not applicable.
- Skill Requirements: Must have skills that match the needs of the Town.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

- Application for acceptance in the program **must** be filed yearly. Forms are available from the Assessors' Office at 380 Great Road, their website (www.Stow-MA.gov/board-assessors) and from the Council on Aging (COA) at 509 Great Road.
- Application forms and documents must be returned to the Assessors' Office which will process the applications and will assist in filling them out if needed.

WORK PROCEDURE:

- Program Participants must keep a record of the dates and hours worked on a daily or monthly time sheet. Department Heads must validate dates and hours, sign the time sheet, and submit it to the Assessors' Office as soon as possible at the end of each month.
- Excess hours worked will be unpaid and cannot be carried forward to a future fiscal year session.

TREATMENT OF TAX REDUCTION:

- Dept. of Revenue: The amount of the property tax reduction the taxpayer receives under this statute is not considered income for the purpose of state income tax withholding, unemployment compensation or workmen's compensation. The tax reduction is, however, considered income for the purposes of federal income tax.
- Federal (IRS): Medicare (1.45%) and OBRA (7.50%) will be deducted from the gross amount earned. Upon termination from the program, a participant may elect to close their OBRA account.
- The net amount will be applied to the actual tax bill for fiscal year **2023**, divided equally between the February and May quarters with an additional commensurate CPA surcharge credit.

PARTICIPANT STATUS:

Taxpayers performing services in return for property tax reductions are employees for the purposes of municipal tort liability. Stow will therefore be liable for damages or injuries to third parties and for indemnification of the program participants to the same extent as they are in the case of regular municipal employees.