

## LEGISLATIVE BILL 145

Approved by the Governor March 19, 2007

Introduced by McDonald, 41; Pirsch, 4

FOR AN ACT relating to homestead exemptions; to amend section 77-3510, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and sections 77-3513 and 77-3514, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006; to provide a duty for the Tax Commissioner; to require notices to claimants as prescribed; and to repeal the original sections.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Section 77-3510, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-3510 On or before February 1 of each year, the Tax Commissioner shall prescribe forms to be used by all claimants for homestead exemption or for transfer of homestead exemption. Such forms shall contain provisions for the showing of all information which the Tax Commissioner may deem necessary to (1) enable the county officials and the Tax Commissioner to determine whether each claim for exemption under sections 77-3507 to 77-3509 should be allowed and (2) enable the county assessor to determine whether each claim for transfer of homestead exemption pursuant to section 77-3509.01 should be allowed. It shall be the duty of the county assessor of each county in this state to furnish such forms, upon request, to each person desiring to make application for homestead exemption or for transfer of homestead exemption. The forms so prescribed shall be used uniformly throughout the state, and no application for exemption or for transfer of homestead exemption shall be allowed unless the applicant uses the prescribed form in making an application. The forms shall require the attachment of an income statement as prescribed by the Tax Commissioner fully accounting for all household income. The Tax Commissioner shall provide to each county assessor printed claim forms and address lists of applicants from the prior year. The application and information contained on any attachments to the application shall be confidential and available to tax officials only.

Sec. 2. Section 77-3513, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, is amended to read:

77-3513 (1) Except as required by section 77-3514, if an owner is granted a homestead exemption as provided in section 77-3507 or 77-3509 or subdivision (1)(b)(ii) or (iii) of section 77-3508, no reapplication need be filed for succeeding years, in which case the county assessor and Tax Commissioner shall determine whether the claimant qualifies for the homestead exemption in such succeeding years as otherwise provided in sections 77-3501 to 77-3529 as though a claim were made.

(2) It shall be the duty of each claimant who wants the homestead exemption provided in subdivision (1)(b)(i) of section 77-3508 to file an application therefor with the county assessor on or before June 30 of each year. Failure to do so shall constitute a waiver of the exemption for such year, except that the county board of the county in which the homestead is located may, by majority vote, extend the deadline to on or before July 20 of each year. An extension shall not be granted to an applicant who received an extension in the immediately preceding year. The county assessor shall mail a notice on or before April 1 to claimants who are the owners of a homestead which was granted an exemption under subdivision (1)(b)(i) of section 77-3508 in the preceding year unless the claimant has already filed the application for the current year or the county assessor has reason to believe there has been a change of circumstances so that the claimant no longer qualifies. The notice shall include the claimant's name, the application deadlines for the current year, a list of documents that must be filed with the application, and the county assessor's office address and telephone number.

Sec. 3. Section 77-3514, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, is amended to read:

77-3514 A claimant who is the owner of a homestead which has been granted an exemption under sections 77-3507 to 77-3509, except subdivision (1)(b)(i) of section 77-3508, shall certify to the county assessor on or before June 30 of each year that a change in the homestead exemption status has occurred or that no change in the homestead exemption status has occurred. The county board of the county in which the homestead is located may, by majority vote, extend the deadline to on or before July 20 of each year. An extension shall not be granted to an applicant who received an extension in the immediately preceding year. The county assessor shall mail a notice on or before April 1 to claimants who are the owners of a homestead which has been

granted an exemption under sections 77-3507 to 77-3509, except subdivision (1) (b) (i) of section 77-3508, in the preceding year unless the claimant has already filed the certification for the current year or the county assessor has reason to believe there has been a change of circumstances so that the claimant no longer qualifies. The notice shall include the claimant's name, the certification deadlines for the current year, a list of documents that must be filed with the certification, and the county assessor's office address and telephone number. For purposes of this section, change in the homestead exemption status shall include any change in the name of the owner, ownership, residence, occupancy, marital status, veteran status, or rating by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or any other change that would affect the qualification for or type of exemption granted, except income checked by the Tax Commissioner under section 77-3517. The certificate shall require the attachment of an income statement as prescribed by the Tax Commissioner fully accounting for all household income. The certification and the information contained on any attachments to the certification shall be confidential and available to tax officials only. In addition, a claimant who is the owner of a homestead which has been granted an exemption under sections 77-3507 to 77-3509 may notify the county assessor by August 15 of each year of any change in the homestead exemption status occurring in the preceding portion of the calendar year as a result of a transfer of the homestead exemption pursuant to sections 77-3509.01 and 77-3509.02. If by his or her failure to give such notice any property owner permits the allowance of the homestead exemption for any year, or in the year of application in the case of transfers pursuant to sections 77-3509.01 and 77-3509.02, after the homestead exemption status of such property has changed, an amount equal to the amount of the taxes lawfully due but not paid by reason of such unlawful and improper allowance of homestead exemption, together with penalty and interest on such total sum as provided by statute on delinquent ad valorem taxes, shall be due and shall upon entry of the amount thereof on the books of the county treasurer be a lien on such property while unpaid. Such lien may be enforced in the manner provided for liens for other delinquent taxes. Any person who has permitted the improper and unlawful allowance of such homestead exemption on his or her property shall, as an additional penalty, also forfeit his or her right to a homestead exemption on any property in this state for the two succeeding years.

Sec. 4. Original section 77-3510, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and sections 77-3513 and 77-3514, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, are repealed.