

NEW OWNERS NEWSLETTER



2020 HAMPTON ST COLUMBIA, SC 29202 PH: 803-576-2640

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What Do I Need to Do as A New Homeowner?

You need to be sure to apply for Legal Residence if you own and occupy the residence.

This can not take place until your deed has been recorded at the ROD (Register of Deeds).

You may only obtain Legal Residence status on 1 (one) property at a time. Spouses are considered one and therefore cannot each claim individual homes for the exemption.

You must change your Driver's License to the property address,

register your vehicles with Richland County and change your voter registration precinct prior to applying for Legal Residence.

You may find the ONLINE Legal Residence Application on our webpage [here](#).

You need to be certain that the mailing address on file is correct, upon transfer of a recorded deed. Our office uses the Grantee Address listed on the Deed by the Attorney as the mailing address. It is the Homeowners responsibility to notify the

Assessor's Office of any mailing address changes. Failure to do so could result in undelivered notices or tax bills.

Changing an address on your driver's license with DMV will not warrant a change in our records. The DMV does not communicate those changes to us.

Please see our Legal Residence Newsletter link for FAQ's about requirements in obtaining Legal Residence.

www.richlandcountysc.gov

What Can I Expect As A New Homeowner?

You can expect to receive a notice in the mail with information about [applying online](#) for legal residence once your deed has been transferred into our system.

It takes approximately 6 weeks for a deed to be transferred into our system once it has been recorded at the ROD.

If your property obtained a new survey which results in a new plat it may take up to 3 additional months for us to update our records to reflect you as the new owner. A new plat requires more verification prior to transfer into our system.

If your property was the result of a parcel split which creates a new lot it will take up to 3 additional months to see the ownership change in our system.

Lot split transactions which transpire between Jan 1 and Dec 31st will not change in our system until the following tax year. December 31 is the control date for all changes. Taxes are paid in arrears and the property will remain as it was on December 31 for the following tax year.

For instance if you purchase a portion of a parcel in January, that tax bill will be mailed to the owner of record as of the previous December 31st. You will not receive a tax bill in your name until the following tax year.

For further explanation please contact our office directly

803-576-2640

AssessorOffice@richlandcountysc.gov



Chances are your taxes were not paid at your closing. If the tax bills have not been generated then they definitely were not paid by the attorney. You will need to verify with your closing attorney what took place.

PAY YOUR TAX BILL ON TIME REGARDLESS OF YOUR APPLICATION STATUS TO AVOID PENALTIES

Where Do I Obtain a Copy of My Deed?

Upon closing on your property, your closing attorney will record the deed and should have either had a recorded copy mailed to you or forwarded a copy to you. Once a deed is recorded the Register of Deeds mails the recorded copy to the address specified on the Deed by the attorney. We recommend you contact your closing attorney if you recently closed on your property to obtain the copy from them. Otherwise, you will need to go to the

Register of Deeds at the County Courthouse to obtain a copy of Deeds or Plats for a minimal fee.

The Assessor's Office does not house any deeds or plats on site.

Please contact ROD at:

1701 Main St Columbia SC

803-576-1910

Or [Here](#)

Were my taxes paid at closing?

Most often NO is the answer. Unless there is a tax bill already generated, but you would be wise to confirm with your closing attorney if the tax bill will be paid by them after your closing. For all closings that take place prior to a tax bill generation, which usually takes place in September each year, your tax bill was NOT paid at the closing. You were given a prorated consideration in closing costs based on the prior years tax amount. This was not paid to

the Treasurer by the attorney on your behalf.

The Treasurer does not prorate tax bills nor will the Treasurer accept payment on an account that has no bill. A partial payment will not be accepted on an account that has a current balance on a bill. All bills must be paid in full unless prior arrangements were made through the Treasurer's office for a payment plan.

Please contact the Treasurer's Office to discuss payment plans:

[Richland County Treasurer](#)

PO BOX 192

Columbia SC 29202

803-576-2270

PLEASE SEND ALL PAYMENTS TO THE TREASURER'S OFFICE. (Pay Here)

The Assessor's Office cannot process payments of any kind.

When Will I Receive a Tax Bill?

Richland County Council and the Auditor's Office determine the millage rate in early fall. The tax bills are generated by the Auditor's Office and mailed in late October.

By SC Code of Law, the tax bills are due January 15th of each year.

Payable to the [Treasurer's Office](#).

Should the 15th fall on a weekend or Holiday, the due date will be the first business day following the weekend or Holiday.

Once you receive your tax bill you will want to check your ratio and be certain that you are receiving the correct tax ratio.

Owner Occupied property should show a 4% ratio, if it does not; you will need to make application for [Legal Residence ONLINE](#) with the Assessor's Office **immediately**.

It takes up to 6 weeks to process applications. During high volume times (November to February) it takes up to 12 weeks.



Why Did My Tax Bill Come in the Previous Owners Name?

SC Code of Laws states the Auditor's Office is required to mail the tax bill to the owner of record as of December 31st of the prior year. SC pays taxes in arrears.

The tax bill is the responsibility of the new owner. Should the tax bill go to the prior owner of record and it should go unpaid by the January 15th due date; a New Owner bill will be mailed in February. This is the time of year the Auditor's Office updates their records to reflect the Assessor's Office

data.

New Owner bills that go out in February will have 30 days to pay without penalties.

However, should you have an escrow with your Mortgage Company, they will most likely have already paid this bill and you will not receive a New Owner bill in February.

Please be diligent and ask your attorney specifics about the tax bill payment should you have a closing after Nov. 1



You must update your Driver's License to reflect your primary residence prior to applying for Legal Residence with our office.

Do I Qualify For Any Exemptions?

You may indeed qualify for exemptions.

1) Do you actually **own and occupy** your property and you are not receiving an exemption on any other property? Then you will most likely qualify for Legal Residence. ([See Legal Residence Newsletter](#))

2) Are you 66 or older and have lived in SC for at least one year? You may qualify for Homestead Exemption with the [Auditor's Office](#). Please contact the [Homestead Department](#) for more information. 803-576-2610 or 803-576-2611

3) Are you disabled Military, Fire & Rescue or Police Officer? Are you blind? Are you the Surviving Spouse of a previously exempt service

individual? You will need to contact [SCDOR](#) for information about your eligibility. 803-898-5700 This exemption will then be processed by the Assessor's Office after it has been granted by SCDOR.

[See our Newsletter about Legal Residence](#)

4) Do you have other medical or mental disabilities not related to question #3? You will need to contact the [Social Security Administration](#) for information about applying and what you will need to do in order to apply. 1-800-772-1213. This exemption will then need to be passed on to the Auditor's Office for processing.

What If My Mortgage is Escrowed?

All Mortgage Companies are required to notify the Auditor's Office of all liens they hold. The Auditor's Office then informs the Mortgage Company of the tax bill amount for each property they hold. Typically, Mortgage Companies pay tax bills by the end of December prior to the due date of January 15th. Should your Mortgage Company pay your tax bill at the nonresident 6% ratio, when they expected to pay the bill at a 4% special ratio, you will see a significant increase in your mortgage payment around March of the

following year.

Be sure to file legal residence application with the Assessor's Office should you actually live in the property. It is best to do this before the tax bills are mailed. If you purchased after the tax bill is mailed you will want to be diligent and apply for legal residence if the property did not have legal residence at the time of the closing.

Your closing attorney can answer this question for you. Should the property have legal residence at the time of the

closing you will not need to apply until the following tax year. You will benefit from the prior owners exemption status.

We cannot apply for legal residence online until your deed has been recorded with the Register of Deeds, the deed has been added to our system and your SC DL or SC ID has been obtained or changed to reflect the property address in which you are seeking application.

Your vehicles must be registered in Richland County and your voter registration must be updated.

([See Legal Residence Newsletter](#))

Why Is My Mortgage Increasing?

At the time of your closing, your attorney may have calculated your escrow payment based on the Legal Residence owner occupied special ratio of 4%. The 4% ratio also has an exemption of the school operations tax which makes up about 2/3 of the 6% tax bill. If you failed to apply for the legal residence with our office, your Mortgage Company could have paid your taxes at the 6% ratio. This ratio includes the school operations tax and is exorbitantly higher than the 4% ratio.

Your Mortgage Company will increase your mortgage payments to compensate for the unexpected shortage as well as the anticipated tax bill for the coming year.

Many homeowners have seen increases in

upwards of \$600 per month or more.

Please remember to apply for legal residence once your deed has been recorded at the Register of Deeds. Please allow about 2 weeks after closing to inquire about your deeds successful recorded date.

You will want to be sure to apply at the Assessor's Office as quickly as possible.

Some Mortgage Companies will use a 3rd party biller such as CORELOGIC. If the Mortgage Company paid at the 6% ratio, you will need to apply as quickly as possible..

Once application has been made with the Assessor's Office for Legal Residence and granted; if your Mortgage uses CORELOGIC it could take up to 3 months



for the refund to be received by your Mortgage Company from CORELOGIC.

It only takes about 3 weeks to process the change with the County. Once our office has granted Legal Residence, the Auditor's Office is then notified to make a change, the Auditor's Office then notifies the Treasurer's office to submit a refund to the entity that paid the tax bill.

**PLEASE MAINTAIN MAILING ADDRESSES WITH THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE
EACH TIME THERE IS A CHANGE.**

You may email your request along with a copy of your Driver's License to our office.

You must be an owner of the property or have Fiduciary Appointment.

Assessor.COA@RichlandCountySC.Gov

What if I purchased or own a Mobile Home?

You must first obtain the Mobile Home Title into your name at the DMV if you purchased from a prior owner. Bring the new title to the Assessor's office and register the Mobile Home in your name. You will also need to purchase a new decal at that time.

Decals cost \$5.00.

If you are an heir to an estate you must obtain ownership of the Mobile Home Title during the Probate process and prior to the close of Probate for the estate.

If you purchased a new Mobile Home from a Sales Company, you will want to bring the bill of sale to the Assessor's Office for registration. The Sales Company will not register the Mobile Home with our office. They only notify the DMV for you.

If you avoid registering your Mobile Home ownership with our offices, you may not receive the tax bill. If the taxes are not paid the home could be sold in the tax sale.

A deed **does not** transfer a Mobile Home unless the Mobile Home was previously detitled/retired with DMV.

(Mobile Home Newsletter—coming soon)

GIS & Mapping

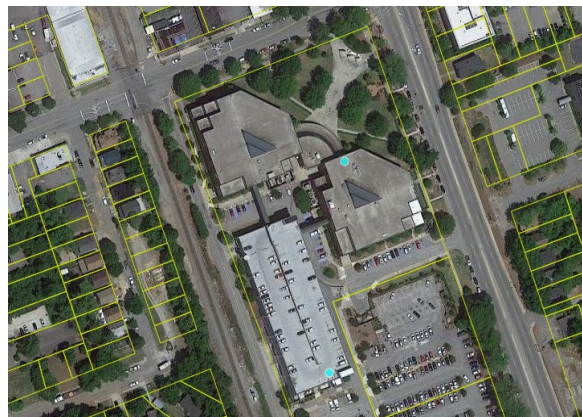
[Richland County GIS Interactive Map](#)

New Features include : ~ Comparative Sales Analysis ~

Enter the desired address of the property. It will appear on the left side. Click that property. The data for the property will populate on the right side of the screen.



Comparative Sales Analysis for a particular property is located on the icon of the house .



There are various other helpful options located on this page as well.

GIS home page can be found [here](#)

IMPORTANT APPLICATION DEADLINE DATES

January

- 15th - Apply for an Appeal (For Properties that did not receive a Property Tax Notice)
- 15th - Make application for the Active Duty Military Special Exemption
- 15th - Make application for the Homeowner's Association Application For Special Valuation
- 15th - Make application for the Special Assessment as Agricultural Use
- 30th - Make application for the ATI Exemptions
- 30th - Make application for the Builder Exemption

May

- 1st - Make application for the Multiple Lot Discount

June

- 30th - Last Day to request property to be Combined for current tax year

Quick Links:

Legal Residence

Assessor's Office
[Apply here](#)

Homestead Exemption

- must be 66 yrs old & have lived in SC for 1 year.
[Apply with the Auditor's Office](#)
803-576-2610

Disabled Veterans

- must have legal residence with the Assessor's Office
You will then apply with [SC DOR](#), 803-898-5700
SC DOR will determine the year in which the exemption is granted.

Other Disabilities

- blind, mental or physical disabilities
Contact [SS Administration](#)
1-800-772-1213
TTY- 1-800-325-0778

Pay My Bill

Send ALL Payments to [Richland County Treasurer](#) or [pay online](#)