



4 North Main Street • Knox, IN 46534 • [www.starkecounty.com](http://www.starkecounty.com)  
574.772.5627 • 800.359.5627 • fax 574.772.5912



Welcome to Starke County Indiana, where we create opportunities and deliver on promises.

Thank you for your interest in the Property Tax Abatement Program for the County of Starke and its incorporated city and towns.

Each Unit of Government (County of Starke, City of Knox, Town of North Judson, and Town of Hamlet) may offer your company real property and personal property tax abatement (also known as property tax phase-in) as an incentive to new and expanding businesses.

The following document is intended to assist you with your request for tax abatement as well as help each Unit of Government in evaluating your request. All requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the procedures and criteria outlined in the document.

If you have any questions during the process, please contact Charles W. Weaver, Executive Director, Starke County Economic Development Foundation, at 574-772-5627.

The Starke County Economic Development Foundation is committed to your success and sensitive to your needs and schedules.

Very truly yours,

William J. Sonnemaker  
President

Charles W. Weaver, J.D.  
Executive Director

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## **Purpose**

- Tax abatement is a phasing-in of real and personal property taxes on projects that increase the tax base and the employment base of a community.
- All units of government in Starke County may offer real and personal property tax abatement as an incentive to new and expanding businesses.
- Each tax abatement request will be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the procedures and criteria outlined in this document.

## **Tax Abatement Overview**

- Property tax abatement in Indiana is authorized under Indiana Code 6-1.1-12.1 in the form of deductions from assessed valuation. Land does not qualify for abatement. Only the increase in assessed value that occurs as a result of the investment is eligible for abatement. It is not permissible to abate property that is already taxed in Indiana.
- Property tax abatement is controlled by the Unit of Government in which the project is located. If the project is located within the corporate boundaries of the City of Knox, the Town of North Judson, or the Town of Hamlet, the Common Council or Town Council of each unit has jurisdiction over the application. If the project is located outside those corporate boundaries, the County of Starke, through its County Council, has jurisdiction over the application.
- The period of tax phase-in may be any number of years between one and ten. An applicant may request an abatement period in their request. Each Unit of Government ultimately determines the period of time for which abatement is granted.
- The units of government in Starke County may offer tax abatement for projects that are industrial or certain commercial projects located within a designated Economic Revitalization Area (ERA). Each Unit of Government determines what areas are ERA within their jurisdiction.
- Projects seeking tax abatement must conform to any applicable ordinances, regulations and design standards currently in place for each Unit of Government in which the project will occur.
- To be eligible, requests for real property tax abatement consideration must be filed and approved before the issuance of an improvement location permit or before any filings toward a building permit. Any applicable fees must accompany the request. Requests for personal property tax abatement should be filed with

the real property request, although there is a procedure by which late filings of personal property tax abatement requests may be considered.

- The following types of projects are NOT eligible for tax abatement per Indiana Code:
  - Private or commercial golf course
  - Country club
  - Massage parlor
  - Tennis club
  - Skating facility (including roller skating, skateboarding or ice skating)
  - Racquet sport facility (including any handball or racquetball court)
  - Hot tub facility
  - Suntan facility
  - Racetrack
  - Package Liquor Store that holds a liquor dealer's permit under IC 7.1-3-10 or any other entity required to operate under a license issued under IC 7.1 et al.
  - Any facility the primary purpose of which is retail food and beverage service, automobile sales or service or other retail
  - Residential, except for certain exceptions
- In the event the successful applicant awarded a tax abatement defaults on the signed agreement, the applicant will be notified by mail that their tax abatement is in default. The letter will include a date, time and place of a public hearing before the Council of the appropriate Unit of Government to discuss the removal of the abatement. The purpose of the hearing will be to allow the tax abatement recipient to explain the reason for the default. After the hearing the respective Council will have the option of removing the deduction, removing the deduction and requiring payment of taxes abated, or invoking any other action the Council deems appropriate.

### **Industrial / Commercial Tax Abatement**

- To be eligible for industrial / commercial tax abatement, the project must be located within a designated Economic Revitalization Area (ERA). Tax abatement within a TIF District will require special consideration by the Redevelopment Commission.
- Tax abatement may be granted for a maximum of ten (10) years to all commercial and industrial companies for new construction, expansions and personal property as long as the eligibility criteria outlined in this document are met.

- The respective Unit of Government's Council may also, at their discretion, use the employee wage and benefits levels when considering the approval of tax abatement for commercial and industrial companies.

### **Speculative Buildings Tax Abatement**

- To be eligible for industrial / commercial tax abatement, the project must be located within a designated Economic Revitalization Area (ERA). Tax abatement within a TIF District will require special consideration by the Redevelopment Commission.
- Tax abatement may be granted for a maximum of ten (10) years to all commercial and industrial companies for new construction, expansions and personal property as long as the eligibility criteria outlined in this document are met.
- Minimal design standards as defined by the respective Unit of Government must be met in order for a speculative building to qualify for tax abatement by that Unit of Government.

### **Procedure for Tax Abatement**

- **STEP 1:** Application for consideration of tax abatement
  - To begin the process the Statement of Benefits Form(s) ([SB-1/Real Property](#) for real property and [SB-1/PP](#) for personal property) must be correctly completed and submitted along with all required attachments. **Applications received after the issuance of an improvement location permit, or after any filings toward a building permit, will not be processed, nor will requests received after installation of equipment.**
  - **For current application fees, contact:**

Mr. Charles W. Weaver, Executive Director  
Starke County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.  
4 North Main Street  
Knox, IN 46534  
Phone: 574-772-5627  
Fax: 574-772-5912  
Email: [execdir@scedf.biz](mailto:execdir@scedf.biz)
  - Completed application forms and applicable fees should be submitted to the respective Unit of Government:

Starke County Auditor

53 E. Mound Street  
Knox, IN 46534  
Phone: 574-772-9105

City of Knox  
Attn: Clerk-Treasurer  
101 W. Washington Street  
Knox, IN 46534  
Phone: 574-772-3032

Town of North Judson  
Attn: Clerk-Treasurer  
204 Keller Avenue  
North Judson, IN 46366  
Phone: 574-896-3340

Town of Hamlet  
Attn: Clerk-Treasurer  
P.O. Box 181  
Hamlet, IN 46532  
Phone: 574-867-3541

- Please contact the appropriate Unit of Government to schedule your company's appearance on the Council's agenda.
- **STEP 2:** Consideration by the Respective Unit of Government's Council
  - In the event the petitioning project is not in a designated Economic Revitalization Area (ERA), the respective Unit of Government's Council must approve an application to designate the property as an Economic Revitalization Area (ERA) to enable the property to be eligible for tax abatement.
  - At the appropriate Unit of Government's Council meeting at which the forms and fees are submitted, the applicant will make a presentation in support of the requested tax abatement.
  - If the request for tax abatement is approved, the respective Council will adopt its resolution which will include, but not be limited to, the length of the abatement for real property and personal property and the inclusion of a claw-back provision. The claw-back provision obligates the applicant to repay to the taxing authorities all real and personal property taxes abated should the applicant cease or severely limit its business within the length of the granted abatement or should the Unit of Government for any reason terminate the granted tax abatement.

- **STEP 3:** Application to the County Auditor and Units of Government

- The property owner is responsible for filing the Statement of Benefits Form(s) ([SB-1/Real Property](#) and [SB-1/PP](#)) and making application to the Starke County Auditor and the Clerk-Treasurer of the respective Unit of Government for a deduction from taxes.

Starke County Auditor  
53 E. Mound Street  
Knox, IN 46534  
Phone: 574-772-9105

City of Knox  
Attn: Clerk-Treasurer  
101 W. Washington Street  
Knox, IN 46534  
Phone: 574-772-3032

Town of North Judson  
Attn: Clerk-Treasurer  
204 Keller Avenue  
North Judson, IN 46366  
Phone: 574-896-3340

Town of Hamlet  
Attn: Clerk-Treasurer  
P.O. Box 181  
Hamlet, IN 46532  
Phone: 574-867-3541

- **STEP 4:** Continued Reporting

- Annual Performance Reports must be submitted to the County Auditor, to the County and Township Assessor, and to either the Clerk-Treasurer of a City or Town (if property located within city or town), or with the County Auditor if property is situated outside corporate limits of a city or town.
- Indiana Code 6-1.1-12.1 provides specific methods for implementing and administering tax abatements and stringent timelines for filing documentation with the Starke County Auditor. **Failure to file the documents on time will result in no deduction.**
- The forms to be filed annually with the Starke County Auditor, regardless of the location of the property, are:
  - Form [SB-1/Real Property](#) on or before **May 10** of each year.

- Form [322/RE](#) on or before **May 10** of each year.
- Form [CF-1/Real Property](#) on or before **May 15** of each year.
- The forms to be filed annually with the Starke County Assessor, regardless of the location of the property, are:
  - Form [SB-1/PP](#) must be filed between **March 1** and **May 15**.
  - Form [103 ERA](#) shall be filed with Form [CF-1/PP](#) between **March 1** and **May 15**.
- The following forms will be filed annually with the Clerk-Treasurer of the City of Knox or the Towns of North Judson or Hamlet if the property is located in one of those municipalities or filed annually with the Starke County Auditor if the property is located outside the corporate limits of one of the municipalities.
  - Form [CF-1/Real Property](#) and Form [CF-1/PP](#) shall be filed on or before **May 15** each year.
  - Form [103 ERA](#) to which shall be attached Form [CF-1/PP](#) shall be filed between **March 1** and **May 15** each year.



