

# Ministry of Finance

## Tax Information Sheet



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Information Sheet

[www.fin.gov.bc.ca/rev.htm](http://www.fin.gov.bc.ca/rev.htm)

## Home Owner Grant

### Low-Income Grant Supplement Program

*Home Owner Grant Act*

#### What is the Low-Income Grant Supplement?

The low-income grant supplement is a grant provided to eligible low-income individuals with homes assessed above \$1,050,000. Eligible individuals need to apply by completing an *Application for Home Owner Grant Low-Income Supplement* form ([FIN 65](#)) and submitting it to the Home Owner Grant Administration, Ministry of Finance. If applicants qualify, they will receive a cheque for the low-income grant supplement to a maximum of \$845.

#### Who Qualifies for the Low-Income Grant Supplement?

Eligible low-income seniors, certain veterans and certain home owners or occupants with disabilities (or with a spouse or relative with a disability) who would otherwise qualify for the additional home owner grant except that their home is assessed above \$1,050,000.

You need to meet the following qualifications to be eligible:

- the home is your principal residence,
- you have a low income (please see the section below, What is Low-Income?),
- you are:
  - 65 or older, or the deceased owner or occupant (which includes an eligible occupant of an eligible apartment, housing unit, land cooperative or multi-dwelling leased parcel) who would have been 65 or older during the calendar year,
  - a veteran, or a veteran's spouse or widow/widower receiving an allowance under the *War Veterans Allowance Act* (Canada) or the *Civilian War-Related Benefits Act*, or
  - a person with disabilities or with a spouse or relative with disabilities (please see the section below, Who Qualifies as a Person with Disabilities?),

- you are the registered owner or eligible occupant of the home on which the supplement is being claimed, or you are the spouse or child, grandchild, father, mother, brother or sister of a deceased owner or occupant who passed away in the current year and you occupied the home at the time of the owner or occupant's death,
- the deceased owner or occupant would have qualified for the grant at the time of death, and
- you are a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant and ordinarily reside in British Columbia.

### **What is Low-Income?**

Low-income means having an Adjusted Net Income of \$30,000 or less in the preceding year. For the 2009 property tax year, use income information from your 2008 income tax return.

Your Adjusted Net Income includes your net income, plus the net income of your shared-income partner if married or living in a marriage-like relationship, less specified deductions for dependent children, age and/or disability. To determine your Adjusted Net Income, please see the Calculate Deductions section on the application form.

### **What is a Shared-Income Partner?**

A shared-income partner is the person you are married to or living together with in a marriage-like relationship (including same-gender relationships) for at least two years before the date of your application, and whom is your spouse at some time during the relevant tax year. This does not include spouses who are separated and living apart and who have a written agreement or court order recognizing the separation.

If your current spouse was not your spouse during the relevant tax year, his or her income is not included in your Adjusted Net Income calculation.

### **What is a Dependent Child?**

A dependent child is an individual who, during the tax year for which you are applying,

- is 19 years old or younger,
- lives with you or your shared-income partner (or both of you) for at least 50% of the time, and
- relies on you or your shared-income partner (or both of you) for the necessities of life for at least 50% of the time.

**Please note:** 50% of the time includes the time up to the date you make the application.

## Who Qualifies as a Person with Disabilities?

A person with disabilities is a person who is receiving disability assistance, hardship assistance or a supplement under the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*. You must provide the required *Consent for Release of Information* form (**FIN 81**) completed and signed by both you and your Ministry of Housing and Social Development representative. Only a registered owner or eligible occupant (which includes an eligible occupant of an eligible apartment, housing unit, land cooperative or multi-dwelling leased parcel) may qualify under this category.

Also included is a person with disabilities who does not receive disability assistance under the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*, **or** is the spouse or relative of a person with disabilities and the disabled person resides with you. If this situation applies to you, you must submit a *Certificate of Physician and Property Owner* (**Form B**) completed and signed by both you and your physician. Attach the form to your application the first year that you are claiming the low-income grant supplement. This medical form must indicate that:

- the disability is permanent, there is no remedial therapy available that would significantly reduce the disability and the disability requires extensive physical assistance in the form of physical care in the home, costing more than \$150 per month,
- structural modifications costing more than \$2,000 have been made to your home in order to manage daily functioning by the person with a disability,
- you purchased your home with structural modifications completed by a previous owner, where the modifications meet the disability needs of the person with a disability and have a value exceeding \$2,000, or
- you made changes to the design specifications of your newly constructed principal residence that meet the disability needs of the person with a disability, and the value of the changes to the structural features of the home exceed \$2,000.

## What Qualifies as a Disability Deduction?

Claim a disability deduction on Line 9 of the application form for each person for whom you or your spouse claimed the disability tax credit on line 316 in Schedule 1 of your federal income tax return.

## The Amount of the Low-Income Grant Supplement

If your Adjusted Net Income does not exceed \$28,000, you will receive up to \$845. If your Adjusted Net Income exceeds \$28,000 but does not exceed \$30,000, you will receive up to half of the full supplement amount of \$845 (\$422.50).

**Please note:** If you are eligible for a partial home owner grant, you must apply in the usual manner through your municipality or the Surveyor of Taxes office (for rural properties), and you must apply separately for the partial low-income grant supplement.

## How to Apply

You need to complete an *Application for Home Owner Grant Low-Income Supplement* form ([FIN 65](#)). Please be sure to sign and date the application and, if applicable, have your shared-income partner sign and date the form.

You need to include the following documentation with your application for both you and your shared-income partner, if applicable.

- A copy of your *Certificate of Title* document if you are a new owner and your name is not appearing on the property tax notice.
- A copy of your Notice(s) of Assessment/Reassessment or income tax returns if you have not yet received your notice(s) from Canada Revenue Agency.
- Schedules from your income tax return(s) if you are claiming deductions for any family member and/or disability.

If you or your shared-income partner are a person with disabilities, you need to include a completed *Certificate of Physician and Property Owner* ([Form B](#)) with your application.

Mail your application to:

Home Owner Grant Administration  
PO Box 9991 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9R7

You can also deliver your application to the nearest [Service BC Centre](#) and request that it be forwarded to Home Owner Grant Administration.

## Property Tax Deferment Program

If you are deferring your taxes under the Property Tax Deferment Program, you may also apply for the low-income grant supplement.

A new Financial Hardship Property Tax Deferment Program is available for the 2009 and 2010 tax years. For program details and qualifications, please see the [Information Sheet](#), *Financial Hardship Property Tax Deferment Program*.

## **Deadline for Submitting Your Application**

Your low-income grant supplement application and supporting documentation must be received by the Home Owner Grant Administration or by a [Service BC Centre](#) by **December 31, 2009**.

You may also apply for a low-income grant supplement for the previous year. You do not need to provide a written reason why you are applying retroactively for a low-income grant supplement.

**Please note:** You should not anticipate receiving your grant before your property taxes are due. **To avoid penalties, you must pay your property taxes in full by the due date unless you are deferring taxes under the Property Tax Deferment Program.**

## **Further Information**

If you have any questions, please call us at 250 356-8904 in Victoria, or toll-free from anywhere in British Columbia at 1 888 355-2700, or e-mail your questions to [hogadmin@gov.bc.ca](mailto:hogadmin@gov.bc.ca)

You can also find information on our website at [www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Property\\_Taxes/Home\\_Owner\\_Grant/hog.htm](http://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Property_Taxes/Home_Owner_Grant/hog.htm)

The information in this information sheet is for your convenience and guidance and is not a replacement for the legislation. The *Home Owner Grant Act* and Regulations are on our website at [www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Property\\_Taxes/Home\\_Owner\\_Grant/legislation.htm](http://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Property_Taxes/Home_Owner_Grant/legislation.htm)