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Politics

## **N.J. Homestead property tax relief not coming this year, treasury says**

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Taxpayers will likely receive Homestead property tax credits on their February and May tax bills.



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By [Samantha Marcus | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

New Jersey homeowners will not receive Homestead property tax credits on their Nov. 1 real estate tax bills, a state treasury official said Wednesday.

Funding for the property tax relief program is tied to the proposed budget for the abbreviated fiscal year beginning Oct. 1, and there won't be adequate time to process the credits to appear on November tax bills, Catherine Brennan, deputy state Treasurer, told the Assembly Budget Committee.

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Eligible homeowners likely will receive two installments of the credit in 2021, the first one on their February tax bills and the second installment in May, said Treasury spokeswoman Jennifer Sciortino.

Gov. [Phil Murphy](#)'s proposed \$32.4 billion spending plan includes [\\$275 million](#) for the property tax relief program, which lowers tax bills for about 580,000 seniors, disabled or low-income homeowners.

Property taxpayers already missed out on their May 1 credit this year after Murphy [froze](#) and then ultimately cut \$142 million in Homestead funding as tax collections cratered in response to the coronavirus and the virtual shutdown of the state earlier this year.



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Funding for the program was then left out of the \$7.7 billion stopgap budget spanning July 1 to Sept. 30 as state officials scrambled to respond to falling revenues.

But Murphy's proposed \$32.4 billion spending plan for the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1 restores funding to the tax relief program. Homeowners, however, won't receive an extra credit to make up for the canceled installment in May. The two credits scheduled to be paid out in 2021 are for property taxes paid in year 2017 and are based on homeowners' 2006 property tax bills.

"We are committed to making Homestead Benefit recipients whole, however, COVID-19 had an unprecedented impact on state finances, forcing us to make some tough decisions," Sciortino said last month.

"Thankfully, the governor's proposed budget restores funding for the program, albeit on a new schedule that will push out subsequent payments to a later date," she said.

Senior and disabled homeowners with income below \$150,000 average receive \$534 benefits and other eligible homeowners with less than \$75,000 receive an average of \$410, according to data in the governor's February budget proposal.



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