

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS*

Ad Valorem Property Tax	Taxes imposed on the basis of the property's value.
Assessed Value	The taxable value of a property against which the tax rate is applied.
Assessee	The person to whom the property is being assessed.
Assessment Appeal	The assessee may file an appeal for reduction of the assessed value on the current local roll during the regular filing period for that year, between July 2 and November 30 with the Clerk of the Board. For supplemental or escape assessments, appeals must be filed within 60 days of the mailing of the tax bill or receipt of the notice, whichever is earlier.
Assessment Appeals Board	The Board of Supervisors, sitting as the Assessment Appeals Board operating under state law, to review and adjust assessments upon request of a taxpayer or his or her agent. (See "assessment appeal")
Assessment Number	A number used to identify assessed property. Synonymous with "APN" (Assessor's Parcel Number) when referring to the fee parcel. It is also the number given to identify improvements on leased lands, possessory interest, manufactured housing, etc. NOTE: An Assessor's parcel may have more than one assessment number tied to it
Assessment Roll	The official list of all property within the county assessed by the Assessor.
Assessment Roll Year	The year following the annual lien date and the regular assessment of property beginning on July 1.
Assessment Review	Requests by property owners for Assessor's staff to review the assessment of their property to determine if the assessed value should be changed.
Assessor's Map	Also known as an Assessor's Parcel Map; these show details of Assessor's parcels in a graphic format. They include such information as Assessor's Parcel Numbers, property bearings and dimensions, acreage, roads, and other information to assist the appraisal process. Not to be confused with a (recorded) parcel map which subdivides property.
Assessor's Parcel	This is the fee parcel for assessment purposes. These parcels are shown in detail on Assessor's maps and each parcel is denoted by a specific APN. Assessor's parcels are created based on recorded documents and maps.
Assessor's Parcel Number (APN)	Represents a specific configuration of property in a specific geographic location of the county. This identifies the "Fee Parcel" for assessment purposes. These are the numbers reflected on Assessor's maps and usually designated as a ten digit number. Example 000-000-000. The grouping indicates Book-Page-Parcel.
Base Year (Value)	The 1975-76 regular roll value serves as the original base value. Thereafter, changes to the assessment on real property value, or a portion thereof, caused by new construction or changes in ownership create the base year value used in establishing the full cash value of such real property.

*Definition of terms are provided to simplify assessment terminology, but does not replace legal definitions.

Basic Aid	“Basic aid” school districts rely principally on locally derived property tax revenues to fund school operations, rather than on Statewide reallocation formulas based on average daily attendance and other factors. School districts become “basic aid” when the projected level of revenues provided by local property taxes exceeds the state formula.
Business Personal Property	Business personal property is assessable, and includes computers, supplies, office furniture and equipment, tooling, machinery and equipment. Most business inventory is exempt. (See personal property).
Change in Ownership	When a transfer of ownership in Real Property occurs, the Assessor determines if a reappraisal is required under state law. If required, the reappraised value becomes the new base value of the property transferred, and a supplemental assessment is enrolled.
CPI	Consumer Price Index as determined annually by the California Bureau of Labor Statistics.
Escaped Assessments	When property that should have been assessed in a prior year is belatedly discovered and assessed, it is referred to as an “escape assessment” because it is an assessment that levied outside the normal assessment period for the lien date(s) in question.
Exclusions from Reappraisal	Some changes in ownership may be excluded from reappraisal if a timely claim is filed with the Assessor’s Office that meets the qualifications. Examples include the transfer of real property between parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren or senior citizens over age 55 who replaces their principal residence.
Exemption	Allowance of a deduction from the taxable assessed value of the property as prescribed by law.
Exemptions: Homeowners	People who own and occupy a dwelling on the lien date as their principal place of residence are eligible to receive an exemption of up to \$7,000 of the dwelling’s taxable value. The tax dollars reduced by the (HOX) homeowner’s exemption are reimbursed to the County by the State of California.
Exemptions: Other	Charitable, hospital, religious or scientific organizations, colleges, cemeteries, museums, and disabled Veterans (for 100%, service-connected disabled Veterans) are eligible for exemption.
Factored Base Year Value	A property’s base value is adjusted each year by the change in the California Consumer Price Index (CPI), not to exceed 2%. The factored base value is the upper limit of taxable value each year.
Fiscal Year	The period beginning July 1 and ending June 30.
Fixture	An improvement to real property whose purpose directly applies to or augments the process or function of a trade, industry or profession.
Full Cash Value (FCV)	The amount of cash or its equivalent value which property would bring if exposed for sale in the open market and as further defined in Revenue and Taxation Code 110.1.
Improvements	Buildings or structures generally attached to the land. Improvements may also include certain business fixtures.
Legal Description	The geographical identity of a specific parcel of land which is acceptable in a court of law.

Lien	The amount owed and created by the assessment of the property, or the amount levied against property by a taxing agency or revenue district.
Lien Date	The time when taxes for any fiscal year become a lien on property; and the time as of which property is valued for tax purposes. The lien date for California property is 12:01 a.m. on January preceding the fiscal year for which the taxes are collected. Revenue & Taxation Code Vol. 2 Section 2195.
Mobilehomes	On July, 1980, the Department of Motor Vehicles transferred all mobilehome licensing and registration to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The law required that mobilehomes be classified as personal property and enrolled on the secured roll.
New Base Year (Value)	The full cash value of property on the date it changes ownership or when new construction is completed.
New Construction	The construction of new buildings, additions to existing buildings, or alterations which convert the property to another to another use or extends the economic life of the improvement, is reassessed, establishing a new base year value for only that portion of the property.
Parcel	Real property assessment unit. Land that is segregated into units by boundary lines for assessment purposes.
Personal Property	Any property except real estate, including airplanes, boats, and business property such as computers, supplies, furniture, machinery and equipment. (Most business inventory, household furnishings, personal effects, and pets are exempt from taxation.)
Possessory Interest (PI)	The possession or the right to possession of real estate whose fee title is held by a tax exempt public agency. Examples of a PI include the exclusive right to use public property at an airport such as a hanger or a concession stand at the county fair. In both cases, the lessee is subject to property taxes. Regardless of the type of document evidencing the right to possession, a taxable PI exists whenever a private party has the exclusive right to beneficial use of tax exemption publicly owned real property.
Proposition 13	Passed by California voters in June 1978, Proposition 13 is a Constitutional amendment that limits the taxation of property and creates a procedure for establishing the current taxable value of locally assessed real property, referencing a base year full cash value.
Proposition 8	Proposition 8 passed by the voters in 1978 allows the Assessor to temporarily lower assessments when the market value on January 1 is lower than the factored base year value for that year. If the market value of the property is less than its factored base year value, market value will be enrolled for the specific assessment year. Whenever such relief is provided, the Assessor is obligated to annually review and enroll the lesser of either market value or the factored base year value, but never higher than the factored base year value. If it is determined that the market value of the property exceeds the factored base year value of the property, the factored base year value will be restored for the assessment year. At this point the property will be no longer be annually reviewed and will be subject to annual increases not to exceed 2%.

**Proposition 58 Exclusion
Parent/Child Or
Grandparent/Grandchild**

This may exclude from reassessment transfers of real property between parents and children or grandparents and grandchildren.

Proposition 60

This may allow a person who is at least 55 years of age, or any severely and permanently disabled person who resides on the property, and who is eligible for the Homeowners' Exemption, to transfer the base year value of their original property to a replacement dwelling of equal or lesser value within the same county.

Title

A person's right to ownership of real property, usually manifested by a recorded document such as a deed, decree of distribution, contract of sale, etc.

Welfare Exemption

A property tax exemption for non-profit organizations that are charitable, religious, hospital, or scientific in nature.

**Williamson Act
(Land Conservation Act)**

Legislation providing agricultural landowners the opportunity to enter into a contract with the county which restricts the use of their land to farming in exchange for alternative taxation procedures.