

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What benefit is the small business classification to me?

All businesses in Beaver County, regardless of size, have traditionally been taxed at the same mill rate. Provincial legislation now allows municipalities to tax small businesses at a lower mill rate, which could result in lower taxes.

Beaver County Council wishes to support the small business sector and has approved a small business assessment classification. At a later date, when the annual budget is approved, Council will decide what the mill rate will be for small businesses.

What is the definition of small business?

Provincial legislation sets some of the eligibility criteria for the small business classification and gives Council discretion on other eligibility criteria.

To be eligible for a small business classification in Beaver County, your business must meet ALL of the following criteria by December 31 of the year prior to the year of taxation:

- ✓ Business cannot be vacant property;
- ✓ Business cannot be “designated industrial property” as defined by Provincial legislation;
- ✓ Property must be owned or leased by a business and
 - Be in possession of a valid development or business permit in Beaver County, and
 - Employ fewer than 50 full-time employees across Canada, and
 - Must not be subleased to someone else.
- ✓ Application has been submitted on or before December 31st of the year prior to the year of taxation.

What do I do if I own a small business, but do not hold a valid Beaver County permit?

To be eligible for the small business classification, your business must meet ALL of the criteria by December 31 of the year prior to the year of taxation. If you do not hold a valid development or business permit, please contact the County’s Development Officer at 780-663-3730. Once you have received your permit, you may submit an application before December 31 for consideration in the subsequent tax year.

What is the definition of full-time employee?

A full-time employee is one who works for the business for a minimum of 35 hours per work week. Seasonal or casual employees are not considered full-time employees.

What if I am the only employee of the business?

Some businesses are very small, such as home-based businesses. If your business meets the eligibility criteria, you may be eligible for the small business classification. You are encouraged to submit an application so that the Assessor can review your situation and make a determination.

What if I have more than one business on my property?

A property which carries out more than one business on the property will be considered one (1) business for the purposes of determining the number of full-time employees and the value of the assessment subject to the small business mill rate.

Will I be ineligible if my business is not open until after December 31st?

You must meet ALL the eligibility criteria as of December 31st. If you will not meet the criteria until some time in the following year, you may submit your application once your business has opened and before December 31st of that year, for consideration in the subsequent tax year.

Are farmers eligible for the small business classification?

Only non-residential assessment can be considered for classification as a small business. Farm land is a separate classification in Provincial legislation and County Council already has the discretion to set a separate mill rate for farm land properties.

When is the deadline for the application?

The deadline for submission of applications is December 31st of the year prior to the year of taxation. However, County Council wishes to allow small businesses to take advantage of the small business classification for the 2021 year. **Therefore, for the 2021 tax year only, applications will be accepted on or before March 15, 2021. Applications may be delivered via e-mail, fax, or mail. Post-marked applications will not be accepted.**

What if I miss the deadline?

Post-marked applications will not be accepted. If you miss the deadline, your application will automatically be deferred for consideration in the subsequent tax year.

Do I have to renew my application each year?

The Assessor will determine whether an application must be renewed on an annual basis or other frequency to determine continued eligibility for the assessment classification.

How much will my taxes be reduced?

Provincial legislation sets the maximum allowable reduction to the small business mill rate. The small business mill rate cannot be less than 75% of the general non-residential mill rate. County Council will decide on the small business mill rate when the annual budget is approved each year.

Note that only the portion of your assessment that is assigned to the small business classification will be eligible for the reduced mill rate. If your property is assessed for other uses (e.g. farm land, residential, other non-residential, etc.), the mill rates for these other types of assessment will apply.

In addition, only the municipal mill rate can be reduced for small businesses. The school, seniors housing, and special municipal mill rates will be the same as other properties.

Who can I speak with for more information?

Inquiries may be directed to the County's Assessor at 780-663-3730.

APPLICATION DEADLINE FOR THE 2021 TAX YEAR IS MARCH 15, 2021

E-mail to: administration@beaver.ab.ca

Fax to: 780-663-3602

Mail to: Box 140, Ryley, AB T0B 4A0

Post-marked applications will NOT be accepted