

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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OIG ALONG WITH THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL PROPERTIES RECEIVING A HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION DESPITE THE HOMEOWNER BEING DECEASED.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) provides an independent and objective assessment of government policies, programs, and operations by conducting audits, evaluations, and investigations. Since June 2021, the OIG has issued numerous letters to the Orleans Parish Assessor's Office concerning residential properties which continued to receive a homestead exemption and senior freeze reduction despite the listed homeowner being deceased.

For the first three quarters of 2022, the City of New Orleans Bureau of Treasury has issued 32 revised real estate tax bills for residential properties that the OIG identified as having benefited from homestead exemptions and a senior freeze reduction despite the listed homeowners being deceased. The Assessor's Office has also removed the homestead exemptions and senior freeze reductions for these properties. According to the Bureau of Treasury, the City of New Orleans is due more than \$204,555 in additional property tax revenue from these 32 properties.

In order to ensure the enforcement of homestead exemptions in compliance with State Law,¹ the OIG submitted 335 properties to the Orleans Parish Assessor's Office for review in 2023. Of the 335 properties submitted, 246 were approved to have the homestead exemption removed which may result in a revised tax bill and savings to the City for those properties.

In these times of increasing threats and limited resources, is incumbent upon the Assessor's Office and the Bureau of Treasury to combine their resources to efficiently identify and mitigate the threat of Homestead Exemption fraud.

Edward Michel, Inspector General

For information on OIG initiatives, including recent reports concerning Homestead Exemption fraud and other work products, please visit the newly re-designed OIG website at www.nolaig.gov.

¹ La. Const. art. VII, Section 20.