



## Obtaining Real Property Tax Relief in Ohio

### A Corporate Department Publication

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The real estate market in Ohio continues to face significant challenges. With many property values declining throughout the state, challenging property tax assessments to obtain tax relief is an important strategy to consider. Porter Wright's experienced lawyers can help you navigate the property tax relief process from start to finish.

How does the complaint process work?

Property taxes in Ohio are paid in "arrears," meaning that taxes paid in 2012 are for tax year 2011. By March 31, 2012, a property owner can file a complaint with the Board of Revision in the county in which the property is located to challenge the assessed value of the property for tax year 2011.

The complaint must include certain information including the current assessed value of the property as well as the owner's opinion of the correct value as of January 1, 2011. The taxpayer will be given a hearing with the Board of Revision, at which the taxpayer can argue for a lower value and at which the local school district may argue to retain the current valuation. An appraisal by a qualified appraiser that supports the taxpayer's opinion of value is generally suggested for commercial and industrial property.

Value of controlling property taxes

Real property taxes are often a significant non-productive expense of property owners. A successful challenge filed by March 31, 2012 for the 2011 tax year assures the taxpayer a lower assessment for at least one year and potentially additional years. Generally, because only one complaint per property may be filed within each three-year period, property owners should consider the best time to file a complaint. Factors to consider include the trends in property valuation in general and whether you are in the first, second or third year of the triennium.

What should you do?

If you own property that you believe has declined in value, you may want to consider pursuing a valuation challenge. A small investment now may reap significant returns in the form of property tax savings.