

2026 Property Tax Appeal Guide for Metro Atlanta Counties

O'Connor discusses how to appeal your taxes in 2026 for Metro Atlanta counties.

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When your 2026 property assessment hits mailboxes next spring, property owners might get a little unexpected surprise from their home's new taxable value. Home prices across Metro Atlanta have climbed again, and many homeowners can expect to see higher 2026 property assessments. But the higher market value on your assessment notice doesn't always reflect reality, and it can mean paying more in property taxes than necessary.

The good news is that owners have the power to challenge it. Georgia law gives homeowners the right to appeal their valuation to possibly lock in savings for three years if the appeal is successful. Here's what to know before the 2026 notices go out next spring and how to take control of property taxes.

The county assessors will issue assessment notices for real and personal property in Spring or early summer 2026, and property owners will have 45 days from the mailing date to file an appeal to the County Board of Tax Assessors. A successful appeal can lock in lower taxable value for three years under Georgia law, an opportunity you don't want to pass up.

Assessment Release Timeline

The following explains assessment notice release dates and appeal deadlines for Metro Atlanta counties, specifically Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb, and Gwinnett. Exact dates vary from year to year, and

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this timeline reflects deadlines posted in recent years. By law property owners are bound to the value notice for their specific property, so they must make sure to be aware of the deadline shown on their notice to avoid penalties and late fees.

County Assessment Notice Release Appeal Deadline

Fulton Mailed late May to early June Mid-July

DeKalb Mailed around June 45 days from the printed mailing date

Cobb Mailed mid-May Late June

Gwinnett Mailed April or late May Mid-June

Review the 2026 Assessment Carefully

There are a few things owners must do when deciding to file an appeal, starting with reviewing their 2026 assessment notice carefully. When reviewing their notice, they'll want to compare the county's stated market value to recent and comparable neighborhood sales. Owners will need to make sure to verify their property's details such as square footage, lot size, condition, and improvements to ensure there are no errors. Errors like inflated features or outdated data are common reasons for high assessments. Fortunately, all four counties offer online property search tools for quick access to assessment data that can be helpful when reviewing your own notice.

Gather Strong Evidence Before Filing

The next step in this process involves gathering strong and credible evidence to defend the appeal. One key piece of evidence to have is comparable home sales, preferably within the past 6-12 months, from the owner's area or nearby, to illustrate how the property's market value doesn't align with recent sales. Document any property damage or deferred maintenance with clear photos of issues such as roofing, cracks in the foundation, or outdated systems. These kinds of issues can significantly impact value. If the owner owns a high-value home or lives in an area with consistent unequal valuations, they can consider getting an independent appraisal to strengthen their case. They can also request the county's valuation data and comparables, which assessors are required to provide within 10 business days. If they are struggling to find the right kind of evidence and information, online tools such as the county's GIS system can be helpful to identify and compare local sales that show that the home may be overvalued in the assessment.

File the Appeal

Each Metro Atlanta county handles filings slightly differently, so owners must make sure to familiarize themselves with their own county's rules and deadlines.

County Filing

Fulton File online through the Fulton Board of Assessors portal or submit the PT-311A form in

person or by mail.

DeKalb File online through the DeKalb Property Appraisal site

Cobb File online through the Cobb Assessor's Office using the appeal submission portal.

Gwinnett File online through the Gwinnett Tax Assessor portal.

Important things to keep in mind when filing:

Appeals must be filed within 45 days of the notice date.

Choose your preferred appeal route (Board of Equalization, Hearing Officer, or Arbitration) on the filing form.

Keep proof of submission or mailing receipt.

What Happens Next?

After filing the appeal, the County Board of Assessors will review the filing and may offer a settlement before a hearing. However, if no agreement is reached, the case goes to the appeal board. Most residential appeals are heard by a Board of Equalization (BOE) panel consisting of local residents. At the board hearing, the owners will have the chance to present their property comparisons, photos, and appraisal data in person or through documentation. After the BOE is done reviewing, the board will issue a written decision confirming or reducing their value.

How Appeal Outcomes Affect 2026 Tax Bill

A successful appeal will lower the taxable value and could result in savings of hundreds or even thousands annually. Georgia's three-year value freeze can lock in the owners reduced assessment for the current year plus two more, this means major savings to come. Now let's say the owner has already begun to pay their taxes. If the owner has overpaid based on the higher value, some counties may issue a refund or credit after the decision. Counties such as Gwinnett, DeKalb, Fulton, and Cobb allow refunds, but they may handle billing differently, and what exactly happens afterward depends on the specific county. Owners must keep in mind that pending appeals don't delay billing, they will still get their bill on time, but future bills will reflect their final appeal result.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

The following are common mistakes to avoid and smart strategies to implement for a successful appeal:

Start early and don't wait until the last week of the appeal window to file.

Owners will want to do quality over quantity, meaning strong, well-matched comparisons will beat long and weak evidence.

During the hearing, stay professional and avoid emotional arguments by sticking to data and market evidence.

Make sure to keep everything from copies of filings, emails, to confirmations.

Consider seeking expert help from firms like O'Connor, as experienced consultants can guide owners through negotiations and hearings efficiently.

About O'Connor:

O'Connor is one of the largest property tax consulting firms, representing 185,000 clients in 49 states and Canada, handling about 295,000 protests in 2024, with residential property tax reduction services in Georgia, Texas, Illinois, and New York. O'Connor's possesses the resources and market expertise in the areas of property tax, cost segregation, commercial and residential real estate appraisals. The firm was founded in 1974 and employs a team of 1,000 worldwide. O'Connor's core focus is enriching the lives of property owners through cost effective tax reduction.

Property owners interested in assistance appealing their assessment can enroll in O'Connor's Property Tax Protection Program™. There is no upfront fee, or any fee unless we reduce your property taxes, and easy online enrollment only takes 2 to 3 minutes.

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