

Some Townships in Cook County Remain Open for Appeal to Start 2026

O'Connor discusses how some townships in Cook County remain open for appeal to start 2026.

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Homeowners across Cook County were certainly ready to put 2025 behind them. Starting with a computer issue, a series of events led to one of the largest residential property tax increases in the history of Illinois. While most townships saw increases of around 16%, some experienced jumps over 100%, especially on the South and West Sides. These developments have caused outrage and calls for change across not only the county, but the entire state of Illinois as well.

While exemptions should be the first line of defense when it comes to protecting your home, property tax appeals are a great weapon to ensure that you are paying only your fair share. With taxable values hurtling into the stratosphere, you need any equalizer that you can get. While most of Cook County has seen its appeal windows close, even those opened a third time thanks to emergency measures, a select few townships are still able to lower their assessments. In this article, we will list the townships currently open and how you can use this to your advantage.

Townships Currently Eligible for Appeals From January 5 to February 3

Lake
Orlan
Palatine

O'CONNOR
Tax Reduction Experts



Some Townships in Cook County Remain Open for Appeal to Start 2026

Schaumburg
Thornton

Opening for Appeals Soon

Bloom
Hanover
Niles
North Chicago
Rich
South Chicago

Board of Review (BOR) Appeals

The people of Cook County may have some of the highest taxes in the nation, but they do have one advantage over other Illinois taxpayers. While all other homeowners have one deadline to file their protests, you have two. There was already a deadline for assessor appeals, which are simple protests that you can do with your township's assessor. These are usually for blatant errors, such as classifying a home as a business or listing a vacant lot as a house. Errors in square footage can also be addressed at this step. For most of the townships on our list, this type of appeal saw its deadline pass sometime between October and November.

The current protest window is for formal hearings with the BOR, which is usually where more complex issues are handled in Illinois. By separating assessor appeals and BOR hearings, Cook County taxpayers have two shots to reduce their taxable value. The long break between the two appeal types also allows you to put together more evidence, since BOR hearings do require more evidence and strong grounds for appeal. If you already tried an assessor appeal and were rejected, you can try again at the BOR phase.

Evidence and Grounds for a BOR Appeal

We have an article from 2025 that lists what you are required to have in detail, but we can still be brief here. You generally must appeal on certain grounds, including uniformity or market value. To be granted a victory, you must have evidence to back up these claims. Uniformity is usually proven by photographing your property, along with similar ones, and putting together a dossier that shows your home is being valued higher than your neighbors. Protesting on the grounds of market value means proving that your home or business is being taxed over what it could be sold for. This is achieved by putting together sales records for the past three years, based on homes that are close to yours in characteristics.

More Pressure on Homeowners Than Ever Before

Like most people in Chicagoland, you were probably struck with sticker shock when you opened

your tax bills in November. There are several reasons for escalating property values and tax bills, including demand from school districts, public pensions, and funding requirements from other taxing bodies. The biggest reason for these increases is that falling commercial values are forcing the tax burden on to homeowners. The Magnificent Mile has seen a large number of vacancies in retail spaces, while the Loop is plagued with empty office complexes.

When these cash cows fail, the Cook County Assessor's Office (CCAO) and other organizations are forced to look elsewhere. This was the main driver for the giant spikes in Cook County taxes to close out 2025. The CCAO, Board of Review (BOR), and the treasurer have all tried to place the blame on each other, though all agree that falling commercial values are the root cause. With some new businesses opening and more moving into the Loop, there is hope that 2026 could see a reversal, though that will take some serious luck.

BOR Appeals Favor Businesses and the Wealthy?

One of the accusations between the CCAO and the BOR is that homeowners are paying more because the BOR grants appeals to businesses and large residential properties. While this is mostly deflection by the CCAO, there is a grain of truth to it. Businesses and people of means have attorneys to represent them at BOR hearings, while using tax experts and other professionals to gather the right evidence. Only attorneys are allowed to represent clients with the BOR, which tends to put a certain resource threshold between the BOR and taxpayers. Businesses will also protest every year, ensuring they are constantly getting the best deal. The annual appeal approach is shown to be the best way to lower taxable value, as it establishes a baseline that can even stand up to the dreaded reassessments that happen every three years.

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 Texas, Illinois, Georgia, 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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