

**TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE
VETERANS PROPERTY TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM**

Dear Applicant:

Enclosed please find a complete application packet for the Veterans Property Tax Work-Off Program. Please follow the Applicant Checklist to be certain that you have submitted all of the necessary forms in order to be considered for this program. You must re-apply each year.

When you have received confirmation from the Veterans Director and Assessor that you are eligible (signatures should be on the application), completed the Application, signed and dated the Participation Agreement, you must submit these documents to the Town Manager's Office for review and acceptance into the program.

The Town Manager's Office is open Mondays from 8:30AM-7:00PM, Tuesdays-Thursdays from 8:30AM to 4:30PM, and Fridays from 8:30AM-1:00PM.

Program participants will be selected by lottery from a pool of qualified applicants unless there is an insufficient number of applicants seeking to participate. You will be notified as soon as the selections are made.

Program participants will volunteer in various Town departments: Town Hall/Town Hall Annex, Senior Center, Schools, Library, and Department of Public Works [non-union tasks only]. Assignments will be based on the interests, talents, and skills of the volunteers and the requests of Town Department Heads.

If you are selected for participation in the program and are assigned to volunteer at the Northbridge Senior Center, Whitinsville Social Library, or Northbridge School Department, a CORI check is required prior to volunteering. PLEASE BRING GOVERNMENT ISSUED PHOTO IDENTIFICATION to the Town Manager's office and SOCIAL SECURITY CARD IN ORDER FOR THE CORI CHECK TO BE PERFORMED.

The Veterans Director can be reached at 508-278-8600, ext. 2017. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 508-234-2095.

Very truly yours,

Sharon L. Susienka
Executive Assistant to the Town Manager

Enc.

VETERANS PROPERTY TAX WORK-OFF POLICY

At the Spring Annual Town meeting on May 7, 2013, members voted to adopt the provisions of M.G.L. 59, sec 5N, also known as the Valor Act. This legislation authorizes local governments to establish a program to allow qualifying Veterans the opportunity to provide services to the Town, in lieu of certain property taxes. While this program is similar to the senior tax work-off program, it is separate and distinct. Questions regarding this abatement opportunity should be referred to the Executive Assistant to the Town Manager (EATM).

A Northbridge Veteran may apply to volunteer to perform specific duties for the town in lieu of a portion of real estate taxes. In exchange for such volunteer services, the Town shall reduce the real property tax obligations of the Veteran at the rate of \$12.00 per hour, not to exceed 84 hours; the total reduction of the real property tax bill shall not exceed \$1,000 in a given tax year. This reduction shall be in addition to any exemption or abatement to which that person is entitled. However, that person shall not be credited with more than the current minimum wage of the Commonwealth per hour for their services provided to the town. As the minimum wage increases so will the per hour rate, thereby reducing the number of hours required to reach the \$1,000 maximum tax reduction.

The amount by which a person's property tax is reduced in exchange for the volunteer services shall not be considered income, wages, or employment for purposes of taxation, withholding taxes, and for worker's compensation. While providing such volunteer services, that person shall be considered a public employee and those services shall be deemed employment for the purposes of unemployment insurance.

The Veterans Director will determine initial eligibility for the program. A Veteran, as defined by M.G.L. ch.4, s.7, clause 43, must have served a minimum of 90 or 180 days on active duty (depending on dates of service), not including active duty for training. A spouse of a Veteran may participate in this program if he is deceased or if he has a service-connected disability. After the Veterans' Director validates the eligible characterization of the Veteran's status, the Assessor will review the property tax abatement application status of the Veteran. A Veteran must re-apply for this program every year. For priority consideration applications are due on October 31st; however, applications will be considered on a rolling basis afterward.

The opportunity to participate in this program is not guaranteed. It is contingent upon available program position limits, the requirements of town departments, and the ability of the Veteran to perform designated tasks. The EATM will determine position availability, expected department needs, and ascertain Veteran desires and capabilities. When it is determined that the Veteran will be able to provide the required services, the EATM will approve the application and coordinate placement.

The department head and Veteran must sign the work log and submit it to the EATM by October 31st each year. Abatements of up to \$1,000 for work performed between January and October will be credited on the following year's February tax bill.

TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE
VETERANS PROPERTY TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM
PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Program Goals

*To assist Veterans with payment of property tax bills

*Increase involvement of Veterans in municipal government and the school system

Eligibility Requirements

* A Veteran, as defined by M.G.L. ch.4, s.7, clause 43.

*Northbridge resident

*Homeowner or spouse

*Own and occupy the property for which Northbridge taxes are paid *(If the property is subject to a trust, you must have legal title, i.e., be one of the trustees on the applicable January 1 assessment date, or at the time the work is performed)*

Selection Process

*Applicant must meet eligibility requirements

*Applicant must have appropriate skills for position

*Applicant and Department Head must both agree it is an appropriate match

Benefit Limits

*Maximum benefit of \$1,000 per fiscal year per household

*Hourly compensation of \$12.00 per hour [State's current minimum wage] up to a max of 84 volunteer hours

*If maximum hours allowed are not completed, credit will be received based on number of hours worked

General Program Information

*Program year is January 1st to October 31st

*Abatements for work performed between January 1st and October 31st will be credited on the **next February's** tax bill

*Applicants must re-apply annually to continue in the program; acceptance is not guaranteed.
A limit of two (2) consecutive years of program participation is allowed unless there are vacancies.

*Participants are exempt from state taxes but are not exempt from federal, social security, or Medicare taxes

*Participating in this program will not affect any local exemptions for which you may be eligible, **however, you may forfeit the tax credit if you sell your property during the program year.**

*If you qualify for the State Circuit Breaker Credit, the amount you may be eligible for could be affected by participation in this program

How to Apply

Town Manager's Office

7 Main Street

Whitinsville, MA 01588

508-234-2095 or download the application at www.northbridgemass.org.

TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE

VETERAN TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM

GENERAL INFORMATION

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the tax work-off program is to assist Veterans of the Town of Northbridge with the payment of residential property tax bills while acknowledging and affirming their skills and abilities and the community's continuing need for their services.

ELIGIBILITY:

- A Veteran, as defined by M.G.L. ch.4, s.7, clause 43
- Resident of Northbridge
- Owner of record (at the time of application) or spouse
- Property for which the abatement is requested must be the primary residence
- Willing and able to work
- Limited to one \$1,000 work-off per household
- Agrees to CORI check [if required]

SCREENING PROCESS:

- Completed application submitted to the Town Manager's Office (Program Coordinator)
- CORI check completed by Town Manager's Office (applicant must bring photo identification, i.e. driver's license or other government issued photo id)
- Verification of the following:
 - Property Ownership (Assessor's Office)
 - Residency (Town Clerk's Office)

SELECTION:

- By lottery (if there are more applicants than positions)
- Maximum of 5 positions per program year
- Limit of two (2) consecutive years of participation in program allowed unless insufficient applications are received

PLACEMENT SUPERVISORS:

- Program Coordinator
 - Attendance at a mandatory informational session with Placement Supervisors
- [First time participants only]**

VETERANS PROPERTY TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM

APPLICANT CHECKLIST

- _____ Application Form, **completed in full**, signed and dated
- _____ Participation Agreement, signed and dated
- _____ DD Form 214 (Discharge Papers)
- _____ CORI check (to be completed when the application form is submitted)*

****Please bring photo identification, i.e., any government issued photo identification such as driver's license, passport, etc.***

PROGRAM DIRECTOR CHECKLIST

- _____ Verification of Veterans Status
- _____ Verification of property ownership
- _____ Verification of residency
- _____ Mandatory attendance at Informational Session

**TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE
7 MAIN STREET
WHITINSVILLE, MA 01588
508-234-2095**

**CONFIDENTIAL APPLICATION FOR
VETERANS PROPERTY TAX WORK OFF PROGRAM**

DATE: _____

NAME OF APPLICANT: _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ **BIRTHDATE:** _____

CELL PHONE: _____ **EMAIL:** _____

The Town of Northbridge is mandated by state law to do a CORI (Criminal background check) on applicants who will be volunteering in the Library, Senior Center, or School Department.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: This information is needed to assist in placement should there be insufficient space in the program. All answers are strictly confidential.

Please answer each of the following by placing a check in the appropriate space.

I am an eligible Veteran. YES _____ NO _____

I am a resident of the Town of Northbridge. YES _____ NO _____

I own and reside in the dwelling for which credit is requested or I am the spouse of such a homeowner residing in the same household. YES _____ NO _____

CERTIFICATION BY VETERANS DIRECTOR: The above applicant has submitted a DD Form 214/discharge papers and proven to be a qualified Veteran to receive abatement credit under the Valor Act, s. 8 and M.G.L. ch.4, s.7, clause 43.

Veterans Director

Date

CERTIFICATION BY TOWN ASSESSOR: The above applicant has property in the Town of Northbridge worthy of abatement.

Principal Assessor

Date

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

RELATIONSHIP TO APPLICANT: _____

PLACEMENT INFORMATION:

What are your past work/volunteer experiences and types of skills? _____

With limited spaces in the program, please share with us any hobbies and/or interests you have that might help us in seeking or creating a position. _____

Job placements may be available in a variety of Town Departments. **[Using the numbers 1-5, please indicate which department(s) you would like to work in order of your preference from most preferred (#1) to least preferred (#5)].**

_____ Town Hall Offices [Accounting, Assessors, Board of Health, Town Clerk, Town Manager, Treasurer/Coll., Veterans Department and Conservation/Planning/Zoning]

_____ Library

_____ Senior Center

_____ Schools

_____ Department of Public Works [non-union work only]

Note any special reasons(s) for this request:

Do you have any restrictions or needs which may affect any position, i.e., physical requirements, seasonal, schedule, hours (duration and/or number of hours), frequency, etc.

Please explain. _____

Are you flexible to work temporarily for other departments when there is a need? YES _____ NO _____

Please explain. _____

I authorize those Town employees who coordinate the Veterans Property Tax Work-Off Program to investigate information from this application for the purpose of volunteer service in the Town of Northbridge. If accepted for volunteer service, I agree to comply with the rules of the Veterans Property Tax Work-Off Program. To the best of my knowledge, all information provided in this application is accurate.

As a participant in this program, I understand that I may earn a maximum of a \$1,000 credit to be applied to my Town of Northbridge property tax bill due on February of the following year. I further understand that this reduction in my property taxes may affect my eligibility for the state Circuit Breaker Credit.

Signature of Applicant: _____

Date: _____

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:

**TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE
TOWN MANAGER'S OFFICE
7 MAIN STREET
WHITINSVILLE, MA 01588**

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS: October 31st for priority consideration for the next year.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Referral to: _____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____

Disposition: _____

If denied, indicate reason: _____

Program Coordinator: _____

(Signature)

2019 VETERANS PROPERTY TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

To be eligible for benefits under the Veterans Property Tax Work-Off Program, and receive a maximum \$1,000 tax credit per year, I recognize and understand the following:

1. The hourly rate for services shall be \$12.00, the State's current minimum wage per hour in exchange for 84 volunteer hours. Any hours volunteered beyond the \$1,000 tax work-off cap allotted under the program do not qualify me for an additional tax credit.
2. I may have to complete a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) form to allow the Criminal History Systems Board to conduct a records check.
3. My placement and work assignment in the Veterans Property Tax Work-Off Program shall be determined by the Program Coordinator. Placement is determined by matching my skills with the available requests. There is a two-week probation period.
4. **The volunteer service hours must be completed by October 31st.** Hours cannot be saved or carried over to the next fiscal year program cycle. The tax work-off credit will be applied to the **next year's February tax bill.**
5. By participating in this program I have committed to complete a community service project within a prescribed timeframe. If I am unable to complete the assignment because of repeated absences, I understand that I may be removed from active participation in the program. I further understand that all absences need to be reported to my Site Supervisor. A letter of resignation is requested if I choose not to continue in the program. If I do not adhere to the rules and procedures or do not satisfactorily perform the assigned tasks, I may be subject to dismissal.
6. I will maintain a detailed log of the time, date, and nature of my work. I will sign this log, have the department head sign it, and submit it to the program manager by October 31st each year.
7. My actions as a participant in the Veterans Property Tax Work-Off Program shall be governed by and shall be subject to the direction and supervision of the Program Director/ Committee and the designated Site Supervisor.

Signature

Date