



gwinnettcounty tax commissioner's office

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Tax & Tag News



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Katherine Meyer

Celebrating 25 Years of Service Excellence

Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center
75 Langley Drive
Lawrenceville, GA 30046-6935

A Leader in Public Service

www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com

Changes in Payment Options for Motor Vehicle Customers

In order to reduce the 2010 budget as required by the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners, the Tax Commissioner's Office will no longer accept credit card or debit cards in face-to-face transactions in the tag offices and will no longer subsidize the credit card convenience fee for customers renewing their tags online effective **January 1, 2010**.

In previous years, the Tax Commissioner's Office absorbed the credit card convenience fee for customers paying over-the-counter at the tag offices and subsidized the credit card and debit card fees that customers pay online when they renew their tags

at the Georgia Department of Revenue (DOR) website.

"This was a difficult decision, and we looked at all of our options before finalizing our recommendation to the Board. We realize that this change in payment options will be inconvenient for some customers. We're doing everything we can to get the word out so that customers won't be surprised when they visit a tag office or go online to renew their tags," explained Katherine Meyer, Gwinnett Tax Commissioner.

As of January 1, 2010, the following options for payment of motor vehicle services are available:

Be first in line - every time. **Pay online** with a credit or debit card at GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com From there, link to the Georgia Department of Revenue's website to pay online with a \$4.95 State convenience fee.

In Person: Customers may pay using cash, checks, money orders and travelers' checks at the branch tag offices. Customers will no longer be able to use credit and debit cards when paying at the tag offices.

Phone: Customers can pay using a credit or debit card by calling the Georgia Department of Revenue at 1-877-496-0249. Customers pay a \$4.95 State convenience fee for each phone transaction.

Mail: Customers can mail renewal payments to the Tax Commissioner's Office using personal checks or money orders. A \$1 mail-in fee is charged for each mailed-in renewal.

Tax Commissioner First in Georgia to Implement Automated Tag Renewal Processing

The Gwinnett Tax Commissioner's Office began processing mailed-in tag renewals electronically in July, becoming the first tax commissioner in Georgia to automate this process.

Mailed-in renewals are now cycled through an electronic system that opens the envelopes, scans the contents, processes the payment and electronically updates vehicle owner records. Benefits include decreased turn-around time and less manual entry for most mail transac-

tions. The retention of paper records will be significantly reduced and will result in an even more accurate process for mailed-in renewals. In addition to faster, more accurate processing, research capabilities are greatly enhanced by this upgrade. Customer service staff will be able to immediately access checks and supporting documentation to assist customers.

Gwinnett citizens will benefit from faster turn-around time and improved customer service.

TAX & TAG NEWS

Property Tax Payments Online

You can pay your taxes online using a VISA, MasterCard, Discover or American Express credit card or check draft/e-check. A convenience fee of 2.4 percent (minimum \$1) will be applied to all credit card charges.



GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com



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NEW GWINNETT RESIDENTS Registering a Vehicle from Another County in Georgia?

Your address can be changed by visiting a Gwinnett County tag office and presenting one of the following as documentation of your residency in Gwinnett:

- A **valid** Georgia driver's license or Georgia ID card with the current Gwinnett County address

OR

- The **valid** Georgia driver's license or Georgia identification card can have the owner's former Georgia address as long as the owner has one of the following documents, dated within one year, with their name and current Gwinnett County address:
 - o Utility Bill
 - o Lease/rental agreement
 - o Bank Statement
 - o Closing papers
 - o Voter registration card

If you do not plan to visit a Gwinnett County tag office in the near future, you may download a Change of Address Request Form at GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com and fax or mail it as indicated on the form.

The Department of Driver Services offers one free change of address on your Georgia Driver's License via the Internet or in person at one of their facilities. Access their website at www.dds.ga.gov.

Mobile Home Information

Changing Ownership of a Mobile Home

When a mobile home is purchased, an ownership change occurs. This ownership change must be registered with the Tax Commissioner's Office.

Mobile Home purchasers have 30 days from the date of the purchase to apply for a new title. Failure to do so will result in a fine from the Georgia Department of Revenue or possible litigation from the mobile home seller.

Gwinnett County will only register or change ownership of a mobile home with a title in the current owner's name. Bills of sale, lease agreements, park reports or a title without updated ownership on the front side will not be accepted.

Registering a Mobile Home

Upon receiving a new title, the mobile home owner must register the mobile home with the Department of Property Tax by submitting a copy of the new title and a "Manufactured Home Change Request Form," which can be obtained at any Tax Commissioner's Office.

If the home is being moved from another county, proof of taxes (paid up-to-date) must be provided, along with a copy of the title in the current owner's name, before a mobile home can be registered and a decal issued.

If the mobile home is new, a current title must accompany the Manufactured Home Change Request Form. There will be a \$10 decal charge when you register a mobile home. This cost is included with the annual tax bill.

Relocating or Moving a Mobile Home

To relocate a mobile home, you must obtain a relocation permit from the Property Tax Department by filling out a Manufactured Home Change Request Form. You will also need the address that the home is being moved to and the mover's name and address. There is a \$10 charge for the relocation decal.

It is unlawful to move a mobile home in Gwinnett County without a relocation permit. Any person violating this is guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished with a fine of no less than \$200 or no more than \$1000, or imprisonment for no more than 12 months, or both.

Who Can Help Me?

Now that Gwinnett citizens have received their 2009 temporary tax bills, the Tax Commissioner is receiving a large number of calls and emails from citizens with questions about their bills, property assessments, school tax, millage rates and more.

"I want to make sure citizens get prompt and accurate information when they have questions. There are many County offices involved in property tax issues, and it can be confusing," explained Katherine Meyer, Gwinnett Tax Commissioner.

Below is information to help guide citizens to the right offices for answers.

The **Gwinnett Tax Commissioner** is a constitutionally-elected official responsible for billing and collection of Gwinnett property taxes and for administering homestead exemptions. Her office is responsible for collecting property taxes, processing homestead exemption applications, preparing the tax digest, billing, accounting and disbursing. For questions about these issues, call 770-822-8800, email tax@gwinnettcountry.com or visit www.gwinnetttaxcommissioner.com.

The Tax Commissioner has no authority for the assessment of property and is in no way involved in that process.

The **Gwinnett Board of Education** is an elected board and determines the school budget and a millage rate to fund it. The Tax Commissioner has no authority regarding school taxes and simply bills based on the assessed values and rates established by the taxing authorities. For questions about school millage rates, call 678-301-6200 or visit www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us.

The **Gwinnett Tax Assessor's Office** is responsible for property tax assessments. The Board of Commissioners appoints the Board of Tax Assessors for fixed terms. This Board appraises property values, notifies property owners if property assessed values change, reviews property assessment appeals, and reviews and approves homestead exemptions. Call the Tax Assessor's office at 770-822-7220 or email assessor@gwinnettcountry.com. This office can also explain what steps are available to citizens to try to reduce property value for next year.

For questions about County millage rates, citizens can contact the **Gwinnett Board of Commissioners** at 770-822-7000 or visit www.gwinnettcountry.com. The 2009 temporary tax bill millage rate was set by a judge on an interim basis to enable tax bills to be mailed; however, a final millage rate will be set by the Board of Commissioners at a future date. A final notice of taxes will be mailed to homeowners after the final millage rate is set if additional taxes are owed or if refunds are necessary.

The **Gwinnett Stormwater Utility** can answer questions about stormwater rates. Call 678-376-7193 or visit www.gwinnett-stormwater.com.

For questions about street lights and speed tables, contact **Gwinnett Traffic Engineering and Planning** at 770-822-7462.

Helpful Contact Information

Gwinnett Tax Commissioner

770-822-8800; tax@gwinnettcountry.com;
www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com

Gwinnett Tax Assessor's Office

770-822-7200; assessor@gwinnettcountry.com

Gwinnett Board of Commissioners

770-822-7000; www.gwinnettcountry.com

Gwinnett Board of Education

678-301-6200; www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us

Gwinnett Stormwater Utility

678-376-7193; www.gwinnettstormwater.com

Gwinnett Traffic Engineering and Planning

770-822-7462

Tax Commissioner www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com	Tax Assessor www.Gwinnett-Assessor.com
Constitutionally-elected official	Appointed by Board of Commissioners for a fixed term
Responsible for billing and collection of property taxes	Responsible for appraising property values and notifying owners on assessed value changes
Administers homestead exemptions	Reviews property assessment and homestead exemption appeals

Understanding Homestead Exemptions

There are currently 14 exemptions available to Gwinnett County homeowners.

For all homestead exemptions, you must own and occupy the property as your primary residence as of January 1 of the tax year for which application is being made. Property owners must not be receiving a homestead exemption on any other property, including properties in other Georgia counties or in other states. Married couples are considered by law as a single family unit; therefore, only one homestead exemption between husband and wife may be claimed. Also, all vehicles owned by the property owner(s) must be registered in Gwinnett County.

All ages, income figures, and exemption amounts are based on the current tax year and are subject to change. If you are adding or deleting a person's name on a deed, you must re-file for homestead. Refinancing your home will not affect your exemption.

If you reside within the city limits of Dacula, Grayson, Lawrenceville, Lilburn, Snellville, or Sugar Hill, your application for a county exemption will also facilitate any applicable city exemption for which you may be entitled.

All applicants for homestead exemption must indicate on the application whether they are U.S. citizens or are qualified aliens or nonimmigrants under the Federal Immigration and Nationality Act. Those applicants who indicate they are qualified aliens or nonimmigrants will be required to submit with their application their valid documentation from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service for purposes of verification.

NOTE: If you wish to qualify for an exemption that requires special documentation (tax forms, military forms, immigration documentation, etc.), please mail your documentation with your application to this address:

Katherine L. Meyer
Tax Commissioner
P.O. Box 372
Lawrenceville, GA 30046

To see a list of all the possible exemptions and exemption summaries, visit our website.

Did You Know?

Question: My vehicle is a 2003 model and it failed emissions testing. Why?

Answer: There are two main reasons why a 1996 or newer model year vehicle may fail the on-board diagnostics (OBD) test:

1. There is something wrong with your vehicle's emission control system and it needs to be repaired. You will receive a copy of your Georgia Vehicle Emission Inspection Report (VIR) and Emission Repair Form from your inspector. Take these documents to a repair facility. The VIR will indicate the general area of the failure and will help your repair technician determine the appropriate repairs.
2. Your vehicle's OBD computer is "Not Ready." While this does not necessarily mean your vehicle has a problem, it does indicate your vehicle's OBD computer has not met the criteria to be ready for testing.

This excerpt is provided courtesy of the Georgia Clean Air Force. Visit cleanairforce.com to learn more.

Locations and Contacts

(Please note tag office days and hours of operation)

Property Tax Office

Gwinnett Justice & Administration Center
75 Langley Drive
Lawrenceville, GA 30046-6935
Monday - Friday
8:30am - 5pm

Lawrenceville Tag Office

750 South Perry Street., 1st floor
Monday - Thursday
8am - 6pm

Norcross Tag Office

5030 Georgia Belle Court, Suite 1013
Monday - Thursday
8am - 6pm

North Gwinnett Tag Office

2735 Mall of Georgia Boulevard
Wednesday - Saturday
8am - 6pm

Peachtree Corners Tag Office

6135 Peachtree Parkway, Suite 201B
Tuesday - Friday
8am - 6pm

Snellville Tag Office

2845 Lenora Church Road
Tuesday - Friday
8am - 6pm

Motor Vehicle Information

Agents available 8:30am - 5pm
Monday - Friday
770-822-8818
tag@gwinnettcountry.com

Property Tax Information

Agents available 8:30am - 5pm
Monday - Friday
770-822-8800
tax@gwinnettcountry.com

www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com

Tax & Tag News

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