

The seal of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts is a circular emblem. It features a central five-pointed star surrounded by a wreath of olive and oak branches. The words "THE COMPTROLLER OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS" are inscribed around the perimeter of the seal, and "TEXAS" is written at the bottom. The seal is rendered in a light, embossed style against the orange background.

Glenn Hegar
Texas Comptroller
of Public Accounts

Appraisal District Director's Manual

March 2024

LARGE PRINT VERSION

Tax Code Section 5.05(a) authorizes the Comptroller's office to prepare and issue publications relating to property appraisal and tax administration as a public service. By publishing this manual, the Comptroller's office is making available an information resource of a general nature regarding the property appraisal and tax administration. This publication does not address and is not intended to address all aspects of property appraisal, tax administration or property tax law. The information contained in this publication neither constitutes nor serves as a substitute for legal advice. Pursuant to Tax Code Section 5.041(f), the Comptroller's office may not advise a property owner, a property owner's agent or the appraisal district on a protest matter. Questions regarding property appraisal, tax administration, the meaning or interpretation of statutes, legal requirements and other similar matters should, as appropriate or necessary, be directed to an attorney or other appropriate counsel.

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Introduction

Appraisal districts are responsible for appraising property in the district for ad valorem tax purposes for each taxing unit that imposes ad valorem taxes on property in the district.¹ An appraisal district is established in each county and has the same boundaries as the county's boundaries.² An appraisal district is a political subdivision of the state that is governed by a board of directors.³

Senate Bill (SB) 2, 88th Legislature, Second Called Session, and the accompanying constitutional amendment approved by the voters at the November 2023 election, made changes to the governance and functions of certain appraisal districts. This manual addresses those changes and includes notations related to the effective date of certain provisions.

Beginning on July 1, 2024, the governance of the appraisal district and certain functions performed by the board of directors of the appraisal district are based on the population of the county in which the appraisal district is established. A county with a population of less than 75,000 is considered

a less populous county.⁴ A county with a population of 75,000 or more is considered a populous county.⁵

This manual contains a chapter describing the governance and functions of each type of appraisal district. Information applicable to both types of appraisal districts are included in separate chapters.

Common abbreviations and terms used in this manual are:

ARB – appraisal review board

TAC – tax assessor-collector

TDLR – Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation

TLO – taxpayer liaison officer

Voting taxing units – taxing units that are entitled to vote on the appointment of members to the board of directors.

¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.01(b)

² Tex. Tax Code §§6.01(a) and 6.02(a)

³ Tex. Tax Code §§6.01(c) and 6.03(a-1)

⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(a) as amended by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.02, effective July 1, 2024

⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(a) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

Board of Directors in Less Populous Counties and Populous Counties until July 1, 2024

This chapter applies to all counties until July 1, 2024. After July 1, 2024, this chapter applies to less populous counties. Counties with a population of less than 75,000 are considered less populous counties.⁶

Composition of Board of Directors

The board of directors is composed of five members.⁷ The number of directors can be increased up to 13 by action of the board of directors.⁸ However, in most cases, the board of directors may not make this change if a voting taxing unit adopts a resolution opposing the change.⁹

Taxing units participating in the appraisal district may increase the number of directors up to 13 members if three-fourths of voting taxing units adopt resolutions.¹⁰ A change is not valid if it reduces the voting entitlement of one or more taxing units (unless the taxing unit adopts one of two

specified resolutions) or if it expands the types of taxing units that are entitled to vote on the appointment of directors.¹¹

The county TAC is a nonvoting director, if not appointed as a voting director.¹² If a county commissioners court enters into a contract for assessment and collections under Tax Code Section 6.24(b) or if the appraisal district board of directors enters into a contract for appraisal under Tax Code Section 6.05(b), then the county TAC is ineligible to serve on the board of directors.¹³

Board members may not receive compensation for service on the board but are entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.¹⁴ This reimbursement is as provided by the budget adopted by the board of directors.¹⁵

⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(a) as amended by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.02, effective July 1, 2024

⁷ Tex. Tax Code §§6.03(a) effective until July 1, 2024 and 6.03(a-1) as amended by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.02, effective July 1, 2024

⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.031(a)

⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.031(a)

¹⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.031(b)

¹¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.031(b)

¹² Tex. Tax Code §§6.03(a) effective until July 1, 2024 and 6.03(a-1) as amended by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.02, effective July 1, 2024

¹³ Tex. Tax Code §§6.03(a) effective until July 1, 2024 and 6.03(a-1) as amended by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.02, effective July 1, 2024

¹⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(c)

¹⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(c)

Degrees of Consanguinity and Affinity

1st DEGREE	2nd DEGREE	3rd DEGREE
<p>By Consanguinity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents • Children <p>By Affinity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spouses of relatives listed under first degree consanguinity • Spouse • Spouse’s parents • Spouse’s children • Stepparents • Stepchildren 	<p>By Consanguinity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grandparents • Grandchildren • Brothers & sisters <p>By Affinity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spouses of relatives listed by second degree consanguinity • Spouse’s grandparents • Spouse’s grandchildren • Spouse’s brothers & sisters 	<p>By Consanguinity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great grandparents • Great grandchildren • Nieces & nephews • Aunts & uncles <p>By Affinity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No prohibitions

Eligibility

To be eligible to serve on a board of directors, an individual must be a current resident of the appraisal district having resided in the appraisal district for at least two years immediately preceding the date of taking office.¹⁶ This residency requirement does not apply to a county TAC serving as a non-voting director.¹⁷

An employee of a taxing unit that participates in the appraisal district is not eligible to serve on the board of directors unless that individual also is a member of the taxing unit governing body or an elected official of a taxing unit.¹⁸ Membership on the taxing unit governing body does not make an otherwise eligible individual ineligible to serve on the board of directors.¹⁹

¹⁶ Tex. Tax Code §§6.03(a) effective until July 1, 2024 and 6.03(a-1) as amended by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.02, effective July 1, 2024

¹⁷ Tex. Tax Code §§6.03(a) effective until July 1, 2024 and 6.03(a-1) as amended by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.02, effective July 1, 2024

¹⁸ Tex. Tax Code §§6.03(a) effective until July 1, 2024 and 6.03(a-1) as amended by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.02, effective July 1, 2024

¹⁹ Tex. Tax Code §§6.03(a) effective until July 1, 2024 and 6.03(a-1) as amended by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.02, effective July 1, 2024

Owing delinquent property taxes disqualifies a person from serving on the board of directors.²⁰ The person is ineligible if he or she owns property on which delinquent property taxes have been owed for more than 60 days after the date the person knew or should have known of the delinquency.²¹ This disqualification does not apply if the person is paying the delinquent taxes and any penalties and interest under an installment payment agreement or has deferred or abated a suit to collect the delinquent taxes.²²

A person is ineligible to serve on the board of directors if the individual served as a member of the board of directors for all or part of five terms, unless they were a county assessor-collector at the time of service, or the appraisal district is established in a county with a population of less than 120,000.²³

A person who has appraised property for compensation for use in proceedings, represented property owners for compensation in proceedings in the appraisal district or was an appraisal district employee at any time within the preceding three years is ineligible to serve on the board of directors.²⁴

A person is ineligible to serve on the board of directors if the individual is related within the second degree of consanguinity (blood) or affinity (marriage) to the following:

- an appraiser who appraises property for use in a proceeding under the Tax Code; or
- a person who represents property owners for compensation in proceedings under the Tax Code in the appraisal district.²⁵

A director who continues to hold office knowing he or she is related in this manner to the above-named persons commits a Class B misdemeanor offense.²⁶

An individual is not eligible to be a candidate for, to be appointed to, or to serve on the board of directors if the individual has a substantial interest in a business entity that is party to a contract or the individual is a party to a contract with the appraisal district.²⁷ This prohibition also applies to contracts with a taxing unit that participates in the appraisal district if the contract relates to the performance of an activity governed by the Tax Code.²⁸ An appraisal district may not enter into a contract with a board member or with a business entity in which a board member has a substantial interest.²⁹ A taxing unit may not enter into a contract re-

²⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a)(2)

²¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a)(2)

²² Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a)(2)

²³ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a-1)

²⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a-1)

²⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a)(1)

²⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(b)

²⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.036(a)

²⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.036(a)

²⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.036(b)

lating to the performance of an activity governed by the Tax Code with a board member in which the taxing unit participates or with a business entity in which a board member has a substantial interest.³⁰

An individual has substantial interest in a business entity if:

- the combined ownership of the director and the director's spouse is at least 10 percent of the voting stock or shares of the business entity; or
- the director or director's spouse is a partner, limited partner or officer of the business entity.³¹

Appointment by Taxing Units and Terms

Taxing units — counties, cities/towns, school districts, junior colleges and certain conservation and reclamation districts — nominate candidates and vote on the board of directors in odd-numbered years.³² Conservation and reclamation districts may participate in this process if at least one conservation and reclamation district in the appraisal district delivers to the chief appraiser a written request to nominate and vote on the board of directors by June 1 of each odd-numbered year.³³ On request, the chief appraiser must certify all eligible conservation and reclamation districts that are

imposing taxes and that participate in the appraisal district by June 15.³⁴

The board of directors is selected by appointment; it is not an election governed by the Texas Election Code.³⁵ The method or procedure for appointing members can be changed by the board of directors or by three-fourths of the voting taxing units acting through resolutions.³⁶

The voting entitlement of a taxing unit is determined by a calculation that takes into account a taxing unit's share of the total dollar amount of property taxes imposed in the appraisal district.³⁷ The chief appraiser makes this calculation for each taxing unit (other than conservation and reclamation districts) and delivers written notice before Oct. 1 of each odd-numbered year of the number of votes to which each taxing unit is entitled.³⁸ Each taxing unit (other than a conservation and reclamation district) that is entitled to vote may submit to the chief appraiser one nominee for each position to be filled before Oct. 15.³⁹

The chief appraiser also must calculate the number of votes that an eligible conservation and reclamation district is entitled to and must deliver before July 1 of each odd-numbered year, a written notice to the

³⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.036(c)

³¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.036(d)

³² Tex. Tax Code §6.03(c)

³³ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(c)

³⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(c)

³⁵ Tex. Att'y Gen. Op. JM 166 (1984)

³⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.031(a) and (b)

³⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(d)

³⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(e)

³⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(g)

district of its voting entitlement and right to nominate one candidate for director.⁴⁰ All eligible conservation and reclamation districts must submit the name of the district's nominee to the chief appraiser before July 15 of each odd-numbered year.⁴¹ Before Aug. 1, the chief appraiser must prepare a nominating ballot listing all the nominees of conservation and reclamation districts and deliver a ballot to the presiding officer of the board of directors of each district.⁴² The board of directors of each district must submit its vote for the nominee of conservation and reclamation districts before Aug. 15.⁴³ The winning nominee of the conservation and reclamation districts in the appraisal district becomes a nominee for appraisal district director.⁴⁴

The chief appraiser must prepare a ballot before Oct. 30 with candidates whose names were timely submitted, including the nominee of conservation and reclamation districts, if applicable.⁴⁵ Each taxing unit entitled to vote must determine its vote by resolution and submit it to the chief appraiser before Dec. 15.⁴⁶ The five candidates who receive the largest cumulative vote totals become the board of directors.⁴⁷ The chief

appraiser announces the new directors before Dec. 31.⁴⁸ Ties must be resolved by the chief appraiser by any method of chance.⁴⁹

In counties with a population of 120,000 or more, a taxing unit entitled to cast at least five percent of the total votes is required to determine its vote by resolution adopted at the first or second meeting held after the chief appraiser delivers the ballot. The taxing unit must submit its vote not later than the third day following the date the resolution is adopted.⁵⁰

Both the board of directors and taxing units may propose to change the method or procedure for appointing directors.⁵¹ If the board of directors makes the proposal, a voting taxing unit may veto the proposal by adopting a resolution opposing the change before Sept. 1.⁵² If a participating taxing unit proposes a change, the change is adopted if three-fourths of the voting taxing units adopt resolutions providing for the change.⁵³ A resolution to change the method or procedure for appointing directors must be filed with the chief appraiser after June 30 and before Oct. 1 of a year in which members are appointed, or the resolution is ineffective.⁵⁴

⁴⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(f) and (h)

⁴¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(h)

⁴² Tex. Tax Code §6.03(h)

⁴³ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(h)

⁴⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(h)

⁴⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(j)

⁴⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(k)

⁴⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(k)

⁴⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(k)

⁴⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(k)

⁵⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(k-1)

⁵¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.031(a) and (b)

⁵² Tex. Tax Code §6.031(a)

⁵³ Tex. Tax Code §6.031(b)

⁵⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.031(c)

Throughout the selection process, the Tax Code specifies dates for action by the chief appraiser and the taxing units. The dates provided in Tax Code Section 6.03(f) and (g) are directory and not mandatory.⁵⁵ However, the advice of legal counsel should be obtained in such situations.

Appraisal district directors serve two-year terms beginning on Jan. 1 of an even-numbered year.⁵⁶ The two-year term of office does not apply to the county TAC who serves as a nonvoting director.⁵⁷

Voting taxing units may adopt staggered one- and two-year terms.⁵⁸ To adopt staggered terms, taxing units must take two actions.⁵⁹ First, at least three-fourths of the voting taxing units are required to adopt resolutions for staggered terms.⁶⁰ Second, the voting taxing units must have changed the method for appointing members to end cumulative voting (casting all or part of the votes to which the taxing unit is entitled). These two actions may be proposed concurrently.⁶¹

A resolution proposing staggered terms must be filed with the chief appraiser after June 30 and before Oct. 1.⁶² If the chief ap-

praiser determines that enough taxing units filed valid resolutions, he or she must notify all taxing units of the change before Oct. 10.⁶³ Staggered terms take effect on Jan. 1 of the next even-numbered year.⁶⁴ To start staggering terms, all members are appointed for that year without regard to staggered terms.⁶⁵ At the earliest practical date after Jan. 1, the board determines by lot which of its members will serve one- and two-year terms.⁶⁶

Boards with an even number of members divide the one- and two-year terms in half. Boards with an odd number of members must have one more member with a two-year term than members with one-year terms.⁶⁷ For example, a six-member board would choose three members to serve one-year terms. A five-member board would choose two.

For each director's term that expires on Jan. 1, the appraisal district must annually appoint directors for a term that begins on that Jan. 1.⁶⁸

Staggered terms may be rescinded by resolution of a majority of voting taxing units.⁶⁹ The resolution must be adopted and filed with the chief appraiser after June 30 and

⁵⁵ Tex. Att'y Gen. Op. JM-166 (1984)

⁵⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(b)

⁵⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(b)

⁵⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(a)

⁵⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(a)

⁶⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(a)

⁶¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(a)

⁶² Tex. Tax Code §6.034(b)

⁶³ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(c)

⁶⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(d)

⁶⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(d)

⁶⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(d)

⁶⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(d)

⁶⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(e)

⁶⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(g)

before Oct. 1 of odd-numbered years.⁷⁰ After a valid rescission, the terms of all current members expire on the next Jan. 1, even if a member will have only served one year of a two-year term.⁷¹ The entire board will be appointed for two-year terms on that date.⁷² Staggered terms are automatically rescinded if the appraisal district makes a change in the method of appointing board members that results in a method of using cumulative voting.⁷³

Recalling a Director

A taxing unit may ask for the recall of an appointed director the taxing unit voted for in the appointment process.⁷⁴ A recall starts when a taxing unit files a resolution with the chief appraiser stating that the taxing unit is calling for the recall of a named member.⁷⁵ Within 10 days after a taxing unit files a recall resolution, the chief appraiser must give written notice of the resolution's filing to the presiding officer of each voting taxing unit.⁷⁶

Only the taxing units that voted for the member may vote.⁷⁷ A recall-voting taxing unit has the same number of votes in the recall that it cast in appointing the board

member.⁷⁸ A taxing unit votes by submitting a resolution to the chief appraiser on or before the 30th day after the recall resolution's filing.⁷⁹

Not later than the 10th day after the last day for voting in favor of the recall, the chief appraiser must count the votes cast.⁸⁰ A director is recalled if the number of votes cast in favor of recall equals or exceeds a majority of the votes cast appointing the board member.⁸¹ The chief appraiser must immediately notify in writing the presiding officer of the board of directors and the governing body of each recall-voting taxing unit of the results.⁸² If the chair is the subject of the recall, the board secretary must also be notified.⁸³

After a recall, the director's vacancy is filled by the recall-voting taxing units appointing a new board member.⁸⁴ Each recall-voting taxing unit may nominate by resolution one candidate and is entitled to the same number of votes it originally cast to appoint the recalled member.⁸⁵

On or before the 15th day after the last day nominations must be submitted, the chief appraiser must prepare a ballot and deliver

⁷⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(g)

⁷¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(g)

⁷² Tex. Tax Code §6.034(g)

⁷³ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(h)

⁷⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(a)

⁷⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(a)

⁷⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(a)

⁷⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(b)

⁷⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(b)

⁷⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(b)

⁸⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(c)

⁸¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(c)

⁸² Tex. Tax Code §6.033(c)

⁸³ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(c)

⁸⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(d)

⁸⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(d)

a copy of the ballot to the presiding officer of each taxing unit's governing body that is entitled to vote to fill the vacancy.⁸⁶ A taxing unit determines its vote by resolution and submits it to the chief appraiser.⁸⁷ The chief appraiser counts the votes on or before the 15th day after the last day on which a taxing unit may vote, declares the winner who received the largest vote total and notifies the chair of the board of directors, each taxing unit and the candidates.⁸⁸ The chief appraiser must resolve a tie vote by any method of chance.⁸⁹

If the board of directors is appointed by another method or procedure adopted under Tax Code Section 6.031, the taxing units that voted for or participated in the director's appointment may recall him or her and appoint a new director by any method adopted by resolution of a majority of recall-voting taxing units.⁹⁰ If the appointment was by election, the method of recall and appointing a new director to the vacancy is not valid unless it provides that each taxing unit is entitled to the same number of votes it cast for the member being recalled.⁹¹

Vacancy

If a vacancy occurs on the board, each voting taxing unit nominates by resolution a

candidate to fill the vacancy.⁹² Within 45 days after receiving notice from the board of directors that a vacancy exists, a taxing unit must submit the nomination to the chief appraiser.⁹³ The chief appraiser delivers a list of the nominees to the directors within the next five days.⁹⁴ Directors select by majority vote one of the nominees to fill the vacancy.⁹⁵ If a vacancy occurs for a board with staggered terms, the vacancy is filled by appointment of the voting taxing unit that nominated the person whose departure caused the vacancy.⁹⁶

Disapproval of Board Actions

At times, the board of directors may take an action with which the majority of voting taxing units may disagree. Under Tax Code Section 6.10, a majority of voting taxing units may veto any action by the board of directors.⁹⁷ This disapproval power under Tax Code Section 6.10 does not apply to the adoption of the budget by the board.⁹⁸

To veto a board action other than the budget, the governing bodies of a majority of voting taxing units must adopt resolutions disapproving the action.⁹⁹ The voting taxing units must file the resolutions with the

⁸⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(d)

⁸⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(d)

⁸⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(d)

⁸⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(d)

⁹⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(e)

⁹¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(e)

⁹² Tex. Tax Code §6.03(1)

⁹³ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(1)

⁹⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(1)

⁹⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(1)

⁹⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.034(i)

⁹⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.10

⁹⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.10

⁹⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.10

board's secretary within 15 days after the action is taken.¹⁰⁰ The board action is revoked effective the day after the day on which the required number of resolutions is filed.¹⁰¹

For voting taxing units to disapprove the appraisal district budget, a majority of the taxing units must file a resolution with the board's secretary within 30 days after the budget is adopted.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.10

¹⁰¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.10

¹⁰² Tex. Tax Code §6.06(b)

Governance In Populous Counties on July 1, 2024

Composition of Board of Directors

Counties with a population of 75,000 or more are considered populous counties.¹⁰³ The board of directors is composed of nine members.¹⁰⁴ Five members are appointed by the taxing units that participate in the district; three members are elected by a majority vote at the general election for state and county officers by the voters of the county in which the appraisal district is established; and the TAC serves as an ex officio director.¹⁰⁵

The board of directors or taxing units participating in the district may not increase the number of members on the board, change the method by which directors are selected, or alter the terms of office.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301

¹⁰⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(c) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

¹⁰⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(c) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

¹⁰⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(b) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

Board members may not receive compensation for service on the board but are entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.¹⁰⁷ This reimbursement is as provided by the budget adopted the board of directors.¹⁰⁸

Eligibility

To be eligible to serve on a board of directors, an individual must be a resident of the appraisal district and must have resided in the appraisal district for at least two years immediately preceding the date of taking office.¹⁰⁹ This residency requirement does not apply to a county TAC serving as a non-voting director.¹¹⁰

An employee of a taxing unit that participates in the appraisal district is not eligible to serve on the board of directors, unless that individual also is a member of the governing

¹⁰⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(c)

¹⁰⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(c)

¹⁰⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(d) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

¹¹⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(d) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

body of the taxing unit or an elected official of a taxing unit.¹¹¹ Membership on the governing body of a taxing unit does not make an otherwise eligible individual ineligible to serve on the board of directors.¹¹²

Owing delinquent property taxes disqualifies a person from serving on the appraisal district board of directors.¹¹³ The person is ineligible if he or she owns property on which delinquent property taxes have been owed for more than 60 days after the date the person knew or should have known of the delinquency.¹¹⁴ This disqualification does not apply if the person is paying the delinquent taxes and any penalties and interest under an installment payment agreement or has deferred or abated a suit to collect the delinquent taxes.¹¹⁵

A person is ineligible to serve on an appraisal district's board of directors if the individual served as a member of the board of directors for all or part of five terms, unless they were a county assessor-collector at the time of service.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(d) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

¹¹² Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(d) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

¹¹³ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a)(2)

¹¹⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a)(2)

¹¹⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a)(2)

¹¹⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a-1)

A person who has appraised property for compensation for use in proceedings, represented property owners for compensation in proceedings in the appraisal district or was an appraisal district employee at any time within the preceding three years is ineligible to serve on the board of directors.¹¹⁷

A person is ineligible to serve on the board of directors if the individual is related within the second degree of consanguinity (blood) or affinity (marriage) to the following:

- an appraiser who appraises property for use in a proceeding under the Tax Code; or
- a person who represents property owners for compensation in proceedings under the Tax Code in the appraisal district.¹¹⁸

A director who continues to hold office knowing he or she is related in this manner to the above-named persons commits a Class B misdemeanor offense.¹¹⁹

An individual is not eligible to be appointed to or to serve on the board of directors if an individual has a substantial interest in a business entity that is party to a contract or the individual is a party to a contract with the appraisal district.¹²⁰ This prohibition also applies to contracts with a taxing unit that participates in the appraisal district if the contract relates to the performance of

¹¹⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a-1)

¹¹⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a)(1)

¹¹⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(b)

¹²⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.036(a)

an activity governed by the Tax Code.¹²¹ An appraisal district may not enter into a contract with a board member or with a business entity in which a board member has a substantial interest.¹²² A taxing unit may not enter into a contract relating to the performance of an activity governed by the Tax Code with a board member in which the taxing unit participates or with a business entity in which a board member has a substantial interest.¹²³

An individual has substantial interest in a business entity if:

- the combined ownership of the director and the director's spouse is at least 10 percent of the voting stock or shares of the business entity; or
- the director or director's spouse is a partner, limited partner or officer of the business entity.¹²⁴

Election of Members by the Public and Terms

Three members of the board of directors are elected by a majority vote at the general election for state and county officers by the voters of the county in which the appraisal district is established.¹²⁵ Election

¹²¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.036(a)

¹²² Tex. Tax Code §6.036(b)

¹²³ Tex. Tax Code §6.036(c)

¹²⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.036(d)

¹²⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(c) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

Code Chapter 144 applies to a candidate for an elective position on the board of directors.¹²⁶ The election is governed by the Election Code.

A candidate for an elective position on the board of directors must file an application for a place on the ballot with the county judge in the county in which the appraisal district is established.¹²⁷ The application must be accompanied by a filing fee or a petition in lieu of a filing fee.¹²⁸ A filing fee received with an application is deposited in the county treasury to the credit of the county general fund.¹²⁹

The filing fee varies depending on the population of the county. For a county with a population of 200,000 or more, the filing fee is \$400. For a county with a population of less than 200,000, the filing fee is \$200.¹³⁰ A petition submitted in lieu of a

¹²⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.032(a) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.04, effective October 12, 2023

¹²⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.032(b) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.04, effective October 12, 2023

¹²⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.032(b) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.04, effective October 12, 2023

¹²⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.032(e) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.04, effective October 12, 2023

¹³⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.032(c)(1) and (2) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.04, effective October 12, 2023

filing fee must include a minimum of the lesser of 500 signatures or two percent of the total vote received in the county by all the candidates for governor in the most recent gubernatorial general election.¹³¹ If the minimum number of signatures determined using the vote count in the most recent gubernatorial general election is less than 50, the number of signatures required is the lesser of 50 or 20 percent of that total vote.¹³²

Elected directors serve staggered four-year terms.¹³³ Each term begins on Jan. 1 of an odd-numbered year.¹³⁴

The first election for appraisal district directors is the uniform election date in May 2024. The directors elected at that time take office on July 1, 2024 and serve a term that expires on Dec. 31, 2026. Following the initial election, directors will be elected beginning with the general election conducted in

November 2026. Directors elected at that time take office on Jan. 1, 2027.¹³⁵

At the first meeting of the board of directors following the November 2026 general election, the elected directors will draw lots to determine which director will serve a two-year term and which two directors will serve a four-year term. After the November 2028 general election, all elected directors will serve four-year terms.¹³⁶

Appointment by Taxing Units and Terms

The taxing units participating in the appraisal district appoint five members to the board of directors; the appointment process is not governed by the Texas Election Code.¹³⁷

Taxing units — counties, cities/towns, school districts, junior colleges and certain conservation and reclamation districts — select five appointed directors in the fall of each odd-numbered year.¹³⁸ Conservation and reclamation districts may participate in this process if at least one conservation and reclamation district in the appraisal district

¹³¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.032(d)(1) and (2) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.04, effective October 12, 2023

¹³² Tex. Tax Code §6.032(d)(2) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.04, effective October 12, 2023

¹³³ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(e) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

¹³⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(e) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

¹³⁵ Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.13, effective October 12, 2023

¹³⁶ Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.13, effective October 12, 2023

¹³⁷ Tex. Att’y Gen. Op. JM-166 (1984)

¹³⁸ Tex. Tax Code §§6.03 and 6.0301(c) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

delivers to the chief appraiser a written request to nominate and vote on the board of directors by June 1 of each odd-numbered year.¹³⁹ On request, the chief appraiser must certify all eligible conservation and reclamation districts that are imposing taxes and that participate in the appraisal district by June 15.¹⁴⁰

The voting entitlement of a taxing unit is determined by a calculation that takes into account a taxing unit's share of the total dollar amount of property taxes imposed in the appraisal district.¹⁴¹ The chief appraiser makes this calculation for each taxing unit (other than conservation and reclamation districts) and delivers written notice before Oct. 1 of each odd-numbered year of the number of votes to which each taxing unit is entitled.¹⁴² Each taxing unit (other than a conservation and reclamation district) that is entitled to vote may submit to the chief appraiser one nominee for each position to be filled before Oct. 15.¹⁴³

The chief appraiser also must calculate the number of votes that an eligible conservation and reclamation district is entitled to and must deliver before July 1 of each odd-numbered year, a written notice to the district of its voting entitlement and right to

nominate one candidate for director.¹⁴⁴ All eligible conservation and reclamation districts must submit the name of the district's nominee to the chief appraiser before July 15 of each odd-numbered year.¹⁴⁵ Before Aug. 1, the chief appraiser must prepare a nominating ballot listing all the nominees of conservation and reclamation districts and deliver a ballot to the presiding officer of the board of directors of each district.¹⁴⁶ The board of directors of each district must submit its vote for the nominee of conservation and reclamation districts before Aug. 15.¹⁴⁷ The winning nominee of the conservation and reclamation districts in the appraisal district becomes a nominee for appraisal district director.¹⁴⁸

The chief appraiser must prepare a ballot before Oct. 30 with candidates whose names were timely submitted, including the nominee of conservation and reclamation districts, if applicable.¹⁴⁹ Each taxing unit entitled to vote must determine its vote by resolution and submit it to the chief appraiser before Dec. 15.¹⁵⁰ In counties with a population of 120,000 or more, a taxing unit entitled to cast at least five percent of the total votes is required to determine its vote by resolution adopted at

¹³⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(c)

¹⁴⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(c)

¹⁴¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(d)

¹⁴² Tex. Tax Code §6.03(e)

¹⁴³ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(g)

¹⁴⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(f) and (h)

¹⁴⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(h)

¹⁴⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(h)

¹⁴⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(h)

¹⁴⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(h)

¹⁴⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(j)

¹⁵⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(k)

the first or second meeting held after the chief appraiser delivers the ballot. The taxing unit must submit its vote not later than the third day following the date the resolution is adopted.¹⁵¹

The five candidates who receive the largest cumulative vote totals become the board of directors.¹⁵² The chief appraiser announces the new directors before Dec. 31.¹⁵³ Ties must be resolved by the chief appraiser by any method of chance.¹⁵⁴

Throughout the selection process, the Tax Code specifies dates for action by the chief appraiser and the taxing units. The dates provided in Tax Code Section 6.03(f) and (g) are directory and not mandatory.¹⁵⁵ However, the advice of legal counsel should be obtained in such situations.

Appointed directors serve staggered four-year terms.¹⁵⁶ Each term begins on Jan. 1 of an even-numbered year.¹⁵⁷

The term of an appraisal district director serving on Dec. 31, 2024, expires on Jan. 1,

2025. Taxing units participating in the appraisal district must appoint five directors to serve terms beginning on Jan. 1, 2025. Two directors are appointed to serve a term of one year and three directors are appointed to serve a term of three years. After the initial term, all appointed directors will serve four-year terms.¹⁵⁸

Recalling an Appointed Director

A taxing unit may ask for the recall of an appointed director the taxing unit voted for in the appointment process.¹⁵⁹ A recall starts when a taxing unit files a resolution with the chief appraiser stating that the taxing unit is calling for the recall of a named member.¹⁶⁰ Within 10 days after a taxing unit files a recall resolution, the chief appraiser must give written notice of the resolution's filing to the presiding officer of each voting taxing unit.¹⁶¹

Only the taxing units that voted to appoint the member may vote.¹⁶² A recall-voting taxing unit has the same number of votes in the recall that it cast in appointing the board member.¹⁶³ A taxing unit votes by submitting a resolution to the chief appraiser on or

¹⁵¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(k-1)

¹⁵² Tex. Tax Code §6.03(k)

¹⁵³ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(k)

¹⁵⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(k)

¹⁵⁵ Tex. Att'y Gen. Op. JM-166 (1984)

¹⁵⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(e) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

¹⁵⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(e) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

¹⁵⁸ Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.13, effective October 12, 2023

¹⁵⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(a)

¹⁶⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(a)

¹⁶¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(a)

¹⁶² Tex. Tax Code §6.033(b)

¹⁶³ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(b)

before the 30th day after the recall resolution's filing.¹⁶⁴

Not later than the 10th day after the last day for voting in favor of the recall, the chief appraiser must count the votes cast.¹⁶⁵ A director is recalled if the number of votes cast in favor of recall equals or exceeds a majority of the votes cast appointing the board member.¹⁶⁶ The chief appraiser must immediately notify in writing the presiding officer of the board of directors and the governing body of each recall-voting taxing unit of the results.¹⁶⁷ If the chair is the subject of the recall, the board secretary must also be notified.¹⁶⁸

After a recall, the director's vacancy is filled by the recall-voting taxing units appointing a new board member.¹⁶⁹ Each recall-voting taxing unit may nominate by resolution one candidate and is entitled to the same number of votes it originally cast to appoint the recalled member.¹⁷⁰

On or before the 15th day after the last day nominations must be submitted, the chief appraiser must prepare a ballot and deliver a copy of the ballot to the presiding officer of the governing body of each taxing unit

that is entitled to vote to fill the vacancy.¹⁷¹ A taxing unit determines its vote by resolution and submits it to the chief appraiser.¹⁷² The chief appraiser counts the votes on or before the 15th day after the last day on which a taxing unit may vote, declares the winner who received the largest vote total and notifies the chair of the board of directors, each taxing unit and the candidates.¹⁷³ The chief appraiser must resolve a tie vote by any method of chance.¹⁷⁴

If the board of directors is appointed by another method or procedure adopted under Tax Code Section 6.031, the taxing units that voted for or participated in the appointment of the director may recall him or her and appoint a new director by any method adopted by resolution of a majority of recall-voting taxing units.¹⁷⁵ If the appointment was by election, the method of recall and appointing a new director to the vacancy is not valid unless it provides that each taxing unit is entitled to the same number of votes it cast for the member being recalled.¹⁷⁶

Vacancy

If a vacancy occurs in an elective position, the board of directors must appoint a person to fill the vacancy by a majority vote of its members. A person appointed to fill the

¹⁶⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(b)

¹⁶⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(c)

¹⁶⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(c)

¹⁶⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(c)

¹⁶⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(c)

¹⁶⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(d)

¹⁷⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(d)

¹⁷¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(d)

¹⁷² Tex. Tax Code §6.033(d)

¹⁷³ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(d)

¹⁷⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(d)

¹⁷⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(e)

¹⁷⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.033(e)

vacancy of an elective position must meet the qualifications required of a director elected at the general election.¹⁷⁷

If a vacancy occurs in an appointive position, each voting taxing unit nominates by resolution a candidate to fill the vacancy.¹⁷⁸ Within 45 days after receiving notice from the board of directors that a vacancy exists, a taxing unit must submit the nomination to the chief appraiser.¹⁷⁹ The chief appraiser delivers a list of the nominees to the directors within the next five days.¹⁸⁰ Directors select by majority vote one of the nominees to fill the vacancy.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(g) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

¹⁷⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(f) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

¹⁷⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(f) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

¹⁸⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(f) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

¹⁸¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.0301(f) as added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., 2nd C.S., ch. 1 (S.B. 2), Sec. 5.03, effective July 1, 2024

Governance, Board Duties, Authority and Policies

A board of directors has required duties and authority under the Tax Code. Other additional duties and authority are provided for in other law. Consult an attorney regarding all legal duties and authority.

Oath of Office

The Texas Constitution requires all elected and appointed officers to sign an anti-bribery statement and take an oath of office before beginning the duties of the office.¹⁸²

The constitutionally prescribed anti-bribery statement is located on the secretary of state's website as Form 2201 at sos.state.tx.us/statdoc/forms/2201.pdf. A director signs this statement before the oath of office is administered.¹⁸³ Directors should retain the statement in the appraisal district's official records.¹⁸⁴

The official oath of office is found on the secretary of state's website as Form 2204 at sos.state.tx.us/statdoc/forms/2204.pdf.

¹⁸² Tex. Const. art. XVI §1(a) and (b)

¹⁸³ Tex. Const. art. XVI §1

¹⁸⁴ Tex. Const. art. XVI §1(c)

Conflicts of Interest

Board members are subject to conflict of interest provisions in law, including Tax Code Section 6.036 which excludes certain individuals from serving on the board of directors. Local Government Code Chapter 171 applies to all local officials, including appraisal district boards of directors. Local Government Code Chapter 176 applies to officers of political subdivisions of the state.¹⁸⁵

For more information, see the Texas Ethics Commission's conflict of interest forms at ethics.state.tx.us/forms/conflict/.

Ex Parte Communications

A board member commits a Class C misdemeanor offense if the member directly or indirectly communicates with the chief appraiser on any matter relating to property appraisal by the appraisal district.¹⁸⁶ However, this type of communication is allowed in:

- an open meeting of the appraisal district board of directors or another public forum; or

¹⁸⁵ Tex. Local Gov't Code §§171.001(1) and 176.001(3) and (4)

¹⁸⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.15(a) and (d)

- a closed meeting of the board of directors held to consult with its attorney about pending litigation, at which the chief appraiser's presence is necessary for full communication between the board and its attorney.¹⁸⁷

These ex parte communication provisions do not apply to a routine communication between the chief appraiser and the county TAC relating to appraisal roll administration, including a communication made in connection with the certification, correction or collection of an account.¹⁸⁸ This exception applies regardless of whether the county TAC was appointed to the board of directors or serves as a nonvoting director.¹⁸⁹

These ex parte communication provisions do not prohibit an appraisal district board member from transmitting in writing to a chief appraiser, without comment, a complaint by a property owner or taxing unit about a specific property's appraisal.¹⁹⁰

A board member, officer or employee of a taxing unit commits a Class A misdemeanor offense if they directly or indirectly communicate with the chief appraiser or another appraisal district employee for the purpose of influencing an appraised property value, unless they own or lease the property themselves.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.15(a)

¹⁸⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.15(c)

¹⁸⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.15(c)

¹⁹⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.15(c)

¹⁹¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.155

Primary Duties

The following is a nonexclusive list of the board of directors' primary responsibilities under the Tax Code:

Establish the appraisal district office;¹⁹²

Hire a chief appraiser;¹⁹³

Adopt the appraisal district's annual operating budget before Sept. 15 after fulfilling notice requirements and holding a public hearing;¹⁹⁴

Adopt a new budget within 30 days after a budget is disapproved by voting taxing units;¹⁹⁵

Determine whether to remove ARB members appointed by the board after learning of a potential ground for removal;¹⁹⁶

Notify taxing units of any board vacancy and elect by majority vote of members one of the submitted nominees;¹⁹⁷

Elect from members a chair and secretary at the first meeting of the calendar year;¹⁹⁸

Have board meetings at least once each calendar quarter;¹⁹⁹

¹⁹² Tex. Tax Code §6.05(a)

¹⁹³ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(c)

¹⁹⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(b)

¹⁹⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(b)

¹⁹⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.41(f) as amended by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S. Ch. 533, Sec. 5

¹⁹⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.03(l)

¹⁹⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(a)

¹⁹⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(b)

Develop and implement policies regarding reasonable access to the board;²⁰⁰

Prepare information describing the board's functions and complaint procedures; the information must be made available to the public and the appropriate taxing units;²⁰¹

Notify parties to a complaint filed with the board of the status of the complaint unless otherwise provided;²⁰²

Appoint a TLO and one or more deputy TLOs in counties having a population of over 120,000;²⁰³

Annually evaluate the performance of the TLO and each deputy TLO, if applicable, including a review of the timeliness of complaint resolution;²⁰⁴

Refer matters relating to the ARB's conduct investigated by the TLO to the local administrative district judge with a recommendation;²⁰⁵

Biennially develop a written plan for the periodic reappraisal of all property in the appraisal district's boundaries, hold a public hearing with the required notice, approve a plan by Sept. 15 of each even-numbered year and distribute copies to participating taxing units and to the Comptroller's office as required;²⁰⁶

Make an agreement with newly formed taxing unit's governing body on an estimated budget allocation for the new taxing unit;²⁰⁷

Have prepared an annual financial audit conducted by an independent certified public accountant and deliver a copy of the audit to each voting taxing unit and make available for inspection at the appraisal district office;²⁰⁸

Designate the appraisal district depository at least once every two years;²⁰⁹

Receive taxing units' resolutions disapproving board actions;²¹⁰

Adhere to requirements regarding purchasing and contracting under Local Government Code Chapter 252;²¹¹

Provide advice and consent to the chief appraiser concerning the appointment of an agricultural appraisal advisory board and determine the number of members on that advisory board;²¹²

Adhere to laws concerning the preservation, microfilming, destruction or other disposition of records; and²¹³

Adopt and implement a policy for the temporary replacement of an ARB member who violates ex parte communication requirements.²¹⁴

²⁰⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(d) and (e)

²⁰¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(f)

²⁰² Tex. Tax Code §6.04(g)

²⁰³ Tex. Tax Code §6.052(a)

²⁰⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.25(i)

²⁰⁵ Tex. Tax Code §41.66(q)

²⁰⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(i)

²⁰⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(h)

²⁰⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.063(a) and (b)

²⁰⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.09

²¹⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.10

²¹¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.11

²¹² Tex. Tax Code §6.12(a)

²¹³ Tex. Tax Code §6.13

²¹⁴ Tex. Tax Code §41.66(g)

Statutory Authority

Tax Code Chapter 6 contains much of the statutory authority for boards of directors. The following is a non-exclusive list of boards' authority:

Provide for the operation of a consolidated appraisal district by interlocal contract between two or more adjoining appraisal districts;²¹⁵

Change the number of directors or method of selecting directors, or both, unless any of the voting taxing units oppose the change;²¹⁶

Have board meetings at any time at the call of the chair or as provided by board rule;²¹⁷

Contract with another appraisal district or with a taxing unit in the appraisal district to perform the duties of the appraisal district office;²¹⁸

Prescribe, by resolution, specified actions of the chief appraiser relating to appraisal district finances or administration that are subject to board approval;²¹⁹

Employ a general counsel to the appraisal district to serve at the will of the board;²²⁰

Purchase or lease real property and construct improvements necessary to establish and operate an appraisal district office or branch office;²²¹

Convey real property owned by the appraisal district;²²²

Amend the approved operating budget after giving notice to participating taxing units not later than the 30th day before the date the board acts on the proposed amendment;²²³

Authorize the chief appraiser to disburse appraisal district funds;²²⁴

Change the appraisal district's method of financing unless any participating taxing unit opposes the change;²²⁵

Contract with the governing body of a taxing unit or county to assess and collect taxes through the Interlocal Cooperation Act;²²⁶

Change the number of ARB members; and²²⁷

Appoint auxiliary ARB members and select the number of auxiliary members by resolution, except in certain counties.²²⁸

The Tax Code also provides certain statutory authority to the board of directors outside of Chapter 6, including authorizing a board of directors to approve the chief appraiser to contract with private appraisal firms to perform appraisal services under Tax Code Section 25.01(b). On the board of directors' written approval, a chief appraiser is entitled to appeal certain ARB orders

²¹⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.02

²¹⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.031(a)

²¹⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(b)

²¹⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(b)

²¹⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(h)

²²⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(j)

²²¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.051(a)

²²² Tex. Tax Code §6.051(c)

²²³ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(c)

²²⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(f)

²²⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.061(a)

²²⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.24(a) and (b)

²²⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.41(b-1)

²²⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.414

to district court as provided by Tax Code Section 42.02.

Limited Appraisal Authority

The board's appraisal authority is limited. The board does not appraise property or review values on individual properties. The law assigns these tasks to the chief appraiser and the ARB, respectively. The board of directors does have the authority to give written approval for a chief appraiser to appeal certain ARB orders in court.²²⁹

The board has authority over appraisal policy through the following duties and authority:

- duty to develop biennially a written plan for periodic reappraisal;²³⁰
- duty to adopt an operating budget to reflect the board's decisions on handling appraisals;²³¹
- authority to contract with another appraisal district or with a taxing unit in the appraisal district to perform the duties of the appraisal district's office; and²³²
- authority to approve the chief appraiser to contract with private appraisal firms to perform appraisal services.²³³

²²⁹ Tex. Tax Code §42.02(a) and (c)

²³⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(i)

²³¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(b)

²³² Tex. Tax Code §6.05(b)

²³³ Tex. Tax Code §25.01(b)

Meetings

At the board of directors' first meeting each calendar year, the board must elect from its members a chair and a secretary.²³⁴ A non-voting TAC may serve as chair or secretary.²³⁵ A majority of the appraisal district board of directors constitutes a quorum.²³⁶ A TAC who is a nonvoting member is counted in determining the presence of a quorum.²³⁷

The board may meet at any time at the call of the chair or as provided by board rule.²³⁸ However, the board must meet at least once each calendar quarter.²³⁹

The board must provide reasonable time at meetings for public comment on appraisal district and ARB policies and procedures and allow a reasonable amount of time for a TLO's report, if applicable.²⁴⁰

Written Policies

Through its policies, the board determines the appraisal district's goals and operates as the decision-making body of the appraisal district. While the Tax Code requires boards of directors to develop written policies on certain issues, a written policy covering all operational aspects of appraisal district operations should be considered.

²³⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(a)

²³⁵ Tex. Att'y Gen. Op. JC-0580 (2002)

²³⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.04

²³⁷ Tex. Att'y Gen. Op. JC-0580 (2002)

²³⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(b)

²³⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(b)

²⁴⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(d)

Written procedures and policies are good management tools. A policy manual allows the board to make important decisions carefully and in advance, rather than in response to crisis situations. They permit the appraisal district's operations to continue uninterrupted if key employees leave. A policy manual also helps educate the public and others about appraisal district operations.

Examples of policies of boards of directors can be found at comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/board-policies/.

Required Policies

State law requires the board to have written policies on specific issues. The board must:

- develop and implement policies that provide the public with reasonable opportunity to appear before the board to speak on any issue under the board's jurisdiction;²⁴¹
- prepare and maintain a written plan that describes how a non-English speaking person or a person who has a physical, mental or developmental disability may be provided reasonable access to the board; and²⁴²
- prepare information of public interest describing the board's functions and procedures to file complaints and how complaints are resolved by the board.²⁴³

The board must biennially develop a written reappraisal plan for the periodic reappraisal of

all property in the appraisal district's boundaries by Sept. 15 of each even-numbered year.²⁴⁴ The plan must comply with Tax Code Section 25.18.²⁴⁵ Certain activities must be conducted in the reappraisal of all real and personal property located in the appraisal district at least once every three years.²⁴⁶ In summary, those activities are the following:

- identifying properties by physical inspection or other reliable means of identification (such as deeds or other legal documentation, aerial or land-based photographs, surveys, maps and sketches);
- identifying and updating property characteristics;
- defining market areas;
- identifying property characteristics affecting value in market areas (such as property location and market area, physical attributes, legal and economic attributes and legal restrictions);
- developing an appraisal model that reflects the relationship among property characteristics affecting value in each market area and determines the contribution of individual property characteristics;
- applying the conclusions from the model to the characteristics of individual properties; and
- reviewing the appraisal results to determine value.²⁴⁷

²⁴¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(d)

²⁴² Tex. Tax Code §6.04(e)

²⁴³ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(f)

²⁴⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(i)

²⁴⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(i)

²⁴⁶ Tex. Tax Code §25.18(b)

²⁴⁷ Tex. Tax Code §25.18(b)

Tax Code Section 23.01(b) provides that if an appraisal district determines a property's appraised value using mass appraisal standards, those standards must comply with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice.

The board of directors must hold a public hearing to consider the proposed plan and provide written notice to each participating taxing unit of the hearing not later than the 10th day before the hearing.²⁴⁸ After holding the public hearing and approving a plan by Sept. 15 of each even-numbered year, the board of directors must distribute copies of the plan to the participating taxing units and to the Comptroller's office within 60 days of the approval date.²⁴⁹

The board of directors may include language in the reappraisal plan to give the chief appraiser discretion to make limited changes, especially as they relate to the work plan or schedule of appraisal activities, without the need for additional board approval or plan amendment. This limited authority would allow the chief appraiser to make timeline adjustments to meet staffing needs or to address other management issues.

In order to ensure timely compliance with the reappraisal plan, the board of directors should consider conducting an annual review of plan implementation. Attention to completion of tasks according to the

appraisal work plan or schedule should be given, along with completion of reappraisal activities for all identified market areas.

If the plan requires revision because of staff reductions, changes in market areas, unexpected circumstances, or any other reason deemed appropriate by the board of directors, it may be amended by official action, without the board of directors conducting another public hearing. Copies of the amended reappraisal plan should be distributed to the participating taxing units and the Comptroller's office.

The board of directors also must adopt and implement a policy for the temporary replacement of an ARB member who has communicated with another person in violation of ex parte communication provisions.²⁵⁰ An ARB member may not communicate with another person concerning the evidence, argument, facts, merits or any other matters related to an owner's protest, except during the protest hearing.²⁵¹ An ARB member also may not communicate with another person concerning a property that is the subject of the protest, except during a hearing on another protest or other proceeding before the board at which the property is compared to other property or used in a sample of properties.²⁵²

²⁴⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(i)

²⁴⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(i)

²⁵⁰ Tex. Tax Code §41.66(g)

²⁵¹ Tex. Tax Code §41.66(f)

²⁵² Tex. Tax Code §41.66(f)

Appointing the Chief Appraiser

The chief appraiser is the appraisal district's chief administrator.²⁵³ The chief appraiser is generally appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the appraisal district board of directors;²⁵⁴ however, the Comptroller's office may appoint a chief appraiser in certain circumstances. If a taxing unit performs the duties of the appraisal district pursuant to a contract, the assessor for the taxing unit is the chief appraiser.²⁵⁵

Qualifications

To be eligible to serve as a chief appraiser, a person must hold one of the following professional designations:

- Registered Professional Appraiser (RPA) from TDLR;
- MAI from the Appraisal Institute;
- Assessment Administration Specialist from the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO);
- Certified Assessment Evaluator from IAAO; or
- Residential Evaluation Specialist from IAAO.²⁵⁶

²⁵³ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(c)

²⁵⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(c)

²⁵⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(c)

²⁵⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(c)

A chief appraiser with a professional designation other than an RPA, must become certified with TDLR as an RPA within five years of appointment as chief appraiser.²⁵⁷

A person may not serve as a chief appraiser unless the person has completed the chief appraiser training program prescribed by Occupations Code Section 1151.164.²⁵⁸ This does not apply to a county TAC who serves as a chief appraiser.²⁵⁹ It applies only to a chief appraiser appointed on or after July 1, 2006.²⁶⁰ A person may serve in a temporary, provisional or interim capacity as chief appraiser for up to one year without completing this training.²⁶¹

Owing delinquent property taxes disqualifies a person from serving as chief appraiser.²⁶² A person is ineligible for employment as a chief appraiser if he or she owns property on which delinquent property taxes have been owed for more than 60 days after the date the person knew or should have

²⁵⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(c)

²⁵⁸ Tex. Tax Code §5.042(a)

²⁵⁹ Tex. Tax Code §5.042(c)

²⁶⁰ Acts 2005, 79th Leg., R.S. Ch. 1111, Sec. 3

²⁶¹ Tex. Tax Code §5.042(b)

²⁶² Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a)

known of the delinquency.²⁶³ This disqualification does not apply if the person is paying the delinquent taxes and any penalties and interest under an installment payment agreement or has deferred or abated a suit to collect the delinquent taxes.²⁶⁴

A person is also disqualified from employment as the chief appraiser if the person is related within the second degree by consanguinity or affinity to a person who appraises property for compensation for use in proceedings under the Tax Code or to a person who represents property owners for compensation in such proceedings in the appraisal district.²⁶⁵ A chief appraiser who remains employed knowing he or she is related to an appraiser or tax representative as prohibited commits a Class B misdemeanor offense.²⁶⁶

An individual may not be employed by an appraisal district if the individual is an officer or employee of a taxing unit that participates in the appraisal district or has served as an ARB member at any time during the preceding two years.²⁶⁷

A chief appraiser who is not eligible to serve cannot perform any action required by law for chief appraisers, including the preparation, certification or submission of any part

of the appraisal roll.²⁶⁸ A chief appraiser must give written notice of eligibility to serve as chief appraiser to the Comptroller's office no later than Jan. 1 each year.²⁶⁹ The Comptroller's office will appoint an eligible person to perform the duties of chief appraiser for an appraisal district whose chief appraiser is ineligible to serve.²⁷⁰

Duties and Authority

The appraisal district board of directors by resolution may prescribe that specified actions of the chief appraiser relating to the finances or administration of the appraisal district are subject to board approval.²⁷¹ The chief appraiser may employ and compensate professional, clerical and other personnel as provided by the appraisal district budget, with the exception of a general counsel to the appraisal district.²⁷² The chief appraiser may delegate authority to his or her employees.²⁷³ The chief appraiser's primary duty is to discover, list, review and appraise all taxable property in the appraisal district using generally accepted appraisal techniques.

Compensation

The chief appraiser is entitled to compensation as provided by the budget adopted by the board of directors.²⁷⁴ The chief apprais-

²⁶³ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a)

²⁶⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a)

²⁶⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a)

²⁶⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(a)

²⁶⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.054

²⁶⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(c)

²⁶⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(c)

²⁷⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.0501(a)

²⁷¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(h)

²⁷² Tex. Tax Code §6.05(d)

²⁷³ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(e)

²⁷⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(d)

er's compensation may not be directly or indirectly linked to an increase in the total market, appraised or taxable value of property in the appraisal district.²⁷⁵

Conflicts of Interest

The chief appraiser is an officer of the appraisal district for purposes of the nepotism law in Government Code Chapter 573.²⁷⁶ An appraisal district may not employ or contract with an individual or the spouse of an individual who is related to the chief appraiser within the first degree by consanguinity or affinity, as determined under Government Code Chapter 573.²⁷⁷

An appraisal performed by a chief appraiser in a private capacity or by an individual related within the second degree by consanguinity or affinity (as determined under Government Code Chapter 573) to the chief appraiser may not be used as evidence in a protest or challenge under Tax Code Chapter 41 or an appeal under Tax Code Chapter 42 concerning property that is taxable in the appraisal district in which the chief appraiser is employed.²⁷⁸

A chief appraiser commits a Class B misdemeanor offense if the chief appraiser refers a person, whether gratuitously or for compensation, to another person for the purpose of obtaining a property appraisal, whether

or not the appraisal is for ad valorem tax purposes.²⁷⁹

Ex Parte Communications

A chief appraiser commits a Class C misdemeanor offense if the chief appraiser directly or indirectly communicates with a member of the board of directors on any matter relating to property appraisal by the appraisal district.²⁸⁰ This type of communication is allowed in:

- an open meeting of the board of directors or another public forum; or
- a closed meeting of the board of directors held to consult with the board's attorney about pending litigation, at which the chief appraiser's presence is necessary for full communication between the board and the board's attorney.

These ex parte communication provisions do not include a routine communication between the chief appraiser and the county TAC relating to appraisal roll administration.²⁸¹ This applies regardless of whether the county TAC is a nonvoting member of the board of directors or was appointed.²⁸²

These ex parte communication provisions do not prohibit an appraisal district board member from transmitting in writing to a chief appraiser, without comment,

²⁷⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(d)

²⁷⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(g)

²⁷⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(g)

²⁷⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(d)

²⁷⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.035(c)

²⁸⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.15(b) and (d)

²⁸¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.15(c)

²⁸² Tex. Tax Code §6.15(c)

a complaint by a property owner or taxing unit about a specific property's appraisal.²⁸³

Agricultural Appraisal Advisory Board

With the advice and consent of the board of directors, the chief appraiser appoints an agricultural advisory board composed of three or more members as determined by the board.²⁸⁴ Members must have been appraisal district residents for at least five years and be landowners of the appraisal district whose land qualifies for special appraisal of agricultural use, open-space agricultural land or timberland.²⁸⁵

Residential Property Owner Assistance

A chief appraiser may maintain a list of individuals who have designated themselves to provide free assistance to residential property owners.

Upon owner request a chief appraiser must provide to the owner a copy of the list organized by county; make the list available on the appraisal district's internet website, if the appraisal district maintains a website; and provide the name, contact information, and job title of each individual who will provide free assistance.²⁸⁶

A person must designate himself or herself as an individual who will provide free assistance by completing a form prescribed by the chief appraiser and submitting it to the chief appraiser.²⁸⁷

If an appraisal district maintains an internet website, the chief appraiser must prominently post on the appraisal district's homepage:

- a public notice of the availability on the internet of property tax-related information;²⁸⁸
- the name, contact information and a description of the duties of the TLO;²⁸⁹ and
- a publicly available and searchable internet database that contains ARB protest hearing information.²⁹⁰

²⁸³ Tex. Tax Code §6.15(c)

²⁸⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.12(a)

²⁸⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.12(b)

²⁸⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.16(c)

²⁸⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.16(d)

²⁸⁸ Tex. Tax Code §26.04(e-2)

²⁸⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.052(h)

²⁹⁰ Tex. Tax Code §41.13(a)

The chief appraiser has authority and duties including, but not limited to, the following:

Appraisal	Appraise all taxable property at market value, except as otherwise provided by law	Chapter 23
	Determine eligibility for special appraisal and establish both a market and special appraised value on qualified property	Chapter 23
	Determine whether property qualified for agricultural or timber appraisal has undergone a change of use and send a change of use notice to the owner	Chapter 23
	Determine exemption eligibility	Section 11.45
	Create procedures for equitable and uniform inventory taxation	Section 23.12(b)
	Administration of rendition laws	Chapter 22
	Create appraisal records	Section 25.01(a) and Comptroller Rule 9.3004
	Contract, with the approval of the board of directors, with private appraisal firms, if appropriate	Section 25.01(b)
	Certify appraisal roll and other listings to each taxing unit participating in the appraisal district	Section 26.01
	Send notices of appraised value	Section 25.19
	Discover omitted property and adjust the appraisal roll	Section 25.21
	Maintain a list of real estate brokers, sales agents, real estate appraisers or property tax consultants who have designated themselves as an individual who will provide free assistance to an owner for residential property that is occupied by the owner as their principal residence	Sections 6.16(b) and 6.16(c)(1), (2) and (3)
ARB	Submit complete appraisal records of all property to the ARB	Section 25.22
	Present supplemental records and other items for ARB consideration	Section 25.23
	Correct records and make reappraisals as ordered by the ARB	Section 41.08

Adminis- tration	Prepare the appraisal district budget	Section 6.06(a)
	Give notice of public hearing on the appraisal district budget	Section 6.062
	Appoint agricultural advisory board, with the advice and consent of the board of directors	Section 6.12(a)
	Certify a list by June 15 of all eligible conservation and reclamation districts that are imposing taxes and that participate in the appraisal district on the chief appraiser's receipt of a request by a district to nominate and vote on the board of directors	Section 6.03(c)
	Calculate the number of votes each taxing unit has in appointing the board of directors and provide notice as required	Section 6.03(e) and (f)
	Serve as the appraisal district's chief administrator with responsibility to employ and compensate professional, clerical and other personnel as provided by the budget except for a general counsel to the appraisal district	Section 6.05(c) and (d)
	Notify voting taxing units of any proposed property transactions	Section 6.051(b)
	Proportionally credit excess amounts to the following fiscal year if payments by taxing units to the appraisal district budget exceed the amount spent or obligated to be spent during the fiscal year. If a taxing unit has paid its allocated amount but is not allocated part of the appraisal district budget for the following fiscal year, the chief appraiser must refund the proportionate share of the excess funds not later than the 150th day after the end of the fiscal year that payments were made.	Section 6.06(j)
	Serve as the appraisal district's chief administrator with responsibility to employ and compensate professional, clerical and other personnel as provided by the budget except for a general counsel to the appraisal district	Section 6.05(c) and (d)
	Notify voting taxing units of any proposed property transactions	Section 6.051(b)

Adminis- tration (concluded)	Proportionally credit excess amounts to the following fiscal year if payments by taxing units to the appraisal district budget exceed the amount spent or obligated to be spent during the fiscal year. If a taxing unit has paid its allocated amount but is not allocated part of the appraisal district budget for the following fiscal year, the chief appraiser must refund the proportionate share of the excess funds not later than the 150th day after the end of the fiscal year that payments were made.	Section 6.06(j)
	Determine whether a sufficient number of eligible taxing units have valid resolutions when a change in the appraisal district financing method has been proposed and notify each taxing unit of each adopted change	Section 6.061(d)
	Publicise certain Tax Code provisions to residents, including, but not limited to, the availability of electronic communications; the availability of exemption applications; rendering requirements; special appraisal of agricultural land, open-space land, timberland and restricted-use timberland; the deferred tax collection on residence homesteads of the elderly, disabled or those qualified for the disabled veteran exemption; deferred tax collection on appreciating residence homesteads; and the right to protest	Sections 1.085, 11.44, 22.21, 23.43, 23.54, 23.75, 23.9804, 33.06, 33.065 and 41.41
	Produce requested materials in the form and manner prescribed by the Comptroller's office	Section 5.16(b)
Other Duties	Duties required by contract	
	Legal responsibilities or duties assigned by the board of directors	

*Tax Code citations, unless otherwise noted.

Appraisal Review Board (ARB)

In this section: the applicable appointing authority is either the local administrative district judge for a county with a population less than 75,000 or the board of directors for a county with a population greater than 75,000.

The applicable appointing authority in each county appoints ARB members.²⁹¹ The board of directors may remove an ARB member appointed by the board under certain circumstances.²⁹²

The ARB is a board of citizens that hears taxpayer protests and taxing unit challenges, corrects clerical errors in the appraisal records and appraisal rolls, acts on motions to correct the appraisal roll, determines whether exemptions and special valuations were improperly granted and takes any other action or makes any other determination as authorized or required under the Tax Code.²⁹³

There is an ARB for each appraisal district although the board of directors may provide for the operation of a consolidated

ARB by interlocal contract. Members of a consolidated ARB are appointed jointly by the applicable appointing authorities in the counties that are parties to the contract.²⁹⁴ Although an appraisal district provides staff to the ARB for clerical assistance, the ARB maintains independence from the board of directors and appraisal district staff, including the chief appraiser.²⁹⁵

Appraisal districts are allowed to obtain criminal history records of applicant ARB members from the Texas Department of Public Safety and provide that information to the local administrative district judge or ARB members appointed by that judge.²⁹⁶

Eligibility

To be eligible to serve on the ARB, an individual must be an appraisal district resident and must have resided in the appraisal district for at least two years.²⁹⁷ In counties with a population of more than 120,000, a person is ineligible to serve on the ARB if the person has done the following:

²⁹¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.41(d)

²⁹² Tex. Tax Code §6.41(f) as amended by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 533, Sec. 5

²⁹³ Tex. Tax Code §41.01(a)

²⁹⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.41(a), (g) and (h)

²⁹⁵ Tex. Tax Code §§5.041(e-1)(5), 6.41 and 6.43

²⁹⁶ Tex. Gov't Code §411.1296

²⁹⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.41(c)

- served formerly as an appraisal district board member, officer or employee;
- served as a member of a governing body or an officer of a taxing unit until the fourth anniversary of the date the person ceases to be a member or officer;
- appeared before the ARB for compensation during the two-year period preceding the date of appointment; or
- served for all or part of three previous terms as an ARB member or auxiliary member.²⁹⁸

A person may not serve on an ARB if he or she owns property on which delinquent property taxes have been owed for more than 60 days after the date the person knew or should have known of the delinquency.²⁹⁹ This restriction does not apply if the person is paying the delinquent taxes and any penalty and interest under an installment payment agreement or has deferred or abated a suit to collect delinquent taxes.³⁰⁰

Conflict of Interest

An individual is not eligible to serve on an ARB if the individual is related within the second degree by consanguinity or affinity to an individual who is engaged in the business of appraising property for compensation for use in proceedings under the Tax Code or to an individual who represents property owners for compensation in proceedings under the Tax Code in the

²⁹⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.412(d)

²⁹⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.412(a)(2)

³⁰⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.412(a)(2)

appraisal district for which the ARB is established.³⁰¹ An ARB member commits a Class B misdemeanor offense if the ARB member continues to hold office knowing of a violation.³⁰²

A person is ineligible to serve on an ARB if the individual is related within the third degree of consanguinity or within the second degree of affinity to a member of the appraisal district board of directors or the ARB.³⁰³ A person is also ineligible to serve on the ARB if the person is an appraisal district director, an appraisal district officer or employee, a Comptroller employee or a member of the governing body, officer or employee of a taxing unit.³⁰⁴

Additional information regarding conflicts of interest for ARB members, including Tax Code Section 41.69, may be found in the *Appraisal Review Board Training Manual* published by the Comptroller's office.

A person is not eligible to be appointed or to serve on an ARB if the individual contracts with the appraisal district or a taxing unit that participates in the appraisal district.³⁰⁵ A person who has a substantial interest in a business that has either type of contract is also barred.³⁰⁶ Substantial interest is defined as either of the following:

³⁰¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.412(b)

³⁰² Tex. Tax Code §6.412(b)

³⁰³ Tex. Tax Code §6.412(a)(3) (A) and (B)

³⁰⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.412(c)

³⁰⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.413(a)

³⁰⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.413(a)

combined ownership of the individual and the individual's spouse is at least 10 percent of the voting stock or shares of the business, or the individual or the individual's spouse is a partner, limited partner or officer in the business entity.³⁰⁷

An appraisal district and a taxing unit participating in that appraisal district may not enter into a contract with a current ARB member established for that appraisal district or with a business entity in which an ARB member has a substantial interest.³⁰⁸

Number and Term of Office

The ARB consists of three members, but the board of directors by resolution may increase the size of the ARB to a number the board considers appropriate.³⁰⁹ The board of directors for a district in a county with a population of 1.2 million or more by resolution of a majority of members must increase the size of the ARB to a number considered appropriate to manage the ARB duties, including to perform the duties of a special panel.³¹⁰

ARB members serve two-year terms beginning Jan. 1.³¹¹ The board of directors by resolution must provide for staggered terms so that the terms of approximately half the

ARB members expire each year.³¹² In making the initial or subsequent appointments, the applicable appointing authority must designate those members who serve one-year terms.³¹³

Auxiliary and Temporary ARB Members

The board of directors by resolution of a majority of the members may provide for auxiliary ARB members to hear taxpayer protests before the ARB and to assist the ARB in its duties.³¹⁴ The applicable appointing authority may appoint the number of auxiliary members considered appropriate.³¹⁵ An auxiliary member is appointed in the same manner and for the same term as an ARB member under Tax Code Section 6.41 and is subject to the same eligibility requirements and restrictions under Tax Code sections 6.41, 6.411, 6.412 and 6.413.³¹⁶

An auxiliary member may attend ARB meetings but may not vote in an ARB determination or serve as ARB chair or secretary.³¹⁷ An auxiliary member is not included in determining what constitutes a quorum of the board or whether a quorum is present at any ARB meeting.³¹⁸ An auxiliary

³⁰⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.413(d)

³⁰⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.413(b) and (c)

³⁰⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.41(b)

³¹⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.41(b-2)

³¹¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.41(e)

³¹² Tex. Tax Code §6.41(e)

³¹³ Tex. Tax Code §6.41(e)

³¹⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.414(a)

³¹⁵ Tex. Tax Code §§6.41(d) and 6.414(a) and (b)

³¹⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.414(b)

³¹⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.414(c)

³¹⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.414(c)

member may hear taxpayer protests before the ARB.³¹⁹ If an auxiliary member sits on a panel to conduct a protest hearing, the number of non-auxiliary ARB members required to constitute the panel is reduced by the number of auxiliary board members.³²⁰ An auxiliary member sitting on a panel is considered a regular board member for all purposes related to the conduct of the hearing.³²¹ An auxiliary member is entitled to make a recommendation to the ARB regarding a protest heard by the member but is not entitled to vote on the determination.³²²

An auxiliary member is entitled to compensation as provided by the appraisal district budget, but is not entitled to a per diem or reimbursement of expenses.³²³

The appraisal district board of directors must adopt and implement a policy for the temporary replacement of an ARB member.³²⁴ A temporary ARB member replaces an ARB member who may not participate in a protest hearing because that ARB member communicated with another person(s) about a protest outside an ARB hearing in violation of Tax Code Section 41.66(f).³²⁵

³¹⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.414(d)

³²⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.414(d)

³²¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.414(d)

³²² Tex. Tax Code §6.414(e)

³²³ Tex. Tax Code §6.414(f)

³²⁴ Tex. Tax Code §41.66(g)

³²⁵ Tex. Tax Code §41.66(g)

Training

The Comptroller's office must approve curricula, provide materials and supervise ARB member training.³²⁶ ARB members are not allowed to participate in hearings until they complete the Comptroller's training course and a statement agreeing to comply with Tax Code requirements during hearings.³²⁷ A new ARB member appointed after a course offering may continue to serve until the completion of a subsequent course offering.³²⁸

During the second year of an ARB member's term, the ARB member must complete the Comptroller's continuing education training course and complete a statement agreeing to comply with Tax Code requirements during hearings.³²⁹ An ARB member who fails to timely complete the course is not eligible to participate in hearings, vote on determinations of protest or be reappointed to an additional term.³³⁰

ARB members must complete the Comptroller's continuing education training course and complete a statement agreeing to comply with Tax Code requirements in each year they serve.³³¹ The appraisal district board should provide for budgeting

³²⁶ Tex. Tax Code §5.041

³²⁷ Tex. Tax Code §5.041(b) and (b-1)

³²⁸ Tex. Tax Code §5.041(e)

³²⁹ Tex. Tax Code §5.041(e-2)

³³⁰ Tex. Tax Code §5.041(e-2)

³³¹ Tex. Tax Code §5.041(e-2)

ARB training as part of the appraisal district's annual budget.³³²

The Comptroller's office may assess a fee, not to exceed \$50 per trainee, to recover a portion of the costs incurred for the training course.³³³

Except during a hearing or other ARB proceeding, a member of the appraisal district board of directors for which the ARB is established, along with other specified individuals, may not communicate with an ARB member about these training courses or any matter presented or discussed during the courses.³³⁴

The Comptroller's office may not advise a chief appraiser, appraisal district employee, property owner or his or her agent on a matter known to be the subject of an ARB protest. The Comptroller's office may communicate with ARB members regarding:

- technical questions relating to ARB duties and appraisal issues;
- the model ARB procedures; and
- the ARB survey provided to taxpayers.

The Comptroller's office may also communicate with the ARB chair concerning complaints filed against the ARB.³³⁵ The phone

number maintained by the Comptroller's office for ARB members is 800-252-7551.³³⁶

Organization

The applicable appointing authority selects a chair and secretary from among the ARB members.³³⁷ The applicable appointing authority is encouraged to select an ARB chair who has a background in law and property appraisal.³³⁸ The ARB meets at any time at the chair's call or as provided for by ARB rule.³³⁹ The ARB must meet to examine the appraisal records within 10 days after the date the chief appraiser submits the records.³⁴⁰

The ARB must adopt its procedures for hearings.³⁴¹ The ARB must hold a public hearing to consider the proposed procedures and adopt the procedures by resolution no later than May 15 each year.³⁴² The ARB must incorporate the Comptroller's model hearing procedures into its adopted procedures and submit them to the Comptroller's office for review.³⁴³

ARB members are entitled to a per diem for each day the board meets as provided in

³³² Tex. Tax Code §§5.041(e-3) and 6.42(c)

³³³ Tex. Tax Code §5.041(c) and (e-3)

³³⁴ Tex. Tax Code §5.041(g)

³³⁵ Tex. Tax Code §5.041(a) and (f)

³³⁶ Tex. Tax Code §5.041(a)(4)

³³⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.42(a)

³³⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.42(a)

³³⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.42(b)

³⁴⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.42(b)

³⁴¹ Tex. Tax Code §5.103(a)

³⁴² Tex. Tax Code §41.01(c)

³⁴³ Tex. Tax Code §5.103(d) and (e)

the appraisal district budget.³⁴⁴ ARB members are also entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as provided in the appraisal district budget.³⁴⁵ Auxiliary ARB members are entitled to compensation as provided by the appraisal district budget, but not per diem or reimbursement of expenses.³⁴⁶

Personnel

An appraisal district may provide clerical assistance to the ARB, including assisting the ARB with scheduling and arranging hearings.³⁴⁷

The ARB may employ legal counsel as provided by the appraisal district budget or use the services of the county attorney.³⁴⁸

An attorney may not serve as ARB legal counsel if within the last year the attorney or a member of the attorney's law firm represented a property owner in the appraisal district, a participating taxing unit, or the appraisal district in certain matters.³⁴⁹ The prohibition on representing a participating taxing unit or appraisal district does not apply to a county attorney or an assistant to the county attorney.³⁵⁰ An appraisal district may specify in its budget whether the ARB

may employ legal counsel or must use the county attorney's services.³⁵¹ An appraisal district may not require the ARB to employ a specific attorney.³⁵² If the budget authorizes an ARB attorney, the budget must provide for reasonable compensation.³⁵³ ARB attorneys may not act as advocates in a hearing or proceeding conducted by the ARB; may provide advice to the ARB or ARB panel during a hearing or proceeding; and are required to make certain disclosures regarding relevant legal authority in the controlling jurisdiction known to the attorney and not disclosed by the parties and regarding a material fact that may assist the ARB or panel in making an informed decision regardless of whether the fact is adverse to the position of a party.³⁵⁴

An ARB may retain an appraiser certified by the Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board to instruct ARB members on valuation methodology if the appraisal district provides for the instruction in the appraisal district budget.³⁵⁵

Ex Parte Communications with an ARB Member

An ARB member commits a Class A misdemeanor offense if the member communicates with the chief appraiser, an appraisal district employee or a member of

³⁴⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.42(c)

³⁴⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.42(c)

³⁴⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.414(f)

³⁴⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.43(f)

³⁴⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.43(a)

³⁴⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.43(b)

³⁵⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.43(c)

³⁵¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.43(e)

³⁵² Tex. Tax Code §6.43(e)

³⁵³ Tex. Tax Code §6.43(e)

³⁵⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.43(d)

³⁵⁵ Tex. Tax Code §5.041(h)

the appraisal district board of directors for which the ARB is established in violation of Tax Code Section 41.66(f).³⁵⁶

A chief appraiser or another appraisal district employee, a member of a board of directors, a property tax consultant or attorney representing a party to an ARB proceeding commits a Class A misdemeanor offense if the person communicates with an ARB member established for the appraisal district with the intent to influence a decision by an ARB member in the member's capacity as an ARB member.³⁵⁷

These *ex parte* communication provisions do not apply to communications between an ARB and its legal counsel.³⁵⁸ The provisions also do not apply to communications between an ARB member and the chief appraiser, an appraisal district employee, a member of the board of directors, a property tax consultant or an attorney representing a party to a proceeding before the ARB:

- during a protest hearing or other ARB proceeding;
- that constitute social conversation;
- that are specifically limited to and involve administrative, clerical or logistical matters related to the scheduling and operation of hearings, the processing of documents, the issuance of orders, notices and subpoenas and the operation,

appointment, composition or attendance at training of the ARB; or

- that are necessary and appropriate to enable the appraisal district board of directors to determine whether to appoint, reappoint or remove a person as an ARB member, chair or secretary.³⁵⁹

A chief appraiser, an appraisal district employee, member of the board of directors, property tax consultant or agent of a property owner commits a Class A misdemeanor offense if the person communicates with the local administrative district judge regarding the appointment of ARB members.

This provision does not apply to communications with the applicable appointing authority by:

- an ARB member regarding the member's reappointment to the ARB;
- a TLO in the course of performing the officer's clerical duties;
- a chief appraiser, an appraisal district employee, ARB member or member of the board of directors regarding applications and appointment information, including criminal histories, and removal of an ARB member; or
- a TLO regarding communications with a consultant, property owner or agent regarding ARB member removal.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.411(a) and (d)

³⁵⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.411(b)

³⁵⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.411(c)

³⁵⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.411(c-1)

³⁶⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.41(i)

ARB Member Removal

A member may be removed from the ARB by the applicable appointing authority or the judge's designee, if the appointing authority is the judge.³⁶¹ Grounds for removal include a violation of:

- Tax Code Section 6.412 (restrictions on eligibility of ARB member);
- Tax Code Section 6.413 (interest in certain contracts prohibited);
- Tax Code Section 41.66(f) (communication outside a hearing or proceeding); or
- Tax Code Section 41.69 (conflict of interest in taxpayer protest).³⁶²

An ARB member may also be removed for good cause relating to failure to attend ARB meetings or for evidence of repeated bias or misconduct.³⁶³

After learning of a potential ground for removal, the board of directors, local administrative district judge or the judge's designee that appointed the member has 90 days to remove the ARB member or find by official action that the ARB member should not be removed.³⁶⁴

A property owner or chief appraiser may file a complaint with the TLO for the appraisal district alleging that the ARB has adopted or is implementing hearing procedures that are not in compliance with the Comptroller's model hearing procedures or is not complying with procedural requirements of Tax Code Chapter 41. The TLO must investigate the complaint and report the findings to the appraisal district board of directors. If the board of directors determine the allegations are true, it must direct the ARB chair to take remedial action. The board may remove the ARB member from the chair position if it determines the chair has failed to take the actions necessary to bring the ARB into compliance.³⁶⁵

³⁶¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.41(f)

³⁶² Tex. Tax Code §6.41(f)

³⁶³ Tex. Tax Code §6.41(f)

³⁶⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.41(f) as amended by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 533, Sec. 5

³⁶⁵ Tex. Tax Code §41.66(q)

Appraisal District Financial Affairs

Participating taxing units pay for appraisal district operations.³⁶⁶ The board of directors' financial responsibilities include adopting an annual operating budget; selecting a district depository; purchasing and contracting; transferring, constructing and renovating real property; and providing for an independent audit.

Appraisal District Budget

The board of directors is responsible for adopting the appraisal district budget.³⁶⁷

Before June 15 each year, the chief appraiser must prepare a proposed budget for appraisal district operations for the following tax year and submit it to each participating taxing unit and to the board of directors.³⁶⁸

The budget must list:

- each proposed position, including each position's:
 - (a) proposed salary;
 - (b) all proposed benefits;
- each proposed capital expenditure; and
- an estimate of the budget amount that will be allocated to each taxing unit.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.062(c)

³⁶⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(b)

³⁶⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(a)

³⁶⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(a)

Other items commonly included in the budget are:

- contract payments for services;
- reimbursement for reasonable and necessary appraisal district board expenses;
- per diem and actual expense reimbursement for ARB members;
- compensation for general counsel to the board of directors or ARB legal counsel, or both;
- reimbursement of appraisal district office staff for reasonable and necessary expenses;
- payment of tuition and fees incurred for courses or educational programs;
- funds for ARB proceedings and operations; and
- other items necessary for appraisal district operations.

An appraisal district is required to reimburse an appraisal district employee for all actual and necessary expenses, tuition and other fees and costs of materials incurred in attending, with approval of the chief appraiser, a course or training program sponsored or approved by TDLR.³⁷⁰

³⁷⁰ Tex. Tax Code §5.04(b)

If an appraisal district performs collection or assessment services, the Interlocal Cooperation Act requires an interlocal payment be in an amount that fairly compensates the performing party for the services or functions performed under the contract.³⁷¹ A 2003 attorney general opinion concludes that an appraisal district budget may only allocate the costs of operating the appraisal district for its appraisal purposes; the costs of tax assessment or collection are paid for by the taxing unit that has contracted with the district for these services and are not allocated to all taxing units within the district regardless of whether the unit contracted with the district for assessment or collection services.³⁷²

Public Notice of Budget Hearing

The board of directors must hold a public hearing to consider the budget.³⁷³ Not later than the 10th day before the hearing, the board of director's secretary must deliver a written notice of the date, time and place of the hearing to each participating taxing unit in the appraisal district.³⁷⁴

Within the same timeframe, the chief appraiser is required to publish a notice of the public hearing in a newspaper having general circulation in the county.³⁷⁵ The newspaper notice may not be smaller than one-quarter

page of a standard-size or tabloid-size newspaper and may not be published in the part of the paper in which legal notices and classified advertisements appear.³⁷⁶ This notice must have the time, date and place of the public hearing; specified summary of the proposed budget; notice that the appraisal district is supported solely from local taxing units; and a prescribed notice that the budget will automatically take effect unless disapproved by certain taxing units and a copy of the budget is available for public inspection at these taxing units.³⁷⁷ In addition to the statutorily required items in the notice, Comptroller Rule 9.3048 requires the notice to provide the number of employees compensated in the budget in terms of full-time equivalent employees and that the notice contains the name, address and telephone number of the appraisal district.

Budget Adoption

The board of directors must approve a budget before Sept. 15.³⁷⁸

If a majority of the voting taxing units adopt and file resolutions disapproving a budget within 30 days after its adoption, the budget does not take effect.³⁷⁹ The board must adopt a new budget within 30 days of disapproval.³⁸⁰

³⁷¹ Tex. Gov't Code §791.011(e)

³⁷² Tex. Att'y Gen. Op. GA-0030 (2003)

³⁷³ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(b)

³⁷⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(b)

³⁷⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.062(a)

³⁷⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.062(a)

³⁷⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.062(b) and (c)

³⁷⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(b)

³⁷⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(b)

³⁸⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(b)

The board may amend the approved budget at any time.³⁸¹ The board secretary must deliver a written copy of a proposed amendment to each participating taxing unit not later than the 30th day before the date the board acts on it.³⁸²

Allocating Costs of Appraisal District Operations

Each participating taxing unit pays a share of the appraisal district budget.³⁸³ The share is based on the proportion of property taxes imposed by the taxing unit to the sum of property taxes imposed by each participating taxing unit in the appraisal district.³⁸⁴ The resulting fraction is multiplied by the total dollar amount of the budget.

$$\frac{\text{Taxing Unit's Tax Levy}}{\text{Total Tax Levy of All Taxing Units}} = \text{Taxing Unit's Fractional Share}$$

If a taxing unit participates in two or more appraisal districts, only the taxes imposed in an appraisal district is used to calculate the taxing unit's cost allocations in that appraisal district.³⁸⁵ Tax Code Section 6.06(d) limits the share of the cost of the budget for a taxing unit that has a large tax levy but a smaller number of parcels. This limit applies to a taxing unit that has less than 5

percent of the total number of real property parcels in the appraisal district while imposing over 25 percent of the total amount of property taxes in the appraisal district for the year. In this case, a taxing unit's allocation may not exceed three times the taxing unit's percentage of the total number of parcels appraised by the appraisal district.³⁸⁶ For example, a taxing unit has 4 percent of the appraisal district's parcels but imposes 30 percent of the taxes. The budget share may not exceed three times 4 percent, or 12 percent. If there was no limitation, the budget share would be 30 percent.

For a newly formed taxing unit or a taxing unit that did not impose taxes in the preceding year, the taxing unit is allocated a portion of the budget and the amount of taxes the taxing unit imposes in the current year is used to calculate its allocation.³⁸⁷ The board of directors and the taxing unit may agree to an estimate of the amount of taxes that will be imposed for the current year.³⁸⁸ After the amount of taxes to be imposed is known, payments are adjusted to reflect the imposed amount.³⁸⁹

Each taxing unit must pay its allocation in four equal payments at the end of each calendar quarter unless a taxing unit's governing body and the chief appraiser agree on a

³⁸¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(c)

³⁸² Tex. Tax Code §6.06(c)

³⁸³ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(d)

³⁸⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(d)

³⁸⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(d)

³⁸⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(d)

³⁸⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(h)

³⁸⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(h)

³⁸⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(h)

different payment method.³⁹⁰ The first payment must be made before Jan. 1 of the year in which the budget takes effect.³⁹¹ If a payment is not paid on the due date, it incurs a 5 percent penalty and an annual interest rate of 10 percent.³⁹² For good cause shown, the board of directors may waive the penalty and interest on a delinquent payment.³⁹³

Different Fiscal Year and Method of Financing

An appraisal district's fiscal year is the calendar year.³⁹⁴ A different fiscal year may be designated by three-fourths of voting taxing units adopting resolutions.³⁹⁵ If the fiscal year is changed, the deadlines for the chief appraiser proposing and the board of directors adopting the budget and the deadline for the first allocation payment are specified deadlines before the first day of the changed fiscal year.³⁹⁶ The budget allocation is based on the amount of property taxes imposed by each participating taxing unit in the most recent tax year preceding the changed fiscal year.³⁹⁷

The board of directors or the taxing units participating in the appraisal district may

prescribe a different method of allocating the costs of operating the appraisal district.³⁹⁸

To change the method of financing, the board of directors must adopt a resolution and deliver it to each taxing unit participating in the appraisal district after June 15 and before Aug. 15.³⁹⁹ The financing does not change if the governing body of any participating taxing unit adopts a resolution opposing the different method, and files it with the board of directors before Sept. 1.⁴⁰⁰ If a board proposal is rejected, the board must provide written notification to each participating taxing unit before Sept. 15.⁴⁰¹

The participating taxing units in an appraisal district may adopt a different allocation method if three-fourths of the voting taxing units adopt resolutions providing for the other method.⁴⁰² This adoption is not valid if it requires any taxing unit to pay a greater proportion of the appraisal district's costs than the taxing unit would pay otherwise without the consent of that taxing unit.⁴⁰³

A resolution changing the allocation method is ineffective if an official copy is not filed with the chief appraiser after April 30 and before May 15.⁴⁰⁴ A change in allocation re-

³⁹⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(e)

³⁹¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(e)

³⁹² Tex. Tax Code §6.06(e)

³⁹³ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(k)

³⁹⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(i)

³⁹⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(i)

³⁹⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(i)

³⁹⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(i)

³⁹⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.061(a) and (b)

³⁹⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.061(a)

⁴⁰⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.061(a)

⁴⁰¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.061(a)

⁴⁰² Tex. Tax Code §6.061(b)

⁴⁰³ Tex. Tax Code §6.061(b)

⁴⁰⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.061(c)

mains in effect until changed or rescinded by resolution of a majority of the governing bodies of voting taxing units.⁴⁰⁵

Designation of District Depository

The board of directors must designate a depository for payments to be deposited.⁴⁰⁶ An appraisal district depository must be a banking corporation incorporated under Texas law or the United States or a Texas savings and loan association whose deposits are insured by the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation (FSLIC).⁴⁰⁷ To the extent that funds in the depository are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or the FSLIC, the funds must be secured in the manner provided by law for the security of funds of counties.⁴⁰⁸

The board of directors must designate as the district depository the financial institution or institutions that offer the most favorable terms and conditions for the handling of the appraisal district's funds.⁴⁰⁹ The board must solicit bids to be designated as depository for the appraisal district.⁴¹⁰ After a depository is designated, the depository must serve for a term of two years and until its successor is designated and has qualified.⁴¹¹ The board and the depository may agree to

extend a depository contract for one additional two-year period.⁴¹²

Consult legal counsel regarding the applicability of Local Government Code Chapter 116 concerning county depositories.

District's funds may be disbursed only by a written check, draft or order signed by the board chair and secretary of the board.⁴¹³ The board by resolution may authorize the chief appraiser to disburse funds.⁴¹⁴

Purchasing and Contracting

An appraisal district is subject to the same requirements and has the same purchasing and contracting authority as a municipality under Local Government Code Chapter 252.⁴¹⁵ Local Government Code Section 252.061 provides for an injunction if a contract is made without complying with Local Government Code Chapter 252 and any resident of the appraisal district may seek an injunction under that section.⁴¹⁶

Local Government Code sections 252.062 and 252.063 provide for criminal penalties for municipal officers and employees violating competitive bidding requirements and the removal of those individuals. These provisions apply to an appraisal district officer or employee in the same manner those

⁴⁰⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.061(e)

⁴⁰⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(f)

⁴⁰⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.09(a)

⁴⁰⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.09(d)

⁴⁰⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.09(b)

⁴¹⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.09(c)

⁴¹¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.09(c)

⁴¹² Tex. Tax Code §6.09(c)

⁴¹³ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(f)

⁴¹⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.06(f)

⁴¹⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.11(a)

⁴¹⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.11(b)

sections apply to a municipal officer or employee.⁴¹⁷

The Public Property Finance Act (Local Government Code Chapter 271) and the Interlocal Cooperation Act (Government Code Chapter 791) should also be reviewed. Consult with an attorney about bidding procedures, purchasing and contracts.

Financial Audit

At least once each year, the board of directors must have an audit prepared by an independent certified public accountant or a firm of independent certified public accountants.⁴¹⁸ A copy of the report must be delivered to each voting taxing unit.⁴¹⁹ A reasonable number of copies of the report must be available for inspection at the appraisal district office and the report is a public record.⁴²⁰

Other Financial Affairs

The board of directors and the chief appraiser also handle other financial details. Issues to discuss with an attorney include the application of the Public Funds Investment Act in Government Code Chapter 2256 to local governments, including political subdivisions; the application of Government Code Chapter 2253 to governmental entities in regard to public work contracts; sales tax; reporting to the Internal Revenue Service; purchase of insurance; retirement program participation, etc.

⁴¹⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.11(b)

⁴¹⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.063(a)

⁴¹⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.063(b)

⁴²⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.063(b)

Taxpayer Assistance

The IAAO’s publication *Standard on Public Relations* provides that a “public relations program should be an integral part of every assessment office’s work. A public relations program describes what the office does as well as how, why and for whom its services are provided. An effective public relations program results in more accurate and thorough coverage from the media and a better-informed constituency.”⁴²¹ Some of the topics in these standards include developing a written public relations program (including having a public relations officer) and a procedural manual, public records, printed information and correspondence, value notices, special-purpose messages, forms and questionnaires, annual reports, media contacts, speaking engagements, contact with other public officials, appeals process, public education and the internet.⁴²²

⁴²¹ IAAO, *Standard on Public Relations*, (July 2011), p. 5. www.iaao.org/media/standards/Standard_on_Public_Relations.pdf (Last visited March 19, 2024)

⁴²² This is only a selection of some of the topics covered in the standards. For the full text of the standards please see the IAAO’s *Standard on Public Relations* at www.iaao.org/media/standards/Standard_on_Public_Relations.pdf

Reasonable Access

One of the board’s required taxpayer assistance duties is to develop and implement policies that provide the public with reasonable opportunity to appear before the board to speak on any issue under the board’s jurisdiction.⁴²³ Reasonable time must be provided at each board of directors meeting for public comment on appraisal district and ARB policies and procedures and a report from the TLO if required.⁴²⁴

The board must prepare and maintain a written plan that describes how a non-English speaker or an individual with a physical, mental or developmental disability may be provided reasonable access to the board.⁴²⁵

Other General Access Issues

Issues the board should or may address, depending on factors such as whether legal requirements exist, include:

- evaluation of buildings for accessibility to those individuals who are physically impaired as required by state or federal law;
- parking accommodations for persons with disabilities;

⁴²³ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(d)

⁴²⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(d)

⁴²⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(e)

- allowance for attendant animals in offices;
- providing information in different types of media;
- providing a sign-language interpreter;
- providing translator services; and
- providing information in different languages. Certain Spanish resources can be found on the Comptroller’s website at comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/.

Complaint Process

The board of directors must prepare a description of the board’s functions and the board’s procedures for filing and resolving complaints.⁴²⁶ The board must make this information available to the public and the appropriate taxing jurisdictions.⁴²⁷ If a written complaint is filed with the board and the board has authority to resolve it, the board must provide notice of the complaint status to the parties to the complaint unless this notice would jeopardize an undercover investigation.⁴²⁸ The notice must be provided at least quarterly and until final disposition of the complaint.⁴²⁹ In certain counties, the TLO must report at each board of directors meeting on the status of all comments and suggestions received and all complaints filed with the board of directors.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(f)

⁴²⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(f)

⁴²⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(g)

⁴²⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.04(g)

⁴³⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.052(c)

Taxpayer Liaison Officer

In counties with a population of 120,000 or more, the board of directors must appoint a TLO and one or more deputy TLOs.⁴³¹ The TLO serves at the pleasure of the board of directors and is primarily responsible for providing assistance to taxpayers for the district.⁴³²

The TLO is responsible for:

- administering public access functions;
- providing information and materials to the public designed to assist property owners in understanding the appraisal process, protest procedures, the procedure for filing ARB comments, complaints, and suggestions or a request for limited binding arbitration;
- resolving disputes that do not involve matters that may be protested under Tax Code Section 41.41;
- receiving, compiling and forwarding complaints, comments and suggestions concerning ARB matters to the Comptroller’s office not later than Dec. 31 each year;
- reporting to the board of directors at each meeting the status of all comments, complaints and suggestions;
- investigating, referring and/or recommending an appropriate course in resolving a complaint;

⁴³¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.052(a)

⁴³² Tex. Tax Code §6.052(a)

- dismissing a complaint related to a property's appraised value or appraisal methodology and a complaint that is repetitive or fails to state a legitimate concern;
- notifying a property owner of a complaint resolution not later than the 90th day after the complaint was filed;
- completing the required training; and
- providing clerical assistance to the applicable appointing authority in the selection of ARB members, for publicizing the availability of ARB positions and delivering ARB applications.⁴³³

The chief appraiser or any other person who performs legal or appraisal services for the appraisal district for compensation is not eligible to be the TLO or a deputy TLO.⁴³⁴ The TLO or a deputy TLO is entitled to compensation as provided by the budget adopted by the board of directors.⁴³⁵

The TLO must administer the public access functions required by Tax Code sections 6.04(d), (e) and (f) which include allowing the public to speak before the board of directors; preparing and maintaining a written plan on reasonable access to the board for those who do not speak English or who have physical, mental or developmental disabilities; and preparing information

describing board functions and the complaint process.⁴³⁶

The TLO provides information and materials designed to assist property owners in understanding the appraisal process, protest procedures, procedures for filing comments, suggestions or complaints and related matters.⁴³⁷ At each meeting of the board of directors, the TLO is required to report on the status of all comments, complaints and suggestions filed with the officer relating to ARB hearing procedures, matters related to the fairness and efficiency of the ARB and complaints filed with the board of directors that the board has the authority to resolve.⁴³⁸

The TLO is required to provide complaints, comments and suggestions related to ARB hearing procedures and other matters related to the fairness and efficiency of the ARB to the Comptroller's office by Dec. 31 each year.⁴³⁹

⁴³³ Tex. Tax Code §6.052(a), (b), (c) and (f)

⁴³⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.052(e)

⁴³⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.052(d)

⁴³⁶ Tex. Tax Code §§6.04(d), (e) and (f) and 6.052(a)

⁴³⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.052(b)

⁴³⁸ Tex. Tax Code §§6.04(g) and 6.52(c)

⁴³⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.052(b)

Public Information Act

Public information is information that is written, produced, collected, assembled or maintained by or for a governmental entity in connection with the transaction of official business, including electronic communications related to official business, that are created, transmitted, received or maintained on any device.⁴⁴⁰ Public information is available to the public at a minimum during the normal business hours of the governmental body.⁴⁴¹ Certain information is excepted from public information requirements including information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional or statutory, or by judicial decision.⁴⁴²

One example of confidential information specifically related to appraisal districts is information relating to real property sales prices, descriptions, characteristics and other related information received from a private entity by the Comptroller's office or the chief appraiser of an appraisal district under Tax Code Chapter 6.⁴⁴³ This information is confidential, may only be requested by certain people in specified circumstances, remains confidential by persons who ob-

tain it and may not be disclosed except as provided.⁴⁴⁴

After receiving a request for public information, the public information officer must promptly produce public information for inspection, duplication, or both.⁴⁴⁵ The public information officer must provide the public information for inspection or duplication in the offices of the governmental body or send copies if the person requesting the information requests copies and pays the postage and any other applicable charges.⁴⁴⁶ If the information is unavailable because it is in active use or storage, the public information officer must certify this fact in writing to the requestor and set a date and hour within a reasonable time when the information will be available for inspection or duplication.⁴⁴⁷ If a governmental body closes its physical office but requires staff to work, the governmental body is required to make a good faith effort to continue responding to public information requests to the extent staff have access to the information.⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴⁰ Tex. Gov't Code §552.002(a)

⁴⁴¹ Tex. Gov't Code §552.021

⁴⁴² Tex. Gov't Code §552.101

⁴⁴³ Tex. Gov't Code §552.149(a)

⁴⁴⁴ Tex. Gov't Code §552.149

⁴⁴⁵ Tex. Gov't Code §552.221(a)

⁴⁴⁶ Tex. Gov't Code §552.221(b)

⁴⁴⁷ Tex. Gov't Code §552.221(c)

⁴⁴⁸ Tex. Gov't Code §552.221(a)

The charge for providing a copy of public information must be an amount that reasonably includes all related costs to reproducing the information.⁴⁴⁹ If a request is for 50 pages or less, the charge may not include materials, labor or overhead costs.⁴⁵⁰ Charges for these requests must be limited to a charge for each page unless the pages to be photocopied are located in two or more separate buildings that are not physically connected with each other or located in a remote storage facility.⁴⁵¹

The Office of the Attorney General must adopt rules that determine what governmental bodies charge for providing copies of public information.⁴⁵² Each governmental body must use these rules to determine charges for providing copies of public information and to determine the charge, deposit or bond required for making public information that exists in a paper record available for inspection, except to the extent as provided otherwise by law.⁴⁵³ Attorney general rules regarding charges for public information and other related information can be found at texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/governmental-bodies/charges-public-information.

If an officer for public information cannot produce public information for inspection

or duplication within 10 business days after the request, the officer must certify that fact in writing to the requestor and set a date and hour within a reasonable time when the information will be available.⁴⁵⁴

If a governmental body wishes to withhold information from public disclosure, it must ask for an attorney general's decision within 10 business days after the day of receiving the open records request.⁴⁵⁵ A decision is not required if there has been a previous determination that addresses the exact information.⁴⁵⁶ Within a reasonable time but not later than the 10th business day after the date of receiving the written request, a governmental body that asks for a decision must provide the requestor with a written statement that the governmental body wishes to withhold the requested information and has asked for an attorney general's decision and a copy of the governmental body's written communication to the attorney general as required.⁴⁵⁷

An officer for public information must prominently display an attorney general prescribed sign that contains basic information about the rights of a requestor, the responsibilities of a governmental body and the procedures for inspecting or obtaining a copy of public information.⁴⁵⁸ The sign

⁴⁴⁹ Tex. Gov't Code §552.261(a)

⁴⁵⁰ Tex. Gov't Code §552.261(a)

⁴⁵¹ Tex. Gov't Code §552.261(a)

⁴⁵² Tex. Gov't Code §552.262(a)

⁴⁵³ Tex. Gov't Code §552.262(a)

⁴⁵⁴ Tex. Gov't Code §552.221(d)

⁴⁵⁵ Tex. Gov't Code §552.301(a) and (b)

⁴⁵⁶ Tex. Gov't Code §552.301(a)

⁴⁵⁷ Tex. Gov't Code §552.301(d)

⁴⁵⁸ Tex. Gov't Code §552.205(a)

must be displayed at one or more places in the governmental body's administrative offices where it is plainly visible to members of the public and employees of the governmental body whose duties include receiving or responding to requests.⁴⁵⁹

Public officials must complete a one- to two-hour training course on the responsibilities of the governmental body with which the official serves and its officers and employees under the Public Information Act.⁴⁶⁰ The training must be completed not later than the 90th day after the date the public official takes the oath of office or otherwise assumes the duties as a public official.⁴⁶¹ A public official may designate a public information coordinator to satisfy the training requirements for the public official if the public information coordinator is primarily responsible for administering the responsibilities of the public official or governmental body under the Public Information Act.⁴⁶²

A requestor or the attorney general's office may file suit to compel a governmental body to make information available for public inspection.⁴⁶³ A person who claims to be a victim of a violation of the Public Information Act can file a complaint with the district or county attorney of the county in

which the governmental body is located.⁴⁶⁴ Before the 31st day after the date a complaint is filed, the district or county attorney must determine whether the violation alleged in the complaint was committed, whether to bring an action against the governmental body and notify the complainant of those determinations.⁴⁶⁵ A claimant is entitled to file a complaint with the attorney general's office on or after the 90th day after filing it with the district or county attorney.⁴⁶⁶ An official may only file an action if the governmental body does not cure the violation after three days of an official providing written notification to the governmental body that the alleged violation of the Act was committed.⁴⁶⁷

The Public Information Act has three types of violations that carry criminal penalties. The failure to give access to public information is a misdemeanor with a fine of up to \$1,000, six months in jail or both; this is also considered official misconduct and a public official can be removed from office.⁴⁶⁸ These same penalties apply to the distribution of information that is confidential under the Act.⁴⁶⁹ The third violation is if a person willfully destroys, mutilates, removes without permission or alters public

⁴⁵⁹ Tex. Gov't Code §552.205(a)

⁴⁶⁰ Tex. Gov't Code §552.012(b)

⁴⁶¹ Tex. Gov't Code §552.012(b)

⁴⁶² Tex. Gov't Code §552.012(c)

⁴⁶³ Tex. Gov't Code §552.321

⁴⁶⁴ Tex. Gov't Code §552.3215(e)

⁴⁶⁵ Tex. Gov't Code §552.3215(g)

⁴⁶⁶ Tex. Gov't Code §552.3215(i)

⁴⁶⁷ Tex. Gov't Code §552.3215(j)

⁴⁶⁸ Tex. Gov't Code §552.353

⁴⁶⁹ Tex. Gov't Code §552.352

information.⁴⁷⁰ This misdemeanor offense is punishable by a fine of not less than \$25 or more than \$4,000, county jail time from three days to not more than three months or both.⁴⁷¹

Questions regarding the applicability or interpretation of the Public Information Act should be directed to legal counsel.

For more information on the Public Information Act, call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline at 877-673-6839 or see the Office of the Attorney General's *Public Information Handbook* at texasattorneygeneral.gov/publicinfo_hb.pdf.

⁴⁷⁰ Tex. Gov't Code §552.351

⁴⁷¹ Tex. Gov't Code §552.351

Open Meetings Act

The Open Meetings Act requires every regular, special or called meeting of a governmental body to be open to the public, except as provided.⁴⁷² The Open Meetings Act applies any time a quorum of a governmental body meets as provided under Government Code Section 551.001(4).⁴⁷³ Members may attend social occasions, workshops, ceremonial events, press conferences and candidate forums, appearances or debates without violating the law, provided formal action is not taken and any discussion of public business is incidental.⁴⁷⁴

If a governmental body takes an action in violation of the Open Meetings Act, then that action is voidable.⁴⁷⁵ Violation of the Open Meetings Act is a misdemeanor offense.⁴⁷⁶ A member commits a misdemeanor offense if the member or group of members knowingly conspires to circumvent the Open Meetings Act by meeting in numbers less than a quorum for the purpose of secret deliberations in violation of the Open Meetings Act.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷² Tex. Gov't Code §551.002

⁴⁷³ Tex. Gov't Code §551.001(4)

⁴⁷⁴ Tex. Gov't Code §551.001(4)

⁴⁷⁵ Tex. Gov't Code §551.141

⁴⁷⁶ Tex. Gov't Code Chapter 551

⁴⁷⁷ Tex. Gov't Code §551.143(a)

A governmental body must give written notice of the date, hour, place and subject of each meeting.⁴⁷⁸ The governmental body must concurrently post the notice of a meeting and the agenda for the meeting on the internet website.⁴⁷⁹ The Open Meetings Act requires the posting of notices within certain time periods.⁴⁸⁰ It provides for posting meeting notices or adding agenda items for an already posted meeting when there is an emergency or when there is an urgent public necessity.⁴⁸¹ The Open Meetings Act should be consulted regarding the place, content and the deadlines of postings.

For each meeting, a governmental body must prepare and keep minutes or make a recording.⁴⁸² The minutes must state the subject of each deliberation and indicate each vote, order, decision or other action taken.⁴⁸³ These minutes and recordings of an open meeting are public records and must be available for public inspection and copying on request.⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁷⁸ Tex. Gov't Code §551.041

⁴⁷⁹ Tex. Gov't Code §551.056(b)

⁴⁸⁰ Tex. Gov't Code Chapter 551, Subchapter C

⁴⁸¹ Tex. Gov't Code §551.045

⁴⁸² Tex. Gov't Code §551.021(a)

⁴⁸³ Tex. Gov't Code §551.021(b)

⁴⁸⁴ Tex. Gov't Code §551.022

In an open meeting, a person in attendance may make an audio or visual recording of all or any part of the governmental body meeting.⁴⁸⁵ A governmental body may adopt reasonable rules to maintain order at a meeting, but the rules may not prevent or unreasonably impair a person from exercising the right to record the meeting.⁴⁸⁶ These rules may relate to the location of recording equipment and the manner in which the recording is conducted.⁴⁸⁷

The Open Meetings Act provides exceptions to the requirement that meetings of a governmental body be open to the public and sets forth procedures relating to closed meetings.⁴⁸⁸ If there is a closed meeting, a governmental body must first convene in an open meeting with a quorum and follow certain procedures.⁴⁸⁹ A governmental body may not vote, make a decision or take a final action in a closed meeting.⁴⁹⁰ For each closed meeting, a governmental body must keep either a certified agenda or make a recording of the meeting, except for private consultations with the governmental body's attorney.⁴⁹¹ The closed meeting's certified agenda or recording must be preserved for at least two years after the

meeting date or during any period in which litigation is pending regarding that meeting.⁴⁹² A district court may order that a certified agenda or recording of a closed meeting be available for public inspection.⁴⁹³

In part, some of the exceptions in the Open Meetings Act include certain meetings with the governmental body's attorney and meetings regarding personnel matters or real property deliberations. A governmental body may hold a closed meeting to seek the advice of its attorney about pending or contemplated litigation, a settlement offer or on a matter which requires the attorney to meet in a closed session to comply with the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas.⁴⁹⁴ Otherwise, a governmental body may not conduct a private consultation with its attorney.⁴⁹⁵ A closed meeting may be held to deliberate the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if an open meeting deliberation would have a detrimental effect on negotiations for the governmental body.⁴⁹⁶ The Open Meetings Act does not require an open meeting to deliberate on certain personnel matters of a public officer or employee, including the deliberation of the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline or

⁴⁸⁵ Tex. Gov't Code §551.023

⁴⁸⁶ Tex. Gov't Code §551.023

⁴⁸⁷ Tex. Gov't Code §551.023

⁴⁸⁸ Tex. Gov't Code Chapter 551,
Subchapters D and E

⁴⁸⁹ Tex. Gov't Code §551.101

⁴⁹⁰ Tex. Gov't Code §551.102

⁴⁹¹ Tex. Gov't Code §551.103

⁴⁹² Tex. Gov't Code §551.104(a)

⁴⁹³ Tex. Gov't Code §551.104(b) and (c)

⁴⁹⁴ Tex. Gov't Code §551.071

⁴⁹⁵ Tex. Gov't Code §551.071

⁴⁹⁶ Tex. Gov't Code §551.072

dismissal; or to hear a complaint or charge against an officer or employee.⁴⁹⁷

Each elected or appointed public official of a governmental body subject to the Open Meetings Act must complete a training course.⁴⁹⁸ The official is required to complete a training course not later than the 90th day after taking the oath of office or otherwise assumes the duties as a public official.⁴⁹⁹ The Office of the Attorney General must ensure that the training is available.⁵⁰⁰ For more information regarding training by the Office of the Attorney General, please see texasattorneygeneral.gov/og/open-government-training.

A governmental body must maintain and make available for public inspection the record of its members' completion of the training.⁵⁰¹ The failure of one or more members of a governmental body to complete the required training does not affect the validity of an action taken by the governmental body.⁵⁰²

Boards of directors should seek legal advice regarding the applicability of the Open Meetings Act to board meetings. For more information on the Open Meetings Act, call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline at 877-673-6839 or see the Office of the Attorney General's *Open Meetings Act Handbook* at texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/files/divisions/open-government/openmeetings_hb.pdf.

⁴⁹⁷ Tex. Gov't Code §551.074(a)

⁴⁹⁸ Tex. Gov't Code §551.005(a)

⁴⁹⁹ Tex. Gov't Code §551.005(a)

⁵⁰⁰ Tex. Gov't Code §551.005(b)

⁵⁰¹ Tex. Gov't Code §551.005(c)

⁵⁰² Tex. Gov't Code §551.005(f)

Appraisal District Operations

Each appraisal district *must* establish an office located in the county for which the appraisal district is established; an appraisal district may establish branch offices outside the county.⁵⁰³ The board of directors may contract with another appraisal district or with a taxing unit within the district to perform its appraisal district duties.⁵⁰⁴

Ownership or Lease of Real Property

The board of directors may purchase or lease real property and may construct improvements as necessary to establish and operate the appraisal district office or a branch office.⁵⁰⁵

For an appraisal district to acquire or convey real property or construct or renovate a building or other improvement, three-fourths of the voting taxing units must approve.⁵⁰⁶ The board of directors by resolution may propose a property transaction or other action that requires approval of the taxing units.⁵⁰⁷ The chief appraiser must notify each taxing unit entitled to vote on the proposal by delivering a copy of the

board's resolution, together with information showing the costs of other available alternatives to the proposal.⁵⁰⁸ On or before the 30th day after the date a taxing unit receives notice of a proposal, the governing body of the taxing unit by resolution may approve or disapprove the proposal.⁵⁰⁹ If a governing body fails to act by that time or fails to file its resolution with the chief appraiser on or before the 10th day after that 30th day, the proposal is treated as if it were disapproved.⁵¹⁰

If a conveyance of real property owned by the appraisal district is approved, the board of directors may convey the real property and the proceeds are credited to each participating taxing unit in proportion to the taxing unit's allocation of the budget in the year in which the transaction occurs.⁵¹¹

Technological Capabilities

The Tax Code requires appraisal districts to electronically furnish certain material or communicate electronically in specific circumstances; appraisal districts need to have

⁵⁰³ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(a)

⁵⁰⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(b)

⁵⁰⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.051(a)

⁵⁰⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.051(b)

⁵⁰⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.051(b)

⁵⁰⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.051(b)

⁵⁰⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.051(b)

⁵¹⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.051(b)

⁵¹¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.051(c)

the technological capabilities to fulfill these requirements.

When the Tax Code requires a property owner to use a form, the office or agency with which the form is filed must make printed and electronic versions of the forms readily and timely available and must furnish a property owner a form without charge.⁵¹²

If a property owner or designated agent elects for the exchange of electronic communication, a tax official is required to deliver electronically any notice, rendition, application form, completed application or information requested.⁵¹³

The tax official is required to establish a procedure that allows a property owner or designated agent to make the election for the exchange of electronic communication, to specify the manner in which communications will be exchanged and the method used to confirm the delivery of information without charge.⁵¹⁴

A property owner or designated agent's election for electronic communication with a tax official remains in effect until rescinded in writing by the property owner or designated agent.⁵¹⁵

Appraisal districts in a county with a population of 500,000 or more must implement

a system that allows the designation of a property tax agent to be signed and filed electronically.⁵¹⁶

Appraisal districts must implement a system that allows a residence homestead owner to electronically:

- file a notice of protest with the ARB regarding the determination of appraised value or unequal appraisal;
- receive and review comparable sales data and other evidence that the chief appraiser intends to use at the protest hearing before the ARB;
- receive, as applicable, a notice from the appraisal district that a settlement offer will not be made or receive a settlement offer from the appraisal district to correct the appraisal records by changing the property's market value and, if applicable, the appraised value to the value as redetermined by the appraisal district; or
- accept or reject an appraisal district settlement offer.⁵¹⁷

This requirement applies to counties that maintain internet websites and is mandatory for counties with populations of 500,000 or more.⁵¹⁸

Appraisal districts should work with the Comptroller's office to ensure internet compatibility.

⁵¹² Tex. Tax Code §1.09

⁵¹³ Tex. Tax Code §1.085(a-1)

⁵¹⁴ Tex. Tax Code §1.085(a-2) and (a-4)

⁵¹⁵ Tex. Tax Code §1.085(a-3)

⁵¹⁶ Tex. Tax Code §1.111(b)

⁵¹⁷ Tex. Tax Code §41.415(b)

⁵¹⁸ Tex. Tax Code §41.415(a)

Records System

Tax Code Section 5.07 and Comptroller Rule 9.3003 require offices appraising property to develop and maintain a tax records system. Any of the required information may be maintained electronically rather than in physical documents. Such a system must include the following:

- appraisal cards;
- maps;
- rendition forms;
- report of decreased value forms;
- appraisal records of all property;
- tax roll of any taxing unit for whom the appraisal district assesses or collects;
- delinquent tax roll of any taxing unit for whom the office collects;
- alphabetical index;
- partial exemption lists;
- absolute exemption lists; and
- lists of properties receiving appraisal as open-space land; agricultural use; timber use; recreational, park and scenic land; and public access airports.

Appraisal Records of All Property

Provisions in Tax Code Chapter 25 and Comptroller Rule 9.3004 requires all appraisal district offices to develop and maintain appraisal records of all property. These records must be two lists: one for real property and one list for personal property and must contain specified information as applicable. Any required information may be maintained electronically rather in physical documents.

Appraisal Cards

Comptroller Rule 9.3001 requires that all appraisal district offices that appraise property must develop and maintain a system of appraisal cards for all parcels of real estate which each office is required to appraise. A separate appraisal card must be developed and maintained for each parcel of residential or commercial real estate with specified items of information related to the land and improvements on the parcel. Many of these items of information, plus additional specified information, must be on the appraisal card for each parcel of rural or acreage real estate. The appraisal cards may be maintained electronically rather than in physical documents.

Maps

In meeting the chief appraiser's principal responsibility to locate, record and appraise all property in the appraisal district, a complete set of maps is indispensable. Maps enable appraisers to locate each real property parcel, identify its size and shape and determine its relationship to factors that affect its value. Maps also serve to display market and statistical data, appraisal comparisons and land appraisals.

Comptroller Rule 9.3002 requires all appraisal districts and tax offices appraising property to establish and maintain a system of tax maps covering the entire area of the taxing units for whom each office appraises property. The tax map system must be annually updated to incorporate any new

subdivisions or property transfers as indicated by the filing of subdivision plats or deeds with the county clerk's office of the county or counties in which the taxing units for whom each office appraises property are located. Any of the information may be maintained electronically rather than physical documents.

Local Government Records Management

Appraisal districts are subject to the preservation, microfilming, destruction and other records disposition provisions of Local Government Code Chapter 203.⁵¹⁹ For additional information about records management and retention, see the Texas State Library and Archives Commission at www.tsl.texas.gov.

⁵¹⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.13

Appraisal District Personnel

The appraisal district board of directors may employ a general counsel for the appraisal district to serve at the will of the board.⁵²⁰

The general counsel must provide counsel directly to the board and perform other duties and responsibilities as determined by the board.⁵²¹ The general counsel is entitled to compensation as provided by the budget adopted by the board.⁵²²

Through adopting the budget, the board of directors may direct the size and qualifications of staff, as well as set the goals and objectives of the appraisal district through its personnel. The chief appraiser may employ and compensate professional, clerical and other personnel as provided by the budget, with the exception of a general counsel to the appraisal district.⁵²³

A chief appraiser may not employ persons who are related to directors within the second degree by affinity or within the third degree by consanguinity as determined under Government Code Chapter 573.⁵²⁴ A person commits an offense if the person intention-

ally or knowingly violates this prohibition; the offense is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of at least \$100 and up to \$1,000.⁵²⁵

Personnel Policy

IAAO's *Property Appraisal and Assessment Administration* provides general guidance on personnel management, including selection of employees, employee development, compensation, internal communication, motivation and leadership and system issues in management.⁵²⁶

Personnel manuals can inform employees about the appraisal district's goals and objectives, policies, procedures and guidelines to follow in the course of their duties. Manuals should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Examples of appraisal district personnel manuals are at comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/personnel-policies/index.php.

Consult legal counsel for advice in preparing personnel policy manuals or handbooks.

⁵²⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(j)

⁵²¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(j)

⁵²² Tex. Tax Code §6.05(j)

⁵²³ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(d)

⁵²⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(f)

⁵²⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.05(f)

⁵²⁶ IAAO, *Property Appraisal and Assessment Administration*, (1990), pp. 429 to 439

Professional Development

According to IAAO’s *Standard on Professional Development*, “in-service training and continuing education of assessment personnel are essential parts of an effective program”⁵²⁷

Certain appraisal district employees register with and attain certification from TDLR. Registrants must pass one or more examinations to be certified and must participate to the extent required by TDLR in continuing education programs to maintain registration.⁵²⁸ An individual may not serve as a chief appraiser unless the individual has completed chief appraiser training pursuant to Occupations Code Section 1151.164 and Tax Code Section 5.042.⁵²⁹ This prohibition does not apply to a county TAC who serves as chief appraiser under Tax Code Section 6.05(c).⁵³⁰ It applies only to a chief appraiser appointed on or after July 1, 2006.⁵³¹ Also, a person may serve in a temporary, provisional or interim capacity as chief appraiser for up to one year without completing the required training.⁵³²

Chief appraisers are required to complete at least half of their required continuing education hours in programs devoted to one or more of the topics listed in Occupations Code Section 1151.164(b) and at least two of the hours in ethics specific to maintaining the independence of an appraisal office from political pressure.⁵³³

An appraisal district should budget funds to cover necessary training and education expenses. An appraisal district is required to reimburse an appraisal district employee for all actual and necessary expenses, tuition and other fees and costs of materials incurred in attending, with approval of the chief appraiser, a course or training program sponsored or approved by TDLR.⁵³⁴

⁵²⁷ IAAO, *Standard on Professional Development*, (April 2022), p.1.
https://www.iaao.org/media/standards/Standard_on_Professional_Development.pdf (Last visited March 19, 2024)

⁵²⁸ Tex. Occ. Code §§1151.161 and 1151.1581

⁵²⁹ Tex. Tax Code §5.042(a)

⁵³⁰ Tex. Tax Code §5.042(c)

⁵³¹ Acts 2005, 79th Leg., R.S. Ch. 1111, Sec. 3

⁵³² Tex. Tax Code §5.042(b)

⁵³³ Tex. Occupations Code §1151.1581

⁵³⁴ Tex. Tax Code §5.04(b)

Assessment and Collection Functions

A taxing unit and a commissioner's court may contract with another taxing unit to perform their assessment and collection functions.⁵³⁵ The Tax Code provides procedures for taxing units to follow to consolidate assessment, collection or assessment and collection functions with an appraisal district.⁵³⁶ The appraisal district may be responsible for these functions for one or more of the appraisal district's taxing units.

If an appraisal district does assess, collect or assess and collect, please see Tax Code Subtitle E regarding collections and delinquency.

Interlocal Contracts

The board of directors may enter a contract with a taxing unit or a commissioner's court to collect and assess taxes for that taxing unit or county (with county TAC approval).⁵³⁷ These contracts are subject to the Interlocal Cooperation Act.⁵³⁸ The contract may provide for the collecting entity to contract with an attorney to collect delinquent taxes.⁵³⁹

⁵³⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.24(a) and (b)

⁵³⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.26

⁵³⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.24(a) and (b)

⁵³⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.24(a) and (b)

⁵³⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.24(d)

If a county contracts to have its taxes assessed and collected by another entity, the contract must require the assessment and collection of all the taxes the county is required to assess and collect except for special inventory taxes assessed and collected under specified provisions.⁵⁴⁰ The Attorney General has held that Tax Code Section 6.24 is construed as authorizing a contract to obtain assistance for the county TAC, as opposed to supplanting the TAC.⁵⁴¹

Consolidation Election

Pursuant to Tax Code Section 6.26, qualified voters may petition to consolidate the assessment and collection of property taxes. The attorney general has held that Tax Code Section 6.26 is unconstitutional insofar as it contravenes Texas Constitution, Article VIII, Section 14 and that the Legislature may not authorize the electorate to divest the county TAC of the assessment and collection duties, other than appraisal functions.⁵⁴²

Qualified voters residing in an appraisal district may petition to require an election to determine whether to require the appraisal district, county TAC or a specified taxing

⁵⁴⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.24(b) and (c)

⁵⁴¹ Tex. Att'y Gen. Op. JM-833 (1987)

⁵⁴² Tex. Att'y Gen. Op. JM-833 (1987)

unit within the appraisal district to assess, collect or assess and collect property taxes on property appraised by the appraisal district for all taxing units.⁵⁴³

If a taxing unit assesses, collects or assesses and collects its own property taxes, the qualified voters of that taxing unit may submit a petition to the governing body of the taxing unit to require an election to determine whether to require the appraisal district, the county TAC or another taxing unit to assess, collect or assess and collect the taxing unit's property taxes.⁵⁴⁴

For a petition to be valid, it must make certain statements and be signed by a specified amount or percentage of certain qualified voters.⁵⁴⁵

The petition may require the appraisal district, the county TAC or a specified taxing unit within the appraisal district to perform the consolidated functions.⁵⁴⁶ Neither an appraisal district nor a taxing unit may be required by an election to assess, collect or assess and collect taxes on property outside the appraisal district's boundaries.⁵⁴⁷

If the commissioner's court or the taxing unit's governing body finds that a petition is valid, it must order an election in the appraisal district or taxing unit on the next

uniform election date prescribed by the Election Code that is more than 60 days after the last day on which it could have acted on the petition.⁵⁴⁸

If a majority of the qualified voters who voted in the election favor the proposition, the appraisal district, county TAC or specified taxing unit named on the ballot must perform the functions specified by the ballot beginning with the next time property taxes are assessed or collected, as applicable, that is more than 90 days after the date of the election. When the performance of a function begins before that time period, a function may be consolidated if the governing bodies agree, including the appraisal district board of directors if the appraisal district is involved.⁵⁴⁹

A consolidation may not be terminated within two years after the consolidation date.⁵⁵⁰

A taxing unit must pay the actual cost of the consolidated functions to the office or entity that performs the functions pursuant to an election.⁵⁵¹ Actual costs have been defined by the attorney general as those costs that the collecting taxing unit or appraisal district incurs over and above those it would incur if it were not collecting for another taxing unit.⁵⁵²

⁵⁴³ Tex. Tax Code §6.26(a)

⁵⁴⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.26(b)

⁵⁴⁵ Tex. Tax Code §6.26(c)

⁵⁴⁶ Tex. Tax Code §6.26(a)

⁵⁴⁷ Tex. Tax Code §6.26(j)

⁵⁴⁸ Tex. Tax Code §6.26(e)

⁵⁴⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.26(f)

⁵⁵⁰ Tex. Tax Code §6.26(i)

⁵⁵¹ Tex. Tax Code §6.26(g)

⁵⁵² Tex. Att'y Gen. Op. JM-996 (1988)

A taxing unit may require a bond when an appraisal district collects for the taxing unit.⁵⁵³ The taxing unit must pay the premium for the bond from its general fund or as provided by intergovernmental contract.⁵⁵⁴

Annual Collection Budget

If an appraisal district is assessing and collecting, the district should outline the costs in a separate budget.⁵⁵⁵ If the appraisal district performs assessment and collection functions under contract, the budget should be based on the contract. If the appraisal district collects under an election, the budget should be based on actual costs among the taxing units served.⁵⁵⁶ The appraisal district must allocate costs only to those taxing units for which it performs assessment and collection functions.⁵⁵⁷

Special items in the annual collection budget could include required bonds, services of a delinquent tax attorney and court fees (if the appraisal district is handling delinquent collections).

⁵⁵³ Tex. Tax Code §6.29(b)

⁵⁵⁴ Tex. Tax Code §6.29(c)

⁵⁵⁵ Tex. Att’y Gen. Op. GA-0030 (2003)

⁵⁵⁶ Tex. Att’y Gen. Op. JM-996 (1988)

⁵⁵⁷ Tex. Att’y Gen. Op. GA-0030 (2003)

Comptroller Review of Appraisal Districts

The Comptroller's office provides technical assistance to local taxing units and taxpayers on property tax issues, but it cannot intervene in local tax matters. The Comptroller's office is required to adopt rules establishing minimum standards for appraisal district administration and operations and is also required to conduct reviews of appraisal district operations.⁵⁵⁸

Methods and Assistance Program (MAP)

At least once every two years, PTAD must review each appraisal district's governance, taxpayer assistance and the operating and appraisal standards, procedures and methodology to determine compliance with generally accepted standards, procedures and methodology.⁵⁵⁹ After consultation with the Property Tax Administration Advisory Board, the Comptroller's office by rule may establish procedures and standards for conducting and scoring the review.⁵⁶⁰

In conducting the review, the Comptroller's office is entitled to access to all appraisal district records and reports, to copy

or print these materials and to the assistance of the appraisal district's officers and employees.⁵⁶¹

At the conclusion of the review, the Comptroller's office must, in writing, notify the appraisal district of its performance in the review.⁵⁶² If there is a finding of non-compliance with generally accepted standards, procedures and methodology, or certain Comptroller-issued manuals, the Comptroller's office must deliver a report that details the findings and recommendations for improvement to the following:

- the appraisal district's chief appraiser and board of directors; and
- the superintendent and board of trustees of each school district participating in the appraisal district.⁵⁶³

If an appraisal district fails to comply with the report's recommendations and the Comptroller's office finds that the appraisal district board of directors failed to take remedial action reasonably designed to ensure substantial compliance with each report recommendation before the first anniversary of the date the report was issued, the

⁵⁵⁸ Tex. Tax Code §§5.03, 5.10, 5.102, 5.12 and Tex. Gov't Code §403.302

⁵⁵⁹ Tex. Tax Code §6.16(a 1-3)

⁵⁶⁰ Tex. Tax Code §5.102(a)

⁵⁶¹ Tex. Tax Code §5.102(b)

⁵⁶² Tex. Tax Code §5.102(c)

⁵⁶³ Tex. Tax Code §5.102(c)

Comptroller's office must notify TDLR.⁵⁶⁴ TDLR must take action necessary to ensure that the recommendations in the report are implemented as soon as practicable.⁵⁶⁵ If TDLR takes action, then before Feb. 1 of the year following the year in which action is taken, TDLR must, with the assistance of the Comptroller's office, determine whether the recommendations in the most recent report have been substantially implemented.⁵⁶⁶ TDLR must notify the appraisal district's chief appraiser and the board of directors in writing of the determination.⁵⁶⁷

Comptroller Rule 9.301 provides procedures and standards for the reviews and additional MAP information is available at comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/map/index.php.

School District Property Value Study (SDPVS)

Government Code Section 403.302 requires the Comptroller's office to conduct a study to determine the total taxable value of all property in each school district at least once every two years. This study is referred to as the School District Property Value Study (SDPVS).

The purpose of the SDPVS is to help ensure equitable distribution of state funding for public education. Texas funds public

education through state and local funds. Local funding comes from property taxes.⁵⁶⁸ The chief appraiser of each appraisal district determines local property values and school districts set tax rates that determine the amount of local tax revenue. Texas bases state funding, in part, on the total taxable property value within each school district, as determined by the SDPVS.

By law, taxable value equals the market value of all taxable property in a district, minus certain exemptions and deductions such as state-mandated homestead and disabled veteran exemptions as well as value limitations.⁵⁶⁹ Deductions are made for re-investment zones, freeport exemptions, productivity appraisal of qualified agricultural lands, the school tax ceiling for homeowners age 65 and older or disabled and other state-mandated exemptions.⁵⁷⁰

To estimate a school district's taxable value, the Government Code requires the Comptroller's office to do the following:

- use generally accepted sampling, standard valuation, statistical compilation and analysis techniques;
- ensure that different levels of appraisal on sold and unsold property do not adversely affect the accuracy of the study and that different levels of appraisal resulting from protests to the ARB on the grounds

⁵⁶⁴ Tex. Tax Code §5.102(d)

⁵⁶⁵ Tex. Tax Code §5.102(d)

⁵⁶⁶ Tex. Tax Code §5.102(e)

⁵⁶⁷ Tex. Tax Code §5.102(e)

⁵⁶⁸ Tex. Gov't Code §403.301

⁵⁶⁹ Tex. Gov't Code §403.302(d)

⁵⁷⁰ Tex. Gov't Code §403.302(d)

of market or appraised value or unequal appraisal (Tax Code sections 41.41(a)(1) or (2)) are appropriately adjusted in the study; and

- test the validity of taxable values and presume that appraisal roll values represent taxable value when local value is determined to be valid.⁵⁷¹

The Comptroller’s office tests the taxable values the appraisal district assigns to each property category by constructing a statistical margin of error around the estimate of value for selected property categories in each school district.⁵⁷² The Comptroller’s office considers values valid, or acceptable, when they are within the margin of error.⁵⁷³ The Comptroller’s office considers values outside this margin of error invalid.⁵⁷⁴

If a school district’s locally appraised value (local value) is valid, the Comptroller’s office certifies the local value to the commissioner of education.⁵⁷⁵ If the local value is invalid, the Comptroller’s office certifies the state value, unless the school district’s value is higher than the acceptable range or the school district is eligible for a grace period (a period during which state law allows local value to be used even though the school

district’s property values are not at market value).⁵⁷⁶

If, in the final certification of the SDPVS, a school district’s local value as determined by the appraisal district is invalid, the Comptroller’s office is required to send a notification to the board of directors. The board of directors is required to hold a public meeting to discuss the notification.⁵⁷⁷

The Education Code provides how the commissioner of education uses the findings of the SDPVS to determine state aid in school funding.

Additional information regarding the SDPVS is available at: comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/pvs/index.php.

Targeted Appraisal Review Program (TARP)

If the Comptroller’s office determines a school district’s local values to be invalid for three consecutive years, the Government Code requires the Comptroller’s office to perform an additional review of the appraisal district. The additional review is targeted and requires the Comptroller’s office to provide recommendations to the appraisal district regarding appraisal standards, procedures, and methodologies.

⁵⁷¹ Tex. Gov’t Code §403.302(b) and (c)

⁵⁷² Tex. Gov’t Code §403.302(c)

⁵⁷³ Tex. Gov’t Code §403.302(c)

⁵⁷⁴ Tex. Gov’t Code §403.302(c)

⁵⁷⁵ Tex. Gov’t Code §403.302(c)

⁵⁷⁶ Tex. Gov’t Code §§403.302(c) and 403.3011(2)

⁵⁷⁷ Tex. Gov’t Code §403.302(k)

If an appraisal district fails to comply with the report's recommendations and the Comptroller's office finds that the appraisal district board of directors failed to take remedial action reasonably designed to ensure substantial compliance with each recommendation before the first anniversary of the date the recommendations were made, the Comptroller's office must notify TDLR. TDLR must take action necessary to ensure that the recommendations in the report are implemented as soon as practicable. Before Feb. 1 of the year following the year in which TDLR takes action, TDLR must, with the assistance of the Comptroller's office, determine whether the recommendations have been substantially implemented. If it is determined that the recommendations have not been substantially implemented, the board of directors is required to consider whether the failure to implement the recommendations was under the chief appraiser's control and whether the chief appraiser is able to adequately perform his or her duties.⁵⁷⁸

Performance Audits

The Comptroller's office must perform performance audits of appraisal districts that fail to meet specified standards for two consecutive studies conducted by the Comptroller's office under Tax Code Section 5.10.⁵⁷⁹ Existence of any one of the following conditions for two consecutive years triggers an audit:

- the overall median level of appraisal for all properties in the appraisal district is less than 0.75 as determined in the Comptroller's study;
- the coefficient of dispersion around the median of the overall property sample is greater than 0.30; or
- the difference between median levels of appraisal for any two property classes is greater than 0.45.⁵⁸⁰

Under certain circumstances, the Comptroller's office must also complete an audit if a majority of participating taxing units or a majority of voting taxing units submit a written request to the Comptroller's office for a performance audit or an audit of only one or more particular matters.⁵⁸¹

Additionally, owners of at least 10 percent of accounts or parcels of property in a single class can petition for a performance audit (but only if the class makes up at least 5 percent of the total property value in the district).⁵⁸² Further, on written request, property owners may request an audit if the owners represent not less than 10 percent of the appraised value of all the property in the appraisal district belonging to a single class of property if that property class makes up at least 5 percent of the appraisal district's total property value.⁵⁸³

⁵⁷⁸ Tex. Gov't Code §403.302(k-1)

⁵⁷⁹ Tex. Tax Code §5.12(a)

⁵⁸⁰ Tex. Tax Code §5.12(a)

⁵⁸¹ Tex. Tax Code §5.12(b)

⁵⁸² Tex. Tax Code §5.12(c)

⁵⁸³ Tex. Tax Code §5.12(c)

Taxing units and property owners may not request an audit if, for the last two SDPVS under Tax Code Section 5.10:

- the overall median of appraisal for all of the appraisal district’s property is more than 0.90 and less than 1.10;
- the coefficient of dispersion for the overall property sample in the study is less than 0.15; and
- the difference between the highest and lowest median appraisal levels for the various property classes is less than 0.20.⁵⁸⁴

A request for an appraisal district performance audit may not be made:

- during the two years immediately following the publication of the second of two consecutive studies according to which the Comptroller’s office is required to conduct an audit of the appraisal district;
- during the year immediately following the date the results of an audit of the appraisal district conducted by the Comptroller’s office are reported to the chief appraiser of the appraisal district; or
- during a year in which the Comptroller’s office is conducting a MAP review of the appraisal district under Tax Code Section 5.102.⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁸⁴ Tex. Tax Code §5.12(d)

⁵⁸⁵ Tex. Tax Code §5.12(e)

Appraisal districts must bear the cost of audits triggered by study results or triggered by a taxing unit request for an audit.⁵⁸⁶ The cost of a taxpayer-requested audit is borne by the requesting taxpayers.⁵⁸⁷ However, the appraisal district must reimburse the cost of a taxpayer-requested audit if the audit’s results show that the median level of appraisal for a class of property exceeds 1.10 or the median level of appraisal for one property class varies by at least 10 percent from the overall median level of property in the appraisal district.⁵⁸⁸

The Comptroller’s office must report the results of the audit in writing to the governing body of each participating taxing unit, the chief appraiser and to the presiding officer of the appraisal district board of directors.⁵⁸⁹ If it is a taxpayer-requested audit, the Comptroller’s office must also provide a report to a representative of the property owners who requested the audit.⁵⁹⁰

Appraisal District Ratio Study (ADRS)

Tax Code Section 5.10 requires the Comptroller’s office to conduct a ratio study to measure the performance of each appraisal district in Texas at least once every two years and to publish the results. The purpose of the Appraisal District Ratio Study

⁵⁸⁶ Tex. Tax Code §5.13(g)

⁵⁸⁷ Tex. Tax Code §5.13(g)

⁵⁸⁸ Tex. Tax Code §5.13(g)

⁵⁸⁹ Tex. Tax Code §5.13(f)

⁵⁹⁰ Tex. Tax Code §5.13(f)

(ADRS) is to measure the uniformity and median level of appraisals performed by an appraisal district within each major property category. To conduct the ADRS, the Comptroller's office applies appropriate standard statistical analysis techniques to data collected through the SDPVS required by Government Code Section 403.302. The level of appraisal shows whether the appraisal district has appraised properties at 100 percent of the legally required level — normally the market value. The uniformity of appraisal indicates how much the market value percentage varies from property to property.

For more information, visit our website:
comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax

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