

PROPERTY TAX | ONE-PAGE OVERVIEW

Memphis & Shelby County | Rate year: hypothetical example, not a current rate | Reviewed September 25, 2026

Start with the value, then the rate

The Shelby County Assessor determines market (appraised) value and property classification. A residential home is assessed at 25% of market value; commercial/industrial property generally at 40%. Elected City and County bodies adopt their own rates, stated per \$100 of assessed value. The County Trustee handles county bills; the City handles city bills.

Annual property tax before relief = (market value x assessment ratio / 100) x applicable rate.

Worked example - invented rates, not a bill

Assume a \$200,000 residential home inside Memphis, assessed at 25%, with fictional City \$2.00 and County \$3.00 rates per \$100. Assessed value = \$50,000; $\$50,000 / 100 = 500$ rate units. City = $500 \times \$2.00 = \$1,000$; County = $500 \times \$3.00 = \$1,500$; combined = \$2,500 before relief. Outside Memphis, do not add the Memphis rate; another municipality or special levy may apply. Check the parcel and tax year on actual bills.

After reappraisal: what stays level?

Tennessee's certified-rate calculation in a general reappraisal year aims for the same jurisdiction-wide property-tax revenue as the prior year, excluding new construction, improvements and deletions. It does NOT promise the same bill for each property or add inflation automatically. Officials may adopt a higher rate after required public notice and a hearing. Annual budgets and rate votes still matter. [Comptroller; Tenn. Code 67-5-1701]

Fairness is a question to test

Who pays as a share of income, who qualifies for relief, and which neighborhoods receive services? A flat fee takes a larger share of a lower income than a higher income. Value-based taxes vary with property value, but value is not income and renters may bear indirect costs. Revenue choices can affect capacity for schools, housing, streets and other services; spending priorities are separate decisions.

Check a bill, find help, or try your numbers

City tax information: <https://memphistn.gov/tax-information>

County taxes and bill information: <https://www.shelbycountytrustee.com/94/Taxes>

Actual tax-year rates (City / County): <https://www.shelbycountytrustee.com/245/Memphis-Tax-Rates>

County rate table: <https://www.shelbycountytrustee.com/246/Shelby-County-Tax-Rates>

Trustee relief information: <https://www.shelbycountytrustee.com/106/Tax-Relief>

Certified-rate rule - Tennessee Comptroller:

<https://comptroller.tn.gov/boards/state-board-of-equalization/sboe-resources/certified-tax-rate.html>

Try your own numbers: Which jurisdiction(s) tax your parcel? What is its assessed value and tax year? Use the free calculator (illustrative, not an official bill): moralbudget.com/property-tax/calculator. Explore a public budget or tell elected officials which investments matter to you; no account is needed to explore.

Try the free calculator (verify its rate year): <https://moralbudget.com/property-tax/calculator>

Explore public budget choices without an account: <https://moralbudget.com/budget-simulator/select-path>

Sources: Tennessee Comptroller certified-rate guidance and Shelby County Trustee tax-rate/bill/relief pages (links above; detailed citations in the walkthrough). Example amounts are assumptions, not observed local bills or enacted rates.