

City&Town

Christopher C. Harding, Commissioner • Sean R. Cronin, Senior Deputy Commissioner of Local Services



Save the Date: 2020 New Officials Finance Forum

The Division of Local Services (DLS) will host its annual **New Officials Finance Forum on Thursday, June 4th at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester.**

February 20th, 2020

Important Dates & Information

Latest Issue of OSD's *Buy the Way* Now Available

Don't miss the January-February 2020 edition of [Buy the Way](#), the bi-monthly magazine of the Operational Services Division (OSD).

Click [here](#) to get news and updates from OSD delivered to your inbox.

Housing Choice Initiative

Announcing the opening of the online applications for designation as a **Housing Choice Community**. Applications will close at **3pm on Monday, March 23, 2020.**

Housing Choice Community (HCC) designation status lasts for two years, so if your community was designated in 2018, you must re-apply in 2020 to maintain your designation status.

The online application form is

DLS offers the seminar to recently elected or appointed officials every spring. This training introduces municipal finance concepts related to the structure and function of local government including the different roles and functions of local officials and their relation to one another. The purpose is to develop a greater understanding of the municipal budgetary process and the importance of fostering a team approach to municipal finance in your community. We highly encourage any and all new officials to attend. Please spread the word and stay tuned for registration information.

Introducing the DLS Municipal Finance Training and Resource Center

DLS recently unveiled our new [Municipal Finance Training and Resource Center](#) and related [YouTube.com channel](#). Available 24/7, this online resource hosts videos and documents meant to provide information to municipal officials and others interested in a wide variety of topics including local governance, property taxes and Prop 2 1/2, motor vehicle excise, municipal finance best practices, collections, accounting and auditing, debt and borrowing, and financial management.

Please bookmark and share the following link:

<https://www.mass.gov/lists/municipal-finance-learning-and-resource-center>. Also, don't forget to subscribe to our [YouTube channel](#) as well!

We'll be updating both resources regularly to add new training options and to refresh our existing content, so please check back. Questions or comments? Something you'd like to see added? We'd love to hear from you! Please email DLS's Data Analytics & Resources Bureau at DARB@dor.state.ma.us

available at

<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-the-housing-choice-designation>. The application must be submitted through the online form.

A Housing Choice Community designation rewards communities that are producing new housing and have adopted best practices to promote sustainable housing development. To find out more about Housing Choice Communities and the FY2019/FY2020 grants, visit the Housing Choice web pages at <https://www.mass.gov/housingchoice>

School Water Improvement Grants Available

The Massachusetts Clean Water Trust (Trust) and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) are pleased to announce the School Water Improvement Grant (SWIG) program. The SWIG program will provide grant funds to purchase and install filtered water bottle filling stations for schools to replace drinking water fountains that have exceeded the Commonwealth's lead guidance level of 1 part per billion. Eligible School Districts will receive a grant, up front, of \$3,000 per fixture. The pilot application round will be open from February 3, 2020 to March 6, 2020. For more information about SWIG please visit www.mass.gov/SWIG.

Proposed FY2021 State-Owned Land Valuation under MGL C. 58 § 13-17

The Division of Local Services has posted on its website proposed FY2021 state-owned land values based on the fair cash value of

BLA Hosts Local Assessment Workshops

In March, the Bureau of Local Assessment (BLA) will be conducting three regional workshops as well as a webinar for those unable to attend the workshops. Each session will highlight various topics including updates to the Certification Standards IGR, what to expect if in certification this year, overview of the New Growth review and template, and an update on reviewing the utility class use code 504.

The workshops will be held at the following locations:

Danvers

Wednesday March 18, 2020
10am - noon
Danvers Town Hall
1 Sylvia St., Danvers

Shrewsbury

Tuesday, March 24, 2020
1pm - 3pm
Shrewsbury Town Hall
Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room
100 Maple Ave, Shrewsbury.

Sandwich

Wednesday, March 25, 2020
10am – noon
Oakcrest Cove
34 Quaker Meeting House Rd., Sandwich

Webinar

Monday, March 30, 2020
1:30pm
Test the following link <https://zoom.us/test> to verify access from your computer. Once verified, please register as stated below.

Site registration is required. Please email your site choice, name, community, email address and phone number to John Gillet at bladata@dor.state.ma.us.

The Massachusetts Association of Assessing Officers (MAAO) will grant two (2) continuing education credits to assessors attending the Local Assessment Workshops.

certain state owned lands (SOL) pursuant to [MGL Ch. 58, §§ 13-17](#). These lands are reimbursed for loss of local tax revenue on the Cherry Sheet's State-Owned Land line.

[Click here](#) to display the proposed municipal state-owned land values and their share of the total state-owned land. In addition, please see the [DLS Frequently Asked Questions](#) about this program.

The Bureau of Local Assessment (BLA) is notified of acquisitions, deletions and agency transfers by the Department of Capital Asset Management & Maintenance (DCAMM). In preparation for the FY2021 final numbers, if your community has newly reported and outstanding acquisitions from calendar year 2018 and 2019, you will be notified by mid-February by BLA for processing in the Gateway system by March 1, 2020. It is imperative you respond to any request for information within fifteen (15) days to have the additional acreage included in your FY 2021 valuation issued on June 1, 2020.

Any community questioning their proposed state-owned land valuation should contact the Bureau of Local Assessment at bladata@dor.state.ma.us.



Other DLS Links:

[Local Officials Directory](#)

[Municipal Databank](#)

[Informational Guideline Releases \(IGRs\)](#)

[Bulletins](#)

[Publications & Training Center](#)

[Tools and Financial Calculators](#)

February Municipal Calendar

Deadline to Pay 3rd Quarter Tax Bill

- 1 Taxpayer Per [M.G.L. c. 59, § 57C](#), this is the deadline to pay the 3rd quarter actual tax bill without interest unless the bills were mailed after December 31. If mailed after December 31, the actual tax is due as a single installment on May 1 or 30 days after the bills were mailed, whichever is later.

Quarterly Tax Bills – Deadline to Apply for Property Tax Abatement

- 1 Taxpayer According to [M.G.L. c. 59, § 59](#), abatements applications are due on February 1 unless actual tax bills were mailed after December 31. In that case, they are due May 1 or 30 days after mailing, whichever is later.

- 28 State Treasurer **Notification of Monthly Local Aid Distributions**, see [IGR 17-17](#) for more cherry sheet payment information, monthly breakdown by program is available [here](#).

March Municipal Calendar

- 1 DARB **Notification of Cherry Sheet Estimates for the Following Year (pending action taken by the Legislature)**
The cherry sheet provides estimates of 1) receipts: local reimbursement and assistance program appropriations and 2) assessments: state and county

assessments and charges to local governments. MDM posts cherry sheet estimates on the DLS website and updates them at every stage of the state budget process.

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Personal Property Owner | Submit Form of List to Assessors
This return is due on or before March 1, but the Assessors may extend the deadline to a date no later than the date abatement applications are due. |
| 1 | Charitable Organization | Submit 3ABC Forms
To be eligible for exemption from taxation for the next fiscal year, a charitable organization must file this form with the Assessors detailing the property held for charitable purposes. It is due on or before March 1, but the Assessors may extend the deadline to a date no later than the date that abatement applications are due. |
| 1 | Telephone and Telegraph Company | Deadline for Telephone and Telegraph Company to File Form of List
BLA may extend the deadline to a date no later than April 1. |
| 31 | State Treasurer | Notification of Monthly Local Aid Distributions , see IGR 17-17 for more cherry sheet payment information, monthly breakdown by program is available here . |

Due Date Exceptions - According to [M.G.L. c. 4, § 9](#), if the date for any statutory action or payment falls on a Sunday or legal holiday, that action may be performed or payment made on the next business day. This rule also applies to any actions required by or payments due on a Saturday in communities that accepted [M.G.L. c. 41, § 110A](#) permitting public offices to remain closed on that day. The due dates for any local property tax payment, abatement application, or exemption application are also extended to the next business day by [M.G.L. c. 59, §§ 57, 57C, and 59](#) when municipal offices are closed due to a weather-related or other public safety emergency.

To view the municipal calendar in its entirety, please [click here](#).

Editor: Dan Bertrand

Editorial Board: Sean Cronin, Donnette Benvenuto, Linda Bradley, Paul Corbett, Theo Kalivas, Ken Woodland and Tony Rassias

Contact *City & Town* with questions, comments and feedback by emailing us at cityandtown@dor.state.ma.us.

To unsubscribe to *City & Town* and all DLS alerts, email dls_alerts@dor.state.ma.us.