



FREE CHEAT SHEET • ORLANDO HOMEOWNERS

The Florida Homestead Portability Cheat Sheet

Take your Homestead tax savings with you when you move — so you can choose your next home on purpose, not around a tax bill.



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Your home's MARKET value – its ASSESSED value = the benefit you carry

That gap is your Save Our Homes benefit — the value Florida can't tax. Portability lets you take it with you.

The Florida Homestead Portability Kit

The Essentials at a Glance

Moving in Florida? Carry your low property taxes to your next home. This page is the whole system — why your bill is low, how the benefit travels, and the two forms that make it official.

YOUR BENEFIT, STEP BY STEP

Market value	what your home would sell for today
– Assessed value	what Florida actually taxes, held down by the Save Our Homes cap
= Your SOH benefit	the gap the state can't tax
Portability	carries that gap to your next Florida homestead — up to \$500,000

1 Why Your Taxes Are Low

Homestead exemption: up to \$25,000 off all taxes, plus a second \$25,000 (assessed value \$50K–\$75K, non-school). Amendment 5 now inflation-adjusts the second piece **every year**, from CPI — it was **\$25,722** for tax year 2025 (about \$50,722 in total). Check the current year's figure with your county property appraiser.

Save Our Homes (SOH): caps how much your assessed (taxable) value can rise each year at **3% or CPI, whichever is lower**. Over years, a gap opens between market and assessed value — that gap is your benefit.

2 Carry It to Your Next Home

You can transfer (“port”) your SOH benefit to your next Florida homestead — up to **\$500,000**. **Buy UP** (new value $\geq$ old): carry the full benefit. **Buy DOWN** (new value $<$ old): carry a proportional slice = new market $\div$ old market.

Example: old home worth \$500K, assessed \$350K → benefit \$150K. Buy up at \$650K → carry all \$150K; you start taxed on ~\$500K instead of \$650K. Buy down at \$400K → carry 80% = \$120K.

3 Deadlines & Forms

- › Establish your new homestead **within 3 tax years** of leaving the old one.
- › File **DR-501** (homestead) + **DR-501T** (the transfer form). Portability is not automatic.
- › Homestead applications are generally due by **March 1**. Miss the DR-501T and you can homestead the new home but leave your whole benefit behind.

4 Don't Leave Money Behind

Your benefit is only as big as your **OLD home's market value in the year you leave** — and the county property appraiser sets that number. Read your **TRIM notice** (mailed each August): it shows Market, Assessed & the difference — your portability number. If the county's market value looks low, your benefit is understated — fix it with the appraiser or the Value Adjustment Board (full steps on page 2). A real, arm's-length sale is strong evidence of true market value.

5 On Your Next Home

Re-file homestead, file the DR-501T to bring your benefit over, and SOH starts protecting the new home again.

3% CAP RESETS

EXEMPTION APPLIES

NEW GAP BUILDS

How to Challenge Your Value at the Value Adjustment Board

Take Action — the Do-It-Yourself Path

If the county's market value on your old home looks understated — or the appraiser miscalculates the benefit you're transferring — here's the path. Most cases resolve at step 1, without a hearing.

1 Start with an informal review.

Call your county property appraiser and ask for an informal conference about your market value or portability. Bring evidence: your recent sale or purchase contract, **3-5 comparable sales**, an independent appraisal, and photos. Many corrections happen right here — no fee, no hearing. (Property appraiser: Orange — ocpafl.org; Seminole — scpafl.org · 407-665-7506.)

2 Know your deadline.

To go formal, you must file **within 25 days of the date your TRIM notice was mailed** — the exact deadline is printed on the notice (usually mid-September). Miss it and you generally lose the right to petition for that year.

3 Use the right form.

File **DR-486** to dispute your property's value, or **DR-486PORT** specifically for a portability (transfer of homestead assessment difference) dispute. Both are free to download at floridarevenue.com and on your county VAB page.

4 File with the VAB clerk — not the appraiser.

File with your county's VAB office and pay the fee (about **\$15 per parcel** for portability petitions — confirm current amount). Orange (Comptroller): ocompt.com · 109 E. Church St., Suite 450, Orlando · 407-836-5447 · vab@ocompt.com. Seminole (Clerk & Comptroller): seminoleclerk.org · PO Box 8099, Sanford, FL 32772 · 407-665-7663 · VAB@seminoleclerk.org.

5 Keep your taxes current.

State law requires the required partial payment of your taxes by the delinquency date, or the VAB will automatically deny your petition. Don't skip this.

6 Exchange your evidence.

At least **15 days** before your hearing, submit your evidence and witness list to the VAB — and request the property appraiser's evidence in return (they respond within about a week). Lead with your actual sale or contract; it's the strongest proof of true market value.

7 Attend the hearing — then appeal if needed.

A special magistrate (a licensed appraiser or attorney) hears both sides and recommends a decision; the VAB mails you the final written decision. If you still disagree, you can appeal to the circuit court (generally within 60 days).

REALITY CHECK

Most value corrections happen in that informal step-1 call, backed by your real sale — the formal petition is your safety net if the county won't budge. On a free 30-minute call I'll pull your record, tell you straight whether it's worth challenging, and point you to the right pro when it counts.

Want your REAL number?

Free. 30 minutes. No pressure. I'll pull your market & assessed values off the property appraiser's record and map your move.

[BOOK YOUR FREE CALL →](#)

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