



# METHODS AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM 2021 REPORT



**Glenn Hegar** Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

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**2020-21 Final Methods and Assistance Program Review**

This review is conducted in accordance with Tax Code Section 5.102(a-1) and related Comptroller Rule 9.301. The Comptroller is required by statute to review appraisal district governance, taxpayer assistance, operating procedures and appraisal standards.

The appraisal district is established in a county located in an area declared by the governor to be a disaster area during the tax year in which the review is required. Therefore, a limited-scope review has been conducted.

| <b>Mandatory Requirements</b>   | <b>PASS/FAIL</b> |
|---|------------------|
| <b>Does the appraisal district have up-to-date appraisal maps?</b>  |                  |
| <b>Is the implementation of the appraisal district's most recent reappraisal plan current?</b>  |                  |
| <b>Are the appraisal district's appraisal records up-to-date and is the appraisal district following established procedures and practices in the valuation of property?</b> |                  |
| <b>Are values reproducible using the appraisal district's written procedures and appraisal records?</b>   |                  |

| <b>Appraisal District Activities</b>                   | <b>RATING</b> |
|--|---------------|
| <b>Governance</b>                                      |               |
| <b>Taxpayer Assistance</b>                             |               |
| <b>Operating Procedures</b>                            |               |
| <b>Appraisal Standards, Procedures and Methodology</b> |               |

**Appraisal District Ratings:**

Meets All – The total point score is 100

Meets – The total point score ranges from 90 to less than 100

Needs Some Improvement – The total point score ranges from 85 to less than 90

Needs Significant Improvement – The total point score ranges from 75 to less than 85

Unsatisfactory – The total point score is less than 75

| <b>Review Areas</b>                                    | <b>Total Questions in Review Area (excluding N/A Questions)</b> | <b>Total "Yes" Points</b> | <b>Total Score (Total "Yes" Questions/Total Questions) x 100</b> |
|--|---|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Governance</b>                                      |   |                           |  |
| <b>Taxpayer Assistance</b>                             |   |                           |  |
| <b>Operating Procedures</b>                            |   |                           |  |
| <b>Appraisal Standards, Procedures and Methodology</b> |   |                           |  |

**Glenn Hegar**  
**Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts**  
**2020-21 Final Methods and Assistance Program Tier 3 Review**

This review is conducted in accordance with Tax Code Section 5.102(a-1) and related Comptroller Rule 9.301. The Comptroller is required to review appraisal districts' governance, taxpayer assistance, operating procedures and appraisal standards, procedures and methodology. Each appraisal district is reviewed every other year. This report details the results of the review for the appraisal district named above.

**GOVERNANCE**

| <b>Governance Review Question</b>  | <b>Answer</b> | <b>Recommendation</b> |
|--|---------------|-----------------------|
| <b>1. Does the appraisal district board of directors regularly evaluate the chief appraiser?</b>   |               |                       |
| <b>2. Has the chief appraiser completed the Chief Appraiser Institute prescribed by Section 1151.164 Occupations Code as required by Tax Code Section 6.05(c)?</b>   |               |                       |
| <b>3. Has the board of directors and appraisal review board completed Open Meetings training pursuant to Government Code Section 551.005?</b>  |               |                       |
| <b>4. Do the current appraisal district board of director members meet the criteria listed in Tax Code Section 6.03(a), 6.035(a)(2) and 6.035(a-1)?</b>  |               |                       |
| <b>5. Has the chief appraiser calculated the number of votes to which each taxing unit is entitled and delivered written notice of the voting entitlement before October 1st of the most recent odd-numbered year as described in Tax Code Section 6.03(e) or if the appraisal district falls under 6.031, have they received nominating resolutions by December 31st?</b> |               |                       |
| <b>6. Before October 30, did the chief appraiser prepare a ballot, listing the candidates whose names were timely submitted and deliver a copy to each taxing unit that is entitled to vote in accordance with Tax Code Section 6.03(j)?</b>   |               |                       |

| <b>Governance Review Question</b>   | <b>Answer</b> | <b>Recommendation</b> |
|---|---------------|-----------------------|
| 7. Did the appraisal district receive nominating resolutions before December 15 <sup>th</sup> and did the chief appraiser submit the results to the governing body of each taxing unit entitled to vote and the candidates before December 31st as required by Tax Code Sections 6.03(k)? |               |                       |
| 8. Did the board of directors meet at least quarterly and with a quorum present at every meeting in the previous year as required by Tax Code Section 6.04(b)?  |               |                       |
| 9. Was the most recent written reappraisal plan adopted by the appraisal district's board of directors by the Sept. 15 deadline listed in Tax Code Section 6.05(i)?   |               |                       |
| 10. Did the appraisal district board of directors provide notice of and host a public hearing for the 2019-20 reappraisal plan by September 15, 2018 or the 2021-22 reappraisal plan by September 15, 2020 pursuant to Tax Code Section 6.05(i)?  |               |                       |
| 11. Was the appraisal district's most recent preliminary budget produced and delivered to the taxing units according to the requirements of Tax Code Section 6.06(a)?   |               |                       |
| 12. Did the appraisal district prepare and post the most recent budget notice according to the requirements of Tax Code Section 6.062?  |               |                       |
| 13. Did the appraisal district board of directors provide notice of and host a public hearing for the most recent budget and approve a budget before September 15 according to the requirements of Tax Code Section 6.06(b)?  |               |                       |
| 14. Has the chief appraiser appointed a qualified agricultural appraisal advisory board and has that board met at least once within the previous year, as required by Tax Code Section 6.12?  |               |                       |
| 15. Did the appraisal district deliver a copy of the most recent financial audit report to each taxing unit eligible to vote on the appointment of district directors as described in Tax Code Section 6.063(b)?  |               |                       |

| <b>Governance Review Question</b>  | <b>Answer</b> | <b>Recommendation</b> |
|--|---------------|-----------------------|
| 16. Are allocation statements sent to each taxing unit as described in Tax Code Section 6.06(e)?   |               |                       |
| 17. Does the appraisal district have updated board of director policies that include a written plan that describes how a person who does not speak English or has a physical, mental, or developmental disability may be provided reasonable access to the board as described in Tax Code Section 6.04(e)? |               |                       |

### TAXPAYER ASSISTANCE

| <b>Taxpayer Assistance Review Question</b>  | <b>Answer</b> | <b>Recommendation</b> |
|---|---------------|-----------------------|
| 18. Is the information on the appraisal district's website up-to-date?  |               |                       |
| 19. Does the appraisal district maintain contact with the public by providing written publications and annual reports as described in IAAO's <i>Standard on Public Relations</i> ?  |               |                       |
| 20. Does the appraisal district report, and make available to the public, the metered amount of electricity, water or natural gas consumed for which it is responsible to pay and the aggregate costs for those utility services as required by Government Code Section 2265.001? |               |                       |
| 21. Did the appraisal district publicize the notices required by Tax Code Sections 11.44(b), 22.21, 23.43(f), 23.54(g) and 23.75(g) in a manner designed to reasonably notify all property owners?  |               |                       |
| 22. Did the appraisal district publish the notice of protest and appeal procedures as required by Tax Code Section 41.70?   |               |                       |
| 23. Does the appraisal district offer training to employees for customer service/public relations as described in IAAO's <i>Standard on Public Relations</i> ?  |               |                       |

| Taxpayer Assistance Review Question  | Answer | Recommendation |
|--|--------|----------------|
| 24. Does the appraisal district have a procedure for receiving and responding to open records requests that complies with Government Code Chapter 552 and is the procedure being followed?   |        |                |
| 25. Does the appraisal district have a process for updating or maintaining homestead exemptions?   |        |                |
| 26. Does the homestead exemption form used by the appraisal district comply with Comptroller Rule 9.415?   |        |                |
| 27. Does the appraisal district notify property owners when denying, modifying or cancelling exemptions as described in Tax Code Sections 11.43(h) and 11.45(d)?   |        |                |
| 28. Did the appraisal district follow the procedure described in Tax Code Section 11.43(q) when cancelling homestead exemptions for individuals who are 65 years of age or older?  |        |                |
| 29. Did the chief appraiser deliver notices of denial of applications for open-space land designation that include a brief explanation of the procedures for protesting the denials and full explanations of the reasons for the denials in the current or prior year, as required by Tax Code Section 23.57(d)? |        |                |
| 30. Did the chief appraiser deliver appropriate exemption application forms in the current year to persons who in the preceding year were allowed exemptions requiring annual applications, as required by Tax Code Section 11.44(a)?  |        |                |
| 31. Does the appraisal district comply with the requirements for granting solar and wind power energy devices exemptions under Tax Code Section 11.27?   |        |                |
| 32. Does the appraisal district maintain documentation for deferrals as required by Tax Code Section 33.06(b)?   |        |                |
| 33. Does the appraisal district comply with the requirements for granting charitable organization exemptions under Tax Code Section 11.18?   |        |                |

| <b>Taxpayer Assistance Review Question</b>  | <b>Answer</b> | <b>Recommendation</b> |
|---|---------------|-----------------------|
| 34. Does the appraisal district maintain the required information stated in Tax Code Section 11.432 for manufactured homes to qualify as a residence homestead? |               |                       |

### OPERATING PROCEDURES

| <b>Operating Procedures Review Question</b>  | <b>Answer</b> | <b>Recommendation</b> |
|--|---------------|-----------------------|
| 35. Does the chief appraiser ensure all appraisal staff completes all requirements for becoming a Registered Professional Appraiser by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation?   |               |                       |
| 36. Is the appraisal district in compliance with Tax Code Section 6.054, restriction on employment by appraisal district?  |               |                       |
| 37. Does the appraisal district have comprehensive and workable written procedures concerning disaster recovery and mitigation?  |               |                       |
| 38. Did the appraisal district timely submit the Comptroller's most recent appraisal district operations survey?   |               |                       |
| 39. Did the appraisal district send copies of the most recent reappraisal plan to the presiding officers of the governing body of each taxing unit participating in the district and to the Comptroller by the date described in Tax Code Section 6.05(i)? |               |                       |
| 40. Does the appraisal district receive and process arbitration requests as described in Tax Code Section 41A.05 and Comptroller Rule 9.4254?  |               |                       |

| Operating Procedures Review Question  | Answer | Recommendation |
|---|--------|----------------|
| 41. Did the appraisal district correct the appraisal roll and other appropriate records as necessary to reflect the final determination of the appeal and certify the change to the assessor for each affected taxing unit no later than the 45 <sup>th</sup> day after the date an appeal is finally determined as required by Tax Code Section 42.41(a)(1) and 42.41(a)(2)? |        |                |
| 42. Did the appraisal district compile a partial exemption list as described in Tax Code Section 11.46 and Comptroller Rule 9.3010 and was the most recent list made available to the public?   |        |                |
| 43. Not later than April 30 of the most recent year, did the appraisal district prepare and certify to the assessor for each county, municipality and school district participating in the appraisal district an estimate of the taxable value of property in that taxing unit as described by Tax Code Section 26.01(e)?   |        |                |
| 44. Did the chief appraiser prepare and certify the two most recent appraisal rolls to the assessor for each taxing unit participating in the district as described in Tax Code Section 26.01(a)?   |        |                |
| 45. For changes made to the appraisal roll under Tax Code Section 25.25, are the changes coded by the appropriate subsection that authorizes the change?  |        |                |
| 46. Are corrections of the appraisal roll presented to the appraisal district's board of directors and Appraisal Review Board as described in Tax Code Section 25.25(b)?  |        |                |
| 47. Are 25.25 (c) changes to the appraisal roll permissible changes in accordance with Tax Code Section 25.25(c)?   |        |                |
| 48. Does the chief appraiser submit the completed appraisal records to the Appraisal Review Board for review and determination of protests as described in Tax Code Section 25.22?  |        |                |
| 49. Do the appraisal review board's orders of determination comply with the requirements of Tax Code Sections 41.47(c)(1) and (2) and the Comptroller's model hearing procedures as they relate to Tax Code Section 5.103(b)(2)?  |        |                |



| <b>Operating Procedures Review Question</b>   | <b>Answer</b> | <b>Recommendation</b> |
|---|---------------|-----------------------|
| 50. Does the appraisal district provide evidence during the appeals process?  |               |                       |
| 51. Are agent authorization forms on file and complete in accordance with Tax Code Section 1.111(b)?                                  |               |                       |
| 52. Is the appraisal district compliant with Tax Code Section 11.13(g) as it relates to FMFC exemptions?                              |               |                       |
| 53. Are properties correctly categorized according to PTAD classification guidelines?   |               |                       |
| 54. Do the appraisal records include the required descriptive information for manufactured homes as stated in Tax Code Section 25.03? |               |                       |
| 55. Did the appraisal district submit the two most recent electronic property transaction submissions to the Comptroller timely?      |               |                       |
| 56. Did the appraisal district submit the two most recent electronic appraisal rolls to the Comptroller timely?                       |               |                       |

### APPRAISAL STANDARDS, PROCEDURES AND METHODOLOGY

| <b>Appraisal Standards, Procedures and Methodology Review Question</b>  | <b>Answer</b> | <b>Recommendation</b> |
|---|---------------|-----------------------|
| 57. Have the physical inspection dates in the appraisal records been updated within the previous six years as discussed in IAAO's <i>Standard on Mass Appraisal of Real Property</i> ?  |               |                       |
| 58. Did the appraisal district complete and produce written mass appraisal reports in the previous two years as required by USPAP Standard 6?   |               |                       |
| 59. Do the appraisal district's contracts contain the items described in IAAO's <i>Standard on Contracting for Assessment Services</i> ?  |               |                       |
| 60. Does the appraisal district gather available real estate transfer documents and use available third-party sources in gathering sales information, according to IAAO's <i>Standard on Verification and Adjustment of Sales</i> , Sections 3.1 through 3.4? |               |                       |
| 61. Do sold and unsold "like" properties within the same market area have similar noticed values?   |               |                       |

| <b>Appraisal Standards, Procedures and Methodology Review Question</b>  | <b>Answer</b> | <b>Recommendation</b> |
|---|---------------|-----------------------|
| 62. Does the appraisal district run ratio studies by market area and neighborhood, property class, or stratum?  |               |                       |
| 63. Are the appraisal district's cost schedules and appraisal models used in such a way that adjustments are made for neighborhood factors and property specific factors?   |               |                       |
| 64. Has the appraisal district adjusted its residential property cost schedules based on sales data, ratio studies, local conditions or market factors within the previous two years?   |               |                       |
| 65. Has the appraisal district adjusted its commercial property cost schedules based on sales data, ratio studies, local conditions or market factors within the previous two years?  |               |                       |
| 66. Does the appraisal district follow its written procedures for inspecting new personal property accounts in the 12 months after they are created, as discussed in IAAO's <i>Standard on Valuation of Personal Property</i> ? |               |                       |
| 67. Does the appraisal district apply the rendition penalty for taxpayers who do not render timely according to Tax Code Section 22.28 and are penalties waived when necessary, as described in Tax Code Section 22.30?         |               |                       |
| 68. Does the appraisal district comply with appraisal requirements for heavy equipment inventory (Tax Code Section 23.1241)?  |               |                       |
| 69. Does the appraisal district comply with appraisal requirements for motor vehicle inventory (Tax Code Section 23.121)?   |               |                       |
| 70. Does the appraisal district gather income and expense data and calculate values using the income approach for multi-family properties?  |               |                       |
| 71. Does the appraisal district gather income and expense data and calculate values using the income approach for warehouse properties/mini storages?   |               |                       |
| 72. Are exempt and nonexempt multi-family low income properties appraised in accordance with Section 23.215 and 11.1825(q) of the Property Tax Code?  |               |                       |

| <b>Appraisal Standards, Procedures and Methodology Review Question</b>   | <b>Answer</b> | <b>Recommendation</b> |
|--|---------------|-----------------------|
| 73. Does the appraisal district post exempt low-income capitalization rates on their website by January 31st and is the capitalization rate that is posted the one that is used on exempt multi-family low income housing as described in Tax Code Section 11.1825(r)? |               |                       |
| 74. Are net-to-land calculations for agricultural use land designated as dry and irrigated cropland reproducible from the appraisal district's records and is the appraisal district following their dry and/or irrigated cropland schedule?                           |               |                       |
| 75. Are net-to-land calculations for agricultural use land designated as native pasture reproducible from the appraisal district's appraisal records and is the appraisal district following their native pasture schedule?  |               |                       |
| 76. Does the appraisal district perform inspections of properties as a result of receiving wildlife management use appraisal applications?   |               |                       |
| 77. Does the appraisal district perform inspections of properties as a result of receiving agricultural use appraisal applications?  |               |                       |
| 78. For properties that have been granted agricultural use appraisal, are completed applications and required documentation on file?   |               |                       |
| 79. Is the appraisal district following their current guidelines for degree of intensity standards when granting special valuation appraisal for agricultural and/or timberland use?   |               |                       |
| 80. Has the appraisal district updated and implemented timber guidelines to include the qualification of productivity appraisal under Tax Code Sections 23.72(b) and 23.9802(d)?   |               |                       |
| 81. Does the appraisal district make an entry on the appraisal records when agricultural applications are received after April 30 and deliver written notice of imposition of the penalty as described in Tax Code Section 23.431?                                     |               |                       |