
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1981 Session of
2018

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SCHLEGEL CULVER, EMRICK AND WALSH, MARCH 8, 2018

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON URBAN AFFAIRS, MARCH 8, 2018

AN ACT

1 Providing for the establishment of first-time home buyer savings
2 accounts for first-time home buyers in this Commonwealth.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Pennsylvania
7 First-Time Home Buyer Savings Account Act.

8 Section 2. Definitions.

9 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
10 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
11 context clearly indicates otherwise:

12 "Account holder." An individual who establishes,
13 individually or jointly, a first-time home buyer savings
14 account.

1 "Allowable closing costs." A disbursement listed on a
2 settlement statement for the purchase of a single-family
3 residence in this Commonwealth by a qualified beneficiary.

4 "Department." The Department of Revenue of the Commonwealth.

5 "Eligible costs." The down payment and allowable closing
6 costs for the purchase of a single-family residence in this
7 Commonwealth by a qualified beneficiary. Eligible costs shall
8 not include costs incurred prior to the establishment of a
9 first-time home buyer savings account.

10 "Financial institution." A bank, trust company, savings
11 institution, industrial loan association, consumer finance
12 company, credit union, insurance company, safe deposit company,
13 money market mutual fund, benefit association or similar entity
14 authorized to do business in this Commonwealth.

15 "First-time home buyer." An individual who resides in this
16 Commonwealth and has not owned or purchased, either individually
17 or jointly, a single-family residence during the three-year
18 period prior to the purchase date of a single-family residence.

19 "First-time home buyer savings account." An account
20 established under section 3.

21 "Qualified beneficiary." A first-time home buyer who is
22 designated as a qualified beneficiary by the account holder of
23 the first-time home buyer savings account.

24 "Settlement statement." A statement of receipts and
25 disbursements from a real estate transaction, including a
26 statement prescribed under the Real Estate Settlement Procedures
27 Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-533, 88 Stat. 1724).

28 "Single-family residence." A single-family residence owned
29 and occupied by a qualified beneficiary as the qualified
30 beneficiary's principal residence, which may include a

1 manufactured home, trailer, mobile home or a unit in a
2 condominium, cooperative or planned community.

3 "Tax Reform Code of 1971." The act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6,
4 No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971.

5 Section 3. Establishment of first-time home buyer savings
6 account.

7 (a) Designation of first-time home buyer savings account.--
8 Beginning January 1, 2019, an individual may open a first-time
9 home buyer savings account with a financial institution.

10 (b) Designation of qualified beneficiary.--An account holder
11 shall designate no more than one first-time home buyer as the
12 qualified beneficiary of a first-time home buyer savings
13 account. The account holder may designate himself as the
14 qualified beneficiary and may change the designated qualified
15 beneficiary at any time. The account holder shall declare the
16 qualified beneficiary on the annual personal income tax return
17 required under the Tax Reform Code of 1971 for the tax year in
18 which the first-time home buyer savings account is established
19 and for any year in which the qualified beneficiary is changed.

20 (c) Use of first-time home buyer savings account.--Funds
21 from a first-time home buyer savings account may only be used to
22 pay or reimburse a qualified beneficiary's eligible costs for
23 the purchase of a single-family residence in this Commonwealth.

24 (d) Expenses.--The account holder may not use funds held in
25 a first-time home buyer savings account to pay expenses of
26 administering the account, except that a service fee may be
27 deducted from the account by a financial institution in which
28 the first-time home buyer savings account is held.

29 (e) Joint account holders.--An account holder may jointly
30 own a first-time home buyer savings account with another person

1 if the joint account holders file a joint personal income tax
2 return under Article III of the Tax Reform Code of 1971.

3 (f) Qualified beneficiary of more than one account.--An
4 individual may be designated as the qualified beneficiary on
5 more than one first-time buyer savings account.

6 (g) Contributions to account.--Subject to the limitations
7 under section 4(d), an individual other than the account holder
8 may contribute to a first-time home buyer savings account.

9 (h) Transfer of funds.--An account holder may withdraw funds
10 from a first-time home buyer savings account and deposit the
11 funds in a new first-time home buyer savings account held by the
12 same or a different financial institution.

13 Section 4. Deduction and exclusion from taxable income.

14 (a) Deduction of contributions.--Except as otherwise
15 provided under subsection (c), the amount contributed by an
16 account holder to a first-time home buyer savings account during
17 each tax year:

18 (1) may not exceed \$5,000 for an account holder who
19 files an individual personal income tax return or \$10,000 for
20 joint account holders who file a joint personal income tax
21 return; and

22 (2) shall be deductible from the taxable income of the
23 account holder under Article III of the Tax Reform Code of
24 1971 during the tax year the contribution was made.

25 (b) Exclusion of earnings.--Except as otherwise provided
26 under subsection (c), the amount of earnings on a first-time
27 home buyer savings account during the tax year may be excluded
28 from the taxable income of an account holder under Article III
29 of the Tax Reform Code of 1971.

30 (c) Limitations on deductions and exclusions.--An account

1 holder may claim a deduction and exclusion under this section:

2 (1) for a period of no more than 10 years;

3 (2) for an aggregate amount of principal and earnings
4 not to exceed \$50,000 within 10 years; or

5 (3) except as otherwise provided in section 3(h), if the
6 principal and earnings of a first-time home buyer savings
7 account remain in the account until a withdrawal is made for
8 the eligible costs relating to the purchase of a single-
9 family residence by a qualified beneficiary.

10 (d) Nonaccount holders.--An individual other than the
11 account holder who deposits funds in a first-time home buyer
12 savings account under section 3(g) is not entitled to the
13 deduction and exclusion provided for under this section.

14 (e) Remaining funds.--Funds in a first-time home buyer
15 savings account not expended on eligible costs before expiration
16 of the 10-year period under subsection (c)(1) shall be included
17 in the account holder's taxable income under Article III of the
18 Tax Reform Code of 1971.

19 (f) Application to alternative basis taxation.--The
20 deduction and exclusion from taxable income shall apply to any
21 alternative basis for calculating taxable income under Article
22 III of the Tax Reform Code of 1971.

23 Section 5. Reporting.

24 The account holder shall submit to the department all of the
25 following:

26 (1) Upon a withdrawal of funds from a first-time home
27 buyer savings account, a detailed account of the eligible
28 costs toward which the funds were applied and a statement of
29 the amount of funds remaining in the account.

30 (2) With the account holder's personal income tax

1 return:

2 (i) information regarding the first-time home buyer
3 savings account, including a list of transactions for the
4 account during the tax year; and

5 (ii) the Form 1099 issued by the financial
6 institution holding the account.

7 Section 6. Financial institutions.

8 (a) Limitations on financial institutions.--A financial
9 institution may not be required to do any of the following:

10 (1) Designate an account as a first-time home buyer
11 savings account or designate a qualified beneficiary of an
12 account in a financial institution's account contracts or
13 systems.

14 (2) Track the use of money withdrawn from a first-time
15 home buyer savings account.

16 (3) Allocate funds in a first-time home buyer savings
17 account among joint account holders or multiple qualified
18 beneficiaries.

19 (4) Report any information to the department or any
20 other governmental agency that is not otherwise required by
21 law.

22 (5) Determine if an account satisfies the requirements
23 to be a first-time home buyer savings account.

24 (6) Ensure that funds in a first-time home buyer savings
25 account are used for eligible costs.

26 (7) Report or remit taxes or penalties related to the
27 use of a first-time home buyer savings account.

28 (b) Distribution of funds.--Upon proof of the death of the
29 account holder, a financial institution shall distribute the
30 account in accordance with the contract terms governing the

1 first-time home buyer savings account.

2 Section 7. Withdrawal for purpose other than eligible costs.

3 Except as permitted under section 3(h), if an account holder
4 withdraws any amount from a first-time home buyer savings
5 account for a purpose other than eligible costs:

6 (1) The amount shall be included in the account holder's
7 taxable income under Article III of the Tax Reform Code of
8 1971 for the tax year the withdrawal was made.

9 (2) The account holder shall pay to the department a
10 penalty equal to 10% of the amount withdrawn. The penalty
11 shall not apply to funds withdrawn from an account that were:

12 (i) withdrawn by reason of the account holder's
13 death or disability; or

14 (ii) a disbursement of assets of the account
15 pursuant to a filing for protection under the Bankruptcy
16 Code (11 U.S.C. § 101 et seq.).

17 Section 8. Department of Revenue.

18 (a) Duties.--The department shall prepare forms:

19 (1) to designate an account with a financial institution
20 to serve as a first-time home buyer savings account;

21 (2) to designate a qualified beneficiary of a first-time
22 home buyer savings account; and

23 (3) for an account holder to annually submit to the
24 department detailed information regarding the first-time home
25 buyer savings account, including, but not limited to, a list
26 of transactions for the account during the tax year and
27 identifying any supporting documentation that is required to
28 be maintained by the account holder.

29 (b) Rules and regulations.--The department may promulgate
30 rules and regulations necessary to administer and enforce this

1 act.

2 Section 9. Effective date.

3 This act shall take effect in 60 days.