



Province of Alberta

## MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT

# COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION REGULATION

### **Alberta Regulation 281/1998**

With amendments up to and including Alberta Regulation 295/2020

Current as of December 18, 2020

### Office Consolidation

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(Consolidated up to 295/2020)

**ALBERTA REGULATION 281/98**

**Municipal Government Act**

**COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION PROPERTY  
TAX EXEMPTION REGULATION**

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### Interpretation

**1(1)** In this Regulation,

- (a) “Act” means the *Municipal Government Act*;
- (b) “charitable or benevolent purpose” means the relief of poverty, the advancement of education, the advancement of religion or any other purpose beneficial to the community;
- (c) “general public” means pertaining to the general community, rather than a group with limited membership or a group of business associates;
- (d) “professional sports franchise” means a professional sports franchise operating in the National Hockey League, the Canadian Football League, the National Professional Soccer League or the Pacific Coast League;
- (d.1) “subsidized accommodation” means
  - (i) rental accommodation where the Government of Alberta sets the rent at a maximum amount, sets the rent at a percentage of household income or provides the facility with ongoing operating funds,
  - (ii) rent to own units where the Government of Alberta sets the rent at a percentage of income or sets the rent at a maximum amount, and
  - (iii) accommodation where the Government of Alberta sets the mortgage payments as a percentage of income;
- (e) “taxation” means taxation under Division 2 of Part 10 of the Act.

**(2)** For the purposes of the Act and this Regulation, “community association” means an organization where membership is voluntary, but restricted to residents of a specific area, and that is formed for the purpose of

- (a) enhancing the quality of life for residents of the area or enhancing the programs, public facilities or services provided to the residents of the area, or
  - (b) providing non-profit sporting, educational, social, recreational or other activities to the residents of the area.
- (3) The definitions in sections 1 and 284 of the Act apply to this Regulation.

AR 281/98 s1;182/2008

## **Part 1 General Rules**

### **Application**

- 2 This Regulation applies to taxation in 1999 and later years.

### **Part of a property**

- 3 An exemption under section 362(1)(n)(i) to (v) of the Act or Part 3 of this Regulation applies only to the part of a property that qualifies for the exemption.

### **Primary use of property**

- 4(1) Property is not exempt from taxation under section 362(1)(n)(iii), (iv) or (v) of the Act or Part 3 of this Regulation unless the property is primarily used for the purpose or use described in those provisions.

- (2) For the purposes of this Regulation, a property is primarily used for a purpose or use if the property is used for the specified purpose or use at least 60% of the time that the property is in use.

### **Holding property**

- 5 When section 362(1)(n)(i) to (v) of the Act or Part 3 of this Regulation requires property to be held by a non-profit organization, a society as defined in the *Agricultural Societies Act* or a community association for the property to be exempt from taxation, the property is not exempt unless

- (a) the organization, society or association is the owner of the property and the property is not subject to a lease, licence or permit, or
- (b) the organization, society or association holds the property under a lease, licence or permit.

**Non-profit organization**

**6** When section 362(1)(n)(i) to (v) of the Act or Part 3 of this Regulation requires property to be held by a non-profit organization, community association or residents association as defined in section 13 for the property to be exempt from taxation, the property is not exempt unless

- (a) the organization or association is a society incorporated under the *Societies Act*, or
- (b) the organization or association is
  - (i) a corporation incorporated in any jurisdiction, or
  - (ii) any other entity established under a federal law or law of Alberta

that is prohibited, by the laws of the jurisdiction governing its formation or establishment, from distributing income or property to its shareholders or members during its existence.

AR 281/98 s6;204/2011

**Meaning of restricted**

**7(1)** In this Regulation, a reference to the use of property being restricted means, subject to subsections (2) and (3), that individuals are restricted from using the property on any basis, including a restriction based on

- (a) race, culture, ethnic origin or religious belief,
- (b) the ownership of property,
- (c) the requirement to pay fees of any kind, other than minor entrance or service fees, or
- (d) the requirement to become a member of an organization.

**(2)** The requirement to become a member of an organization does not make the use of the property restricted so long as

- (a) membership in the organization is not restricted on any basis, other than the requirement to fill out an application and pay a minor membership fee, and
- (b) membership occurs within a short period of time after any application or minor fee requirement is satisfied.

**(3)** Not permitting an individual to use a property for safety or liability reasons or because the individual's use of the property

would contravene a law does not make the use of the property restricted.

#### **Gaming and liquor licences**

**8(1)** For the purposes of section 365(2) of the Act, property described in section 362(1)(n) of the Act and Part 3 of this Regulation in respect of which a bingo licence, casino licence, pull ticket licence, Class C liquor licence or a special event licence is issued under the *Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Regulation* (AR 143/96) is exempt from taxation if the requirements of section 362(1)(n) and this Regulation in respect of the property are met.

**(2)** Despite subsection (1), property in respect of which a casino facility licence is issued is not exempt from taxation.

AR 281/1998 s8;56/2019;295/2020

## **Part 2**

### **Qualifications for Exemptions Under Section 362(1)(n)(ii) to (v)**

#### **Exemption under section 362(1)(n)(ii) of the Act**

**9(1)** The following property is not exempt from taxation under section 362(1)(n)(ii) of the Act:

- (a) property to the extent that it is used in the operation of a professional sports franchise;
- (b) property that is used solely for community games, sports, athletics or recreation if, for more than 40% of the time that the property is in use, the majority of those participating in the activities held on the property are 18 years of age or older.

**(2)** Property is not exempt from taxation under section 362(1)(n)(ii) of the Act if, for more than 30% of the time that the property is in use, the use of the property is restricted within the meaning of section 7 as modified by subsection (3).

**(3)** For the purposes of subsection (2), limiting the participation in activities held on a property to persons of a certain age does not make the use of the property restricted.

#### **Exemption under section 362(1)(n)(iii) of the Act**

**10(1)** Property referred to in section 362(1)(n)(iii) of the Act is not exempt from taxation unless

- (a) the charitable or benevolent purpose for which the property is primarily used is a purpose that benefits the

general public in the municipality in which the property is located, and

- (b) the resources of the non-profit organization that holds the property are devoted chiefly to the charitable or benevolent purpose for which the property is used.

**(2)** Property is not exempt from taxation under section 362(1)(n)(iii) of the Act if, for more than 30% of the time that the property is in use, the use of the property is restricted within the meaning of section 7.

AR 281/98 s10;182/2008

#### **Exemption under section 362(1)(n)(iv) of the Act**

**11** Property referred to in section 362(1)(n)(iv) of the Act is not exempt from taxation unless the accommodation provided to senior citizens is subsidized accommodation.

AR 281/98 s11;182/2008

#### **Exemption under section 362(1)(n)(v) of the Act**

**12(1)** The following property is not exempt from taxation under section 362(1)(n)(v) of the Act:

- (a) property to the extent that it is used in the operation of a professional sports franchise;
- (b) property if, for more than 40% of the time that the property is in use, the majority of those participating in the activities held on the property are 18 years of age or older;
- (c) property in Calgary or Edmonton that is held by and used in connection with a community association if the association is not a member of the Federation of Calgary Communities or the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues.

**(1.1)** Notwithstanding subsection (1)(c), property held by a community association referred to in that provision is exempt from taxation under section 362(1)(n)(v) of the Act where that community association was a member of the Federation of Calgary Communities or the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues on January 1, 1999 but cancelled its membership after that date.

**(1.2)** Subsection (1.1) applies with respect to 2004 and subsequent years.

**(2)** Property is not exempt from taxation under section 362(1)(n)(v) of the Act if, for more than 30% of the time that the



property is in use, the use of the property is restricted within the meaning of section 7 as modified by subsection (3).

(3) For the purposes of subsection (2), limiting the participation in activities held on a property to persons of a certain age does not make the use of the property restricted.

AR 281/98 s12;283/2003

### **Part 3**

## **Other Property Exempt Under Section 362(1)(n)**

#### **Definitions**

**13** In this Part,

- (a) “arts” means theatre, literature, music, painting, sculpture or graphic arts and includes any other similar creative or interpretive activity;
- (b) “chamber of commerce” means a chamber of commerce that is a non-profit organization and is a member of the Alberta Chamber of Commerce;
- (c) “ethno-cultural association” means an organization formed for the purpose of serving the interests of a community defined in terms of the racial, cultural, ethnic, national or linguistic origins or interests of its members;
- (d) “linguistic organization” means an organization formed for the purpose of promoting the use of English or French in Alberta;
- (e) “museum” means a facility that is established for the purpose of conserving, studying, interpreting, assembling and exhibiting, for the instruction and enjoyment of the general public, art, objects or specimens of educational and cultural value or historical, technological, anthropological, scientific or philosophical inventions, instruments, models or designs;
- (e.1) “residents association” means a non-profit organization that requires membership for residential property owners in a specific development area, that secures its membership fees by a caveat or encumbrance on each residential property title and that is established for the purpose of
  - (i) managing and maintaining the common property, facilities and amenities of the development area for the benefit of the residents of the development area,

- (ii) enhancing the quality of life for residents of the development area or enhancing the programs, public facilities or services provided to the residents of the development area, or
- (iii) providing non-profit sporting, educational, social, recreational or other activities to the residents of the development area;
- (f) “retail commercial area” means property used to sell food, beverages, merchandise or services;
- (g) “sheltered workshop” means a facility designed to provide an occupation for and to promote the adjustment and rehabilitation of persons who would otherwise have difficulty obtaining employment because of physical, mental or developmental disabilities;
- (h) “thrift shop” means a retail outlet operated for a charitable or benevolent purpose that sells donated clothing, appliances, furniture, household items and other items of value at a nominal cost to people in need.

AR 281/98 s13;283/2003;204/2011

**Exemption for other property**

**14** This Part describes property that is exempt from taxation under section 362(1)(n) of the Act that is not exempt under section 362(1)(n)(i) to (v) of the Act.

**Property of residents association**

**14.1(1)** Property that is owned and held by and used in connection with a residents association is exempt from taxation.

**(2)** Despite subsection (1), the following property owned and held by and used in connection with a residents association is not exempt from taxation under section 362(1)(n) of the Act:

- (a) property to the extent that it is used in the operation of a professional sports franchise;
- (b) property if, for more than 40% of the time that the property is in use, the majority of those participating in the activities held on the property are 18 years of age or older;
- (c) property if, for more than 30% of the time that the property is in use, the use of the property is restricted within the meaning of section 7 as modified by subsection (3).

(3) For the purposes of subsection (2)(c), limiting the participation in activities held on a property to persons of a certain age does not make the use of the property restricted.

AR 204/2011 s4

#### **Day cares, museums and other facilities**

**15** A non-profit organization that holds property on which any of the following facilities are operated may apply to the municipality within whose area the property is located for an exemption from taxation:

- (a) a facility used for sports or recreation to the extent that the facility is not used in the operation of a professional sports franchise;
- (b) a facility used for fairs or exhibitions, including agricultural exhibitions;
- (c) a facility used for the arts or a museum;
- (d) a program premises as defined in the *Child Care Licensing Regulation* (AR 143/2008);
- (e) a facility used by a linguistic organization if
  - (i) the use of the property by the general public is actively encouraged, and
  - (ii) a sign is prominently posted in the facility indicating the hours that the whole or part of the facility is accessible to the public;
- (f) a facility used by an ethno-cultural association for sports, recreation or education or for charitable or other benevolent purposes if
  - (i) the use of the property by the general public is actively encouraged, and
  - (ii) a sign is prominently posted in the facility indicating the hours that the whole or part of the facility is accessible to the public;
- (g) a facility in a municipality operated and used by an organization for a charitable or benevolent purpose where the majority of the organization's beneficiaries do not reside in the municipality;
- (h) a facility used as a thrift shop;
- (i) a facility used as a sheltered workshop;

- (j) a facility operated and used by a chamber of commerce;
- (k) a facility used for a charitable or benevolent purpose that is for the benefit of the general public if
  - (i) the charitable or benevolent purpose for which the facility is primarily used is a purpose that benefits the general public in the municipality in which the facility is located, and
  - (ii) the resources of the non-profit organization that holds the facility are devoted chiefly to the charitable or benevolent purpose for which the facility is used.

AR 281/98 s15;283/2003;182/2008;77/2010

#### Conditions for exemption

**16(1)** A municipality must grant a non-profit organization an exemption from taxation in a taxation year in respect of property referred to in section 15 that is held by the organization if

- (a) the non-profit organization makes an application for an exemption to the municipality by September 30 of the year preceding the taxation year and supplies the municipality with the following by November 30 of the year preceding the taxation year:
  - (i) any information the municipality requires to determine if the organization meets the conditions for the exemption, and
  - (ii) a description of any retail commercial areas in the facility,
- (b) the facility on the property is one of the facilities described in section 15 and the non-profit organization operates the facility on a non-profit basis,
- (c) the funds of the non-profit organization are chiefly used for the purposes of the organization and not for the benefit of the organization's directors and employees,
- (d) the property is not disqualified by virtue of subsection (2) or (3), and
- (e) the requirements of subsections (4) and (5), if applicable, are met.

**(2)** Property referred to in section 15(a), (b), (c), (e), (f), (j) or (k) is not exempt from taxation if, for more than 30% of the time that the property is in use, the use of the property is restricted within the meaning of section 7.

(3) Property referred to in section 15(d) or (g) to (i) is not exempt from taxation if an individual is not permitted to use the property because of the individual's race, culture, ethnic origin or religious belief.

(4) Before granting an exemption under this section in respect of a property that is held by a non-profit organization, the municipality may require that an agreement between the organization and the municipality be in force that sets out that

- (a) the organization will provide the municipality with a report by a time and in a manner specified in the agreement that sets out the information the municipality requires to determine if the organization met the conditions for the exemption during the taxation year, and
- (b) if the organization does not comply with the provisions referred to in clause (a), the organization will pay the municipality an amount equivalent to the property taxes that would be payable in respect of the property for the taxation year if the property was not exempt.

(5) Before granting an exemption under this section in respect of a property that is owned by a non-profit organization, the municipality may require that an agreement between the organization and the municipality be in force that sets out that

- (a) no disposition of the property may be made without the approval of the municipality, and
- (b) if the organization is being wound-up and dissolved, the organization must, if required by the municipality, transfer the property to the municipality.

(6) If a municipality grants an exemption to a non-profit organization and later determines that the organization did not meet the conditions that applied to the organization for the exemption for all or part of the taxation year, the municipality may in the taxation year cancel the exemption for all or part of the taxation year, as the case may be, and require the organization to pay property tax in respect of the property for the period that the exemption is cancelled.

AR 281/98 s16;4/2010;77/2010

#### **Waiver of application requirement**

**17(1)** If a municipality has granted a non-profit organization an exemption from taxation under section 16 in respect of a property, the municipality may grant the non-profit organization an exemption from taxation in the following taxation year under

section 16 in respect of the property without requiring the organization to apply for the exemption.

(2) A municipality that has waived an application requirement under subsection (1) in respect of a property for a taxation year may

- (a) require the non-profit organization that holds the property to provide any information that the organization may be required to provide if it was applying for an exemption, and
- (b) if the non-profit organization does not provide the information, cancel in that taxation year the exemption for all or part of that taxation year and require the organization to pay property tax in respect of the property for the period that the exemption is cancelled.

(3) A municipality may not waive the application requirement under subsection (1) in respect of a property for more than 3 consecutive taxation years.

#### **Retail commercial areas**

**18(1)** In this section, “exempt facility” means a facility or part of a facility

- (a) that is held by a non-profit organization, a society as defined in the *Agricultural Societies Act* or a community association and that is exempt from taxation under section 362(1)(n)(i) to (v) of the Act or section 16 of this Regulation, or
- (b) that is owned and held by a residents association and that is exempt from taxation under section 362(1)(n) of the Act.

(2) A retail commercial area that is located within an exempt facility is exempt from taxation if

- (a) the non-profit organization, society as defined in the *Agricultural Societies Act*, community association or residents association that holds the exempt facility also holds and operates the retail commercial area, and
- (b) the net income from the retail commercial area is used
  - (i) to pay all or part of the operational or capital costs of the exempt facility, or

- (ii) to pay all or part of the operational or capital costs of any other facility that is held by the non-profit organization, society, community association or residents association and that is exempt from taxation under section 362(1)(n) of the Act or section 16 of this Regulation.

AR 281/98 s18;204/2011

**Part 4** Repealed AR 283/2003 s5.

## **Part 5**

### **Repeal and Review**

#### **Repeal**

**22(1)** The *Community Organization 1998 Property Tax Exemption Regulation* (AR 289/97) is repealed.

**(2)** Repealed AR 182/2008 s6.

AR 281/98 s22;182/2008

#### **Expiry**

**23** For the purpose of ensuring that this Regulation is reviewed for ongoing relevancy and necessity, with the option that it may be repassed in its present or an amended form following a review, this Regulation expires on December 31, 2023.

AR 281/98 s23;283/2003;182/2008;4/2010;9/2015;  
257/2017;220/2018



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