

**BEFORE THE TAX COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF IDAHO**

In the Matter of the Protest of	)	
	)	DOCKET NO. 18345
[REDACTED],	)	
	)	DECISION
Petitioner.	)	
_____	)	

This case arises from a timely protest of a State Tax Commission staff (staff) decision to deny the property tax reduction benefit for 2004. This matter was submitted for a decision based on the documents in the file. The State Tax Commission has reviewed the file and makes its decision based on the contents of that file.

[Redacted] (petitioner) filed a property tax reduction benefit application on or about April 7, 2004. During review of that application and the accompanying copy of the petitioner's federal income tax return, the staff identified non-taxable annuity proceeds the petitioner received in 2003 that had not been included in the application.

The staff sent the petitioner a letter advising him that his income total was going to be adjusted to include the non-taxable portion of the annuity. The petitioner protested the intended action.

All property within the jurisdiction of this state is subject to property tax. A property tax reduction benefit program is available to certain qualifying individuals throughout the state. The benefit is in the form of a payment (either total or partial) of the applicant's property tax on the dwelling he/she owns and occupies. The payment is funded by state sales tax.

The amount of property tax reduction depends on income--the greater the income, the smaller the benefit. However, income is defined differently for the property tax reduction benefit program

than it is described in the income tax code. Income for property tax reduction benefit purposes is defined in Idaho Code § 63-701(5):

- (5) **"Income" means the sum of federal adjusted gross income** as defined in the Internal Revenue Code, as defined in section 63-3004, Idaho Code, **and** to the extent not already included in federal adjusted gross income:
- (a) Alimony;
  - (b) Support money;
  - (c) Nontaxable strike benefits;
  - (d) **The nontaxable amount of any individual retirement account, pension or annuity,** (including railroad retirement benefits, all payments received under the federal social security act except the social security death benefit as specified in this subsection, state unemployment insurance laws, and veterans disability pensions and compensation, excluding rollovers as provided in section 402 or 403 of the Internal Revenue Code);
  - (e) Nontaxable interest received from the federal government or any of its instrumentalities or a state government or any of its instrumentalities;
  - (f) Worker's compensation; and
  - (g) The gross amount of loss of earnings insurance.
- It does not include capital gains, gifts from nongovernmental sources or inheritances. To the extent not reimbursed, the cost of medical care as defined in section 213(d) of the Internal Revenue Code, incurred or paid by the claimant and/or, if applicable, the claimant's spouse, may be deducted from income. To the extent not reimbursed, personal funeral expenses, including prepaid funeral expenses and premiums on funeral insurance, of the claimant and claimant's spouse only, may be deducted from income up to an annual maximum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per claim. (Emphasis added.)

The calculation of income starts with federal adjusted gross income and, thereafter, makes certain additions and deductions. The nontaxable portion of annuities is specifically required to be included in income for property tax reduction purposes. The only exception is if an annuity is rolled over as provided in section 402 or 403 of the Internal Revenue Code.

The staff determined the petitioner received a gross distribution of annuities in the amount of \$21,780. Of that amount, \$830.03 was taxable and was included in the petitioner's federal adjusted gross income. The petitioner complained at the inclusion of this money in income for the purpose of the benefit stating all of his investments were reflected in his federal tax return.

The property tax reduction benefit is not federal or state income tax – it is payment of property tax based on certain qualifying factors including income. Pursuant to the definition of income as stated in Idaho Code § 63-701(5), the nontaxable portion of the annuity the petitioner received from [Redacted]. in 2003, although not included in his income for federal or state income tax purposes, must be included in his income for property tax reduction benefit purposes.

As a result, the petitioner's income for the purpose of this benefit is determined to be \$29,365 - exceeding the \$21,580 allowed for an applicant to receive a minimum benefit. The petitioner's property tax reduction benefit for 2004 must be denied.

The State Tax Commission is aware there is some potential this decision could cause a hardship to the property tax reduction benefit applicant in certain circumstances. The proper jurisdiction to handle such hardship situations falls with the Ada County Commissioners pursuant to Idaho Code § 63-711.

WHEREFORE, the decision of the State Tax Commission staff to deny the property tax reduction benefit is APPROVED, AFFIRMED and MADE FINAL.

An explanation of the petitioner's right to appeal this decision is enclosed with this decision.

DATED this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2004.

IDAHO STATE TAX COMMISSION

\_\_\_\_\_  
COMMISSIONER

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE BY MAIL

I hereby certify that I have on this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2004, served a copy of the within and foregoing DECISION by sending the same by United States mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to:

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Receipt No.

\_\_\_\_\_