REALTY **ONE** GROUP RESULTS

SESSION LAW 2026-8 · AMENDED BY SESSION LAW 2026-47

The 2026 Reappraisal *Moratorium*

Twelve North Carolina counties reappraised this year.
The General Assembly told most of them to wait.
Here is what that actually means for your tax bill.

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WHAT HAPPENED

Your county reappraised. Then the state hit *pause.*

Twelve North Carolina counties completed property reappraisals that took effect January 1, 2026. Values in several of them jumped sharply — and the General Assembly responded by requiring most of those counties to set the new values aside for one year.

Two laws did the work. **Senate Bill 889** — now Session Law 2026-8, signed June 19, 2026 — created the moratorium. **Senate Bill 474** — Session Law 2026-47, enacted July 7, 2026 — then changed which counties are covered by it.

The mechanics are simple once you see them. If your county is covered, your tax bill for the year beginning July 1, 2026 uses the **schedule of values from the previous reappraisal** — not the new 2026 one. The 2026 values then take effect for the year beginning July 1, 2027, and stay in place until the county's next reappraisal.

The postponed reappraisal is treated as having been conducted as of January 1, 2027 for purposes of the county's eight-year cycle. And if you're in a covered county, you keep the right to appeal that valuation in 2027, as though the change happened then.

> *The values didn't go away. They were moved back a year.*

THE SHAPE OF IT

12	2	1	2027
COUNTIES REAPPRAISED EFFECTIVE 1/1/2026	SESSION LAWS 2026-8 & 2026-47	YEAR POSTPONED	WHEN THE NEW VALUES ACTUALLY APPLY

HOW IT UNFOLDED

Two laws, six *weeks* apart.

If you followed this in the news and came away confused, that's reasonable — the rules changed twice, and the second change came after some counties had already adopted budgets.

APRIL 2026

SB 889 introduced

Filed by Senate Leader Phil Berger with Sens. Brent Jackson and Steve Jarvis, in response to sharp reappraisal increases. Early versions would have covered roughly twenty counties.

MAY 6

Senate passes it, 35–8

Scope narrowed to the twelve counties that actually reappraised effective January 1, 2026.

JUNE 10

House passes it, 70–42

As written, counties with populations of 15,000 or greater must postpone — leaving nine counties covered and three exempt on population.

JUNE 19

Signed into law as SL 2026-8

Governor Stein signs while publicly urging the legislature to pass SB 474 to protect Buncombe County's Helene recovery.

JULY 7

SL 2026-47 amends the list

SB 474 becomes law, rewriting the exemptions: the population floor drops from 15,000 to 12,000, and two new exemption paths are added. The counties covered shift again.

Why counties were caught off guard

North Carolina law requires local governments to adopt budgets by the end of June. SL 2026-8 landed eleven days before that deadline and SL 2026-47 arrived after it — which is why several counties delayed budget adoption, and why the UNC School of Government spent the spring fielding questions about contingent budgets.

WHERE EACH COUNTY LANDED

The twelve *counties.*

These are the counties that reappraised effective January 1, 2026, and where each stands after both laws.

COUNTY	REGION	STATUS	WHY
Guilford	Piedmont Triad	Must postpone	Reappraised 1/1/2026; not exempt under either law
Davidson	Piedmont Triad	Must postpone	Reappraised 1/1/2026; not exempt
Anson	Southern Piedmont	Must postpone	Reappraised 1/1/2026; not exempt
Bladen	Southeastern NC	Must postpone	Reappraised 1/1/2026; not exempt
Onslow	Coastal — Jacksonville	Must postpone	Reappraised 1/1/2026; not exempt
Pender	Coastal — Wilmington metro	Must postpone	Reappraised 1/1/2026; not exempt
Chowan	Northeastern NC	Must postpone	Was exempt under SL 2026-8; the population floor dropping to 12,000 brought it in
Pamlico	Coastal — Pamlico Sound	Must postpone	Same — the lowered population floor brought it in
Clay	Western NC	Exempt	Population under 12,000
Harnett	Central NC	Exempt	In its designated reappraisal year under G.S. 105-286(a)(2)a. with population under 150,000
Scotland	Southern NC	Exempt	Levied a property tax rate above 95 cents per $100 within the previous four years
Buncombe	Western NC	Conditional	Exempt only if it adopts a revenue-neutral or lower rate as a Helene-affected area; otherwise covered

Status reflects Session Law 2026-8 as amended by Session Law 2026-47. Buncombe's position depends on action by its own commissioners — confirm current status with the county before relying on it.

TWO TRIAD COUNTIES AFFECTED · GUILFORD · DAVIDSON

READ THIS BEFORE YOU CELEBRATE

What this law *does not* do.

Headlines called this a property tax freeze. It isn't one, and the difference will show up on your August bill.

It does not cap your tax bill

A property tax bill is value multiplied by rate. This law touches the value side only. Counties and municipalities **still set their own rates**, and a county facing a budget gap can raise the rate. As one fiscal analyst put it during the debate: this changes the timing of when new values are used, not the structure of the tax.

It does not lower your assessed value

Nothing was reduced. The 2026 schedule of values still exists and still applies — starting with the tax year beginning July 1, 2027. If your value went up 40%, it still went up 40%. You just don't pay on it this year.

It does not cancel your appeal rights

The opposite. If you're in a covered county, the law preserves your ability to appeal that valuation in 2027 as though the change occurred then. Keep every notice and every piece of documentation you gathered this year.

THE PRACTICAL READ

Treat this as a one-year runway, not a reprieve. If your reappraisal notice showed a large increase, that increase is coming — you simply have twelve extra months to prepare for it, gather evidence, and decide whether to appeal.

And there may be more coming

A separate proposed constitutional amendment — House Bill 1089 — is on the November 2026 statewide ballot. If voters approve it, it would require limits on how much local governments can increase property tax levies, with the specifics left to future legislation.

In other words, North Carolina's property tax rules are actively in motion. Anything you read about them, including this document, deserves a date check.

CLOSE TO HOME

If you own in Guilford or *Davidson.*

These are the two Triad counties covered by the moratorium — and Guilford is where the pressure has been most visible. The county received a flood of appeals this year, several multiples of its prior-year volume.

What to expect

- **Your bill for this year uses your prior reappraisal value**, not the value on the notice you received earlier in 2026.
- **Your rate is still set locally.** The value being held flat does not guarantee a flat bill — watch what your county and municipality adopt.
- **The 2026 value arrives next year.** Plan your 2027 budget against the number on that notice, not the number on this year's bill.
- **Your appeal window shifts with it.** You may appeal that valuation in 2027. Don't discard the comparable sales, photographs, or contractor estimates you already collected.

If you're selling

Expect buyers and their agents to ask what the taxes will be — and expect some confusion, because this year's bill understates next year's. The honest answer is the one that builds trust: show them both numbers. A seller who volunteers the 2027 value looks like someone with nothing to hide.

If you're buying

Do not underwrite your monthly payment on this year's tax bill. In a covered county, that figure is a one-year artifact. Ask for the 2026 reappraisal notice, apply a realistic rate to that value, and budget accordingly — because your escrow will be recalculated once the new values take effect.

The mistake we expect to see

A buyer closes in a covered county, sets up escrow against a tax bill built on old values, and gets a shortage notice the following year. It's avoidable with one conversation at the offer stage — and it's exactly the kind of thing your agent should raise before you're surprised by it.

THE REST OF OUR MARKET

If your county isn't on the *list.*

Most of the region we serve is unaffected. Forsyth, Wilkes, Watauga, Avery, Ashe, Davie, Rockingham, and Wake did not have reappraisals effective January 1, 2026, so nothing in these two laws changes your bill.

That does not mean reappraisal isn't coming for you. North Carolina requires every county to reappraise real property **at least every eight years**, and counties may elect to move faster — many do, and a number of the state's larger counties run four-year cycles.

Three things worth knowing wherever you own

— **Find out where your county sits in its cycle.** Buying the year before a reappraisal is a different financial picture than buying the year after one, and almost nobody checks.

— **A revaluation year is not automatically a tax increase.** Counties publish a revenue-neutral rate — the rate that would raise the same total revenue as the prior year — though they are not required to adopt it. Watch what your commissioners actually do with it.

— **Appeal deadlines are strict.** Informal review through the assessor first, then the county Board of Equalization and Review, which generally meets between the first Monday in April and the first Monday in May. Miss it and you wait a year.

Ask us for your county's schedule

We track reappraisal timing across the counties we serve, because it changes what a property actually costs to own. If you'd like to know where your county stands — and what the last reappraisal did to values in your neighborhood — just ask.

County reappraisal schedules are published by the NC Department of Revenue and by each county assessor. Cycles can be advanced by county resolution, and larger counties may be required to advance based on their sales assessment ratio — so confirm the current schedule rather than assuming last cycle's timing holds.

REALTY **ONE** GROUP RESULTS

Not sure what your tax bill is *about to do?*

Send us the address. We'll pull the county's reappraisal history, tell you where it sits in its cycle, and give you a realistic number to underwrite against — whether you're buying, selling, or just trying to plan.

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General education about North Carolina property tax law as of August 2026 — not legal, tax, or financial advice. Based on Session Law 2026-8 (SB 889, signed June 19, 2026) as amended by Session Law 2026-47 (SB 474, enacted July 7, 2026). County status can change with further legislation or local action; tax rates are set by county and municipal governing bodies and are not addressed by these laws. Confirm your county's current status, valuation, rate, and appeal deadlines directly with the county tax assessor, and consult a qualified professional about your situation. Information deemed reliable but not guaranteed.