

Appraisal Review Board of Taylor County

Hearing Procedures

I. Appraisal Review Board (ARB) Membership

[Tax Code Section 5.103(b)(12), (15), and (16)]

1. Administration of ARB Appointments

Appraisal Review Board (ARB) members have no statutory role in the process for the administration of applications or requests for an appointment for membership on the ARB. If an ARB member is contacted by an individual requesting an ARB appointment, the member must direct the individual to the Taxpayer Liaison (TLO). The TLO will then turn in the application to the local administrative district judge, who appoints the members of the ARB.

2. Conflicts of Interest

Each ARB member must ensure that he or she has no conflict of interest that results in ineligibility to serve on the ARB or that restricts or prohibits the ARB member's participation in ARB activities, such as participation in the determination of a taxpayer protest. An ARB member must promptly report any conflict of interest to the ARB chair in addition to any other individual or entity as required by law. The chair must promptly notify the appropriate individuals of reported conflicts of interest.

If an ARB member discovers before or during a protest hearing that a conflict of interest exists, the member cannot participate in a protest hearing. The member must file an affidavit with the ARB secretary if the conflict exists due to the Local Government Code Chapter 171 provisions. The ARB member must file the affidavit as soon as the conflict is identified, even if it requires a delay in the conduct of the hearing. If the conflict arises from Tax Code Section 41.69, the ARB member does not have to file an affidavit but must recuse himself or herself immediately from the hearing and report the conflict to the ARB chair or secretary.

ARB members must remember that while Local Government Code Chapter 171 addresses matters of "substantial interest," Tax Code Section 41.69 applies to any protest in which an ARB member has an interest (i.e., Tax Code Section 41.69 does not require the interest to be substantial). While a conflict of interest under Local Government Code Chapter 171 may not prohibit an ARB member from participating in a protest, Tax Code Section 41.69 may still prohibit participation. If an ARB member has a question as to whether he or she has a conflict of interest that might prohibit his or her involvement, the member must immediately contact the ARB chair to address the matter. In the recusal process, the ARB member cannot hear the protest, deliberate on the

protest, or vote on the matter that is the subject of the protest.

3. Ex Parte and Other Prohibited Communications

ARB members must not engage in prohibited ex-parte or other communications. If one or more individuals approach the ARB member and appear to engage or attempt to engage in prohibited communication, the ARB member must immediately remove himself or herself from the conversation.

II. ARB Duties

[Tax Code Section 5.103(b) (1), (5), and (6)]

1. Statutory Duties of an ARB

Each ARB member must ensure that he or she understands the statutory duties of the ARB and complies with all statutory requirements in performing statutory duties as an ARB member. Tax Code Section 41.01 addresses the duties of the ARB and the actions they are authorized to take.

2. Notices Required under the Property Tax Code

Each ARB member must obtain and maintain familiarity with notices required under the Property Tax Code. If an ARB member believes that any required notice is not being provided or does not meet the requirements of applicable law, the ARB member must promptly notify the ARB chair. The ARB chair must investigate each report and take appropriate action to correct all verified problems.

3. Determination of Good Cause under Tax Code Section 41.44(b)

"Good cause" for filing late protests is not defined in Tax Code Section 41.44(b). Claims of good cause for late-filed protests must be carefully considered. The standards in making determinations of good cause under Tax Code Section 41.44(b) must be uniformly applied. The ARB should give due consideration to good cause claims in a manner that properly respects the rights of property owners and their agents while not undermining or contravening laws related to filing deadlines or the orderly and expeditious fulfillment of ARB duties.

III. ARB Hearings (formal hearings, not informal meetings between property owners and appraisal district staff)

[Tax Code Section 5.103(b)(3), (4), (7), and (14)]

1. Scheduling Hearings Generally

The ARB shall schedule a hearing when a timely notice of protest is filed and, in doing so, may be provided with clerical assistance by the appraisal district. The usual deadline for filing protests is May 31st (or 30 days after a notice of appraised value was mailed to you, whichever is later). The filing deadline is postponed until the next business day if the deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or a legal state or national holiday. The ARB coordinator will schedule hearings and notify the owner/agent in writing of the hearing. You will receive written notice of the time, date, place of the hearing, and; subject of the protest. If necessary, you may request a hearing for an evening of an already scheduled Board meeting. The notice shall be delivered no later than the 15th day before the date scheduled for the hearing unless the property owner/agent agrees to a shorter notice period. A property owner/agent consenting to appear at a hearing with less than 15 days written notice must file a written statement with the ARB no later than the hearing. When scheduling a hearing for a protest in which the property owner has submitted an affidavit, the ARB may choose to hear these protests on the same day and hear cases without the property owner appearing. However, if a property owner states on the affidavit any intention to appear at the hearing, the ARB must hear the hearing for the scheduled time and date and may not consider the affidavit unless the property owner does not appear at the scheduled hearing.

A person leasing property who is contractually obligated to reimburse the property owner for taxes imposed on the property is entitled to protest before the ARB the property's appraised value if the property owner does not file a protest relating to the property. Under Tax Code Section 41.413, the lessee can designate another person to act as an agent with the same authority and limitations as an agent designated under Tax Code Section 1.111. Designated agents have the same authority and are subject to the same limitations as agents designated by property owners.

2. Scheduling Hearings for Property Owners, Agents, and Qualifying Lessees

Pursuant to Tax Code Section 41.66(i), the ARB must schedule hearing requests filed by property owners or their designated agents under Tax Code Section 1.111 for a specific time and date. The ARB can schedule more than one protest hearing at the same time and date; however, the property owner or agent can request to postpone a hearing if it is not started by an ARB or the full ARB within two hours of the scheduled hearing time. The postponement request must contain the mailing address and email address of the person requesting the postponement. The ARB must respond in writing or by email to the postponement request no later than the 7th day after the date of receipt of the request.

3. Scheduling Hearings for Multiple Accounts

If requested by a property owner or the designated agent, the ARB must schedule consecutive hearings on the same day on protests concerning up to 20 designated properties. The request must meet all requirements of Tax Code Section 41.66(j), including the required statement in boldfaced type: "request for same-day protest hearings." A property owner or designated agent can file more than one such request in the

same tax year. Also, pursuant to Tax Code Section 41.66(j), the ARB may schedule protest hearings concerning more than 20 properties filed by the same property owner or designated agent. The ARB may follow the practices customarily used to schedule hearings under Section 41.66(j).

4. ARB Panel Assignments [§ 41.66 (k)(k-1) and 41.45 (b-4)(d)(d-1)]

Pursuant to Tax Code Section 41.66(k) and (k-1), if an ARB sits in panels as authorized by Tax Code Section 41.45(d) and (d-1), it must randomly assign protests. Except for panels established under Tax Code Section 6.425, the ARB, with or without clerical assistance from the appraisal district staff, may consider the property type or the protest grounds to assign the protest to a panel with members with particular expertise.

Tax Code Section 41.45(b-4) allows a property owner to request that a single-member panel conduct the protest hearing. The property owner must submit the request no later than the 10th day before the hearing date in writing on the notice of protest or by written submission. If the ARB does not accept the recommendations made by the single-panel member, it can determine the protest or refer it for rehearing to a single-member panel composed of someone who did not hear the original protest.

Tax Code Section 41.66(k-1) allows a property owner or agent to request a special ARB panel to hear a complex property protest if in a county with a population of one million or more. The owner or agent must consent to a special panel reassignment and may request a postponement if they disagree with the reassignment.

Once a protest is scheduled for a specific panel, the ARB cannot reassign it to another panel without the consent of the property owner or a designated agent. If the ARB reassigns a protest to another panel, the owner or designated agent may agree to the reassignment or request a postponement of the hearing. The ARB must postpone the hearing if requested in this situation. Pursuant to Tax Code Section 41.66(k), "[a] change of members of a panel because of a conflict of interest, illness, or inability to continue participating in hearings for the remainder of the day does not constitute reassignment of a protest to another panel."

5. Postponements Under Tax Code Section 41.45(e)

On request made to the appraisal review board before the hearing date, a property owner who has not designated an agent under Section 1.111 to represent the owner at the hearing is entitled to one postponement of the hearing to a later date without showing cause. In addition and without limitation as to the number of postponements, the board shall postpone the hearing to a later date if the property owner or the owner's agent at any time shows good cause for the postponement or if the chief appraiser consents to the postponement. The hearing may not be postponed to a date less than five or more than 30 days after the date scheduled for the hearing when the postponement is sought unless the date and time of the hearing as postponed are agreed to by the chair of the appraisal review board or the chair's representative, the property owner, and the chief appraiser.

Without limit, the ARB must postpone a hearing if the property owner or the designated agent shows good cause, as defined in Tax Code Section 41.45(e-2). The property owner or designated agent must request the postponement in writing by fax, email, telephone, or in-person to the ARB or the ARB chair. If the postponed hearing is rescheduled to occur before the next regular meeting of the ARB, the chair or the chair's representative can act on the postponement request without the necessity of action by the full ARB. Unless the postponed hearing date and time are agreed to by the ARB chair or the chair's representative, the property owner, and the chief appraiser, the ARB cannot postpone the hearing to a date less than five or more than 30 days after the date scheduled for the hearing when the postponement is sought.

Without limit, the ARB must postpone a hearing if the chief appraiser consents to the postponement. The chief appraiser must request the postponement in writing by fax, email, telephone, or in-person to the ARB or the ARB chair. If the postponed hearing is rescheduled to occur before the next regular meeting of the ARB, the chair or the chair's representative can act on the postponement request without the necessity of action by the full ARB. Unless the postponed hearing date and time are agreed to by the ARB chair or the chair's representative, the property owner, and the chief appraiser, the ARB cannot postpone a hearing to a date less than five or more than 30 days after the date scheduled for the hearing when the postponement is sought.

The postponement request must contain the mailing address and email address of the person requesting the postponement. The ARB must respond in writing or by email to the postponement request no later than the 7th day after the date of receipt of the request.

6. Postponements Under Tax Code Section 41.45(e-1)

A property owner or owner's agent who fails to appear at the hearing is entitled to **a new hearing if the property owner or owner's agent files, no later than the fourth day** after the date the hearing occurred, a written statement with the ARB showing good cause, as defined in Tax Code Section 41.45(e-2), for the failure to appear and requesting a new hearing.

The postponement request must contain the mailing address and email address of the person requesting the postponement. The ARB must respond in writing or by email to the postponement request no later than the 7th day after the date of receipt of the request.

7. Postponements Under Tax Code Section 41.45(g)

The ARB must postpone a hearing to a later date if:

- (1) the property owner or the owner's agent is also scheduled to appear at an ARB protest hearing in another appraisal district;
- (2) the other scheduled ARB protest hearing is scheduled to occur on the same

- date as the hearing set by this ARB;
- (3) the hearing notice delivered to the property owner or the owner's agent by the other ARB bears an earlier postmark than the hearing notice delivered by this ARB or, if the postmark date is identical, the property owner or agent has not requested a postponement of the other hearing; and
 - (4) the property owner or the owner's agent includes with the postponement request a copy of the hearing notice delivered to the property owner or the owner's agent by the other ARB.

8. Postponements Under Tax Code Section 41.66(h)

The ARB must postpone a hearing (one time only) if the property owner or the designated agent requests additional time to prepare for the hearing and establishes that the chief appraiser failed to comply with Tax Code Section 41.461. The postponement request must contain the mailing address and email address of the person requesting the postponement. The ARB must respond in writing or by email to the postponement request no later than the 7th day after the date of receipt of the request.

9. Postponements Under Tax Code Section 41.66(i)

The ARB must schedule protest hearings filed by property owners or their designated agents under Tax Code Section 1.111 for a specific time and date. The ARB can schedule more than one protest hearing at the same time and date; however, a property owner or agent can request to postpone a hearing if it is not started by the ARB within two hours of the scheduled hearing time. The postponement request must contain the mailing address and email address of the person requesting the postponement. The ARB must respond in writing or by email to the postponement request no later than the 7th day after the date of receipt of the request.

IV. Conduct of ARB Hearings (formal hearings, not informal meetings between property owners and appraisal district staff)

[Tax Code Section 5.103(b)(2), (9), and (10)]

1. Conducting Hearings Open to the Public

This introductory statement must be read at the beginning of each hearing:

We are the appraisal review board that will hear your protest today. We are not employees of the appraisal district. We are appointed to perform an independent review of your protest. You can complete a survey regarding your experience today. The survey is voluntary. You also have the right to appeal our decision. We will provide the appeal information to you with our determination.

The ARB does not have to read the statement above if the owner or agent has previously appeared before the ARB for that county that same day.

You have been provided with expedited hearing procedures sent with the hearing letter and provided at the time of check-in for the hearing. We will begin the hearing if you have read and signed the acknowledgment and waiver; otherwise, the following procedures shall remain in place.

ARBs should conduct most protest hearings in the following order:

- a. Commence the hearing and announce the assigned protest number, property location, property owner, and other identifying information.
- b. Announce that, in accordance with Tax Code Section 41.45(h), the parties must provide all written and electronic material that has not been provided.
- c. State that the ARB members who are considering the protest have not communicated with anyone about the protest and have signed affidavits to that effect.
- d. Welcome the parties and remind them of the content of the hearing procedures, time limits for the hearing, and other relevant matters.
- e. Ask if any testifying witness holds a license or certificate from the Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board and if the witness is appearing in that capacity.
- f. Inform witnesses that they must give all testimony under oath and swear in all witnesses who plan to testify.
- g. Ask the property owner to decide if he/she wishes to present his/her evidence and argument before or after the appraisal district.
- h. If the property owner or agent presents his/her case first, he/she will present evidence (documents and/or testimony). If witnesses are present, the property owner or agent can examine the witnesses as part of the presentation of evidence. At the end of the presentation, the property owner or agent **must state an opinion of the property's value**.
- i. Next, the appraisal district representative may cross-examine the property owner, the agent or representative, and/or witnesses.
- j. If the property owner or agent presented his/her case first, the appraisal district representative will present evidence (documents and/or testimony) next. If witnesses are present, the appraisal district representative can examine the witnesses as part of the presentation of evidence. At the end of the presentation, the appraisal district representative must state an opinion of the property's value.
- k. Then, the property owner or agent can cross-examine the appraisal district representative and/or witnesses.
- l. The parties cannot examine or cross-examine the ARB members.
- m. The party presenting its case first can offer rebuttal evidence (additional evidence to refute the evidence presented by the other party).
- n. The other party can then offer rebuttal evidence.

- o. The party presenting its case first must make its closing argument and state the ARB determination being sought.
- p. The party presenting its case second must make its closing argument and state the ARB determination being sought.
- q. The ARB chair must state that the hearing is closed.
- r. The ARB must deliberate orally. No notes, text messages, or other forms of written communication are permitted.
- s. The ARB chair must ask for a separate motion for each matter that was the subject of the protest hearing. The motion should include the exact value or issue protested. The ARB must take a vote and a designated appraisal district staff person or ARB member must record it. The parties must make separate motions, and the ARB must make separate determinations for each protested issue (i.e., excessive appraisal and unequal appraisal must have separate ARB motions and determinations). Single-member panels must recommend each motion submitted under protest; however, the ARB will ultimately accept the panel's determination, make its own determination on the protest, or refer the matter for rehearing to a single-member panel composed of someone who did not hear the original protest.
Special panels appointed in certain counties must make a recommendation on each motion submitted under protest; however, the ARB will ultimately accept the panel's determination or refer the matter for rehearing to another special panel composed of members who did not hear the original protest. If ARB does not have at least three other special panel members available, the ARB may make the determination.
- t. Thank the parties for their participation and announce the ARB determination(s) and that an order determining protest will be sent by certified mail or email in counties with populations greater than 120,000 where property owners can submit a written request for email delivery of the notice of determination. Provide the property owner or agent documents indicating that the board members hearing the protest signed the required affidavit.

If the ARB members use computer screens during ARB hearings for reviewing evidence and other information, the ARB must make computer screens available to property owners and agents at the hearings to view the same information that is presented to the ARB members by the appraisal district staff. This requirement is met if the property owner or agent can see all information displayed on at least one computer screen in the hearing location (there is no requirement that the ARB provide the property owner or agent with a separate screen).

If a chief appraiser uses audiovisual equipment at a protest hearing, the appraisal office must provide equipment of the same general type, kind, and character for the use of the property owner or agent during the hearing. See section VI, Other Issues, for more information regarding audiovisual equipment requirements.

The property owner or agent and the appraisal district representative are prohibited from debating with each other. The parties must direct all communications to the ARB members, except for examination or cross-examination during the testimony of witnesses or parties testifying at the hearing.

For taxing unit challenges, motions to correct appraisal records, protests regarding exemptions, or other matters that may be the subject of ARB hearings, the ARB should follow the order of conducting hearings above but may make exceptions for the type of hearing.

Tax Code Section 41.68 and Comptroller Rule 9.803 require that the ARB keep records for each ARB proceeding. This includes the ARB retaining evidence offered or submitted by the parties as required by Tax Code Section 41.45 and Comptroller Rules 9.803 and 9.805. The ARB coordinator ensures proper record-keeping, maintenance, and retention.

2. Conducting Hearings by Telephone or Videoconference Call

Tax Code Section 41.45(n) allows a property owner initiating a protest can offer evidence or argument by affidavit without physically appearing. Tax Code Section 41.45(b-1) requires a property owner to notify the ARB by written request no later than the 10th day before the hearing date if the property owner intends to appear remotely. To offer evidence or argument at a hearing conducted remotely, a property owner must submit a written affidavit of any evidence before the hearing begins. A property owner is responsible for providing access to a hearing conducted remotely to another person the owner invites to participate in the hearing.

Tax Code Section 41.45(b-2) requires the ARB to provide the telephone number for conducting the teleconference call or the URL address for conducting the videoconference (if offered in that county). The ARB must hold the hearing in a location with equipment that allows all ARB members and parties to the protest in attendance to hear and, if applicable, see the property owner's argument.

3. Conducting Hearings Closed to the Public [Tax Code Section 41.66(d), (d-1)]

The chief appraiser and the property owner must file a joint motion to request a closed hearing due to intent to disclose proprietary or confidential information that will assist the ARB in determining the protest.

The ARB chair must convene the hearing as an open meeting and then announce the closed meeting as permitted by Tax Code Section 41.66(d) and (d-1). Only the parties to the protest, their witnesses, and the ARB members are permitted to stay in the hearing

room. The ARB must follow the same order of proceedings as for hearings open to the public.

The ARB Coordinator must keep a separate tape recording or written summary of testimony for the closed meeting in accordance with Comptroller Rule 9.803. The proprietary or confidential evidence presented at the hearing giving rise to the closed hearing is confidential, according to Tax Code Section 22.27. The ARB must mark it as "confidential" and maintain it as confidential in the ARB records for proper handling. After the hearing, the ARB chair must confirm with the parties that all proprietary and confidential information has been appropriately identified by the ARB. The ARB members must maintain the confidentiality of the information and disclose only as provided by law.

After deliberation, the ARB must reconvene in an open meeting and vote or take final action on the protest deliberated in the closed meeting. The ARB and parties cannot mention proprietary or confidential information during the open meeting.

4. Right to Examine and Cross-Examine Witnesses or Other Parties

Tax Code Section 41.66(b) states that "each party to a hearing is entitled to offer evidence, examine or cross-examine witnesses or other parties, and present argument on the matters subject to the hearing." The ARB cannot prohibit this entitlement in any way; however, it may enforce time limits and dictate the order of ARB hearings for witness examination and cross-examination. To the extent possible, the ARB should advise the parties in advance of any time limitations that the ARB intends to impose regarding the presentation of evidence.

5. Party's Right to Appear by an Agent

A person leasing property who is contractually obligated to reimburse the property owner for taxes imposed on the property can file a protest if the property owner does not and designate, under Tax Code Section 41.413, another person to act as his/her agent with the same authority and limitations as an agent designated under Tax Code Section 1.111.

V. Procedures for Telephone Hearings or Video Conference Calls

1. A property owner wishing to appear for a hearing by telephone conference call must:
 - a. notify the Appraisal Review Board (ARB) in writing no later than the tenth day before the date of the hearing; and
 - b. provide any evidence in the form of an affidavit filed before the hearing begins.
2. The ARB will contact the property owner/or agent on the day of the hearing to begin hearing when the ARB is available. The owner is responsible for keeping the line clear and answering promptly when the ARB calls. If the ARB cannot reach the owner, the owner will forfeit the opportunity to participate in the hearing by telephone.

- a. If a property owner not represented by an agent has had to wait more than two hours from the time scheduled for his/her hearing and the hearing has not begun, the owner may request a postponement. The owner should promptly call the ARB and state that he/she is exercising the right to request a postponement of the hearing.
3. The property owner is responsible for ensuring a clear connection from his/her end of the telephone connection.
 - a. The property owner should use a landline telephone or, if the owner uses a cell phone, use from a place with a strong, reliable connection to a cellular network. A property using a VOIP telephone should ensure that the Internet connection is fast enough to provide clear sound transmission without buffering.
 - b. The owner should separate himself/herself from background noises like televisions and barking dogs, noises that might interfere with the ARB Member's ability to hear and understand the owner.
 - c. If a call is dropped or if the property owner's speech is garbled or indecipherable, the ARB may terminate the call and make one attempt to reestablish a connection with the property owner or wait for the property owner to call again. If the connection cannot be reestablished after one attempt, the ARB will proceed with the hearing and the owner will have no further opportunity to participate in the hearing by telephone.
4. If the property owner provides documents, photographs, tables, or other items with his/her affidavit, the owner should label those items prominently, with the first labeled ARB Taxpayer Evidence Page 1, the second labeled Page 2, etc. If the owner wishes to emphasize certain portions of an item, the owner should highlight them or otherwise set them off with colored markings. When the Appraisal District provides items to the property owner before the hearing or at the beginning of the hearing, the district should label those items prominently with the first labeled ARB Cad Evidence Page 1 and the second labeled Page 2, etc. During the hearing, the owner, the ARB members, and the representatives of the Appraisal District should refer to the items by their page numbers.
5. A property owner may not offer evidence by telephone. Evidence includes facts and opinions. The owner may comment on evidence that is presented through an affidavit or by the Appraisal District. ARB members will not ask a property owner to present evidence by telephone.

The property owner is responsible for providing access to another person whom the owner invites to participate in the hearing.

VI. Evidence Considerations

[Tax Code Section 5.103(8), (11), and (13)]

1. A Party's Right to Offer Evidence and Argument

The ARB cannot prohibit a party's right to offer evidence and argument but may enforce time limits and dictate the order of ARB hearings. To the extent possible, the

ARB should advise the parties in advance of any time limitations the ARB intends to impose regarding the presentation of evidence and argument. The ARB should schedule permitting and provide as much time as possible to each party to a hearing to fully present evidence and offer an argument.

Additionally, the owner/agent is entitled to inspect and copy the documents and tangible things, which the Taylor County Appraisal District may offer as evidence at the hearing on their protest. These items will be available for inspection and copying at the Appraisal District's office at least 14 days before the date set for their hearing. If the owner/agent wishes to inspect and/or copy these items, please contact the Appraisal District to request evidence. Copies made by the staff for owner/agents are typically \$.10 for each page.

2. Prohibition of Consideration of Information Not Provided at the ARB Hearing [Tax Code Section 41.66(e)]

In a protest hearing, the ARB cannot consider any appraisal district information on a protest that was not presented to the ARB during the protest hearing. For the ARB to consider any appraisal district record (i.e., appraisal roll history, appraisal cards), one of the parties must present it as evidence (e.g., chief appraiser, appraisal district representative, property owner, agent, or witness) at the protest hearing.

3. Exclusion of Evidence Required by Tax Code Section 41.67(d)(e)

If it is established during a protest hearing that the protesting party previously requested information under Tax Code Section 41.461 and that the opposing party did not deliver the information to the protesting party at least 14 days before the scheduled or postponed hearing, the opposing party cannot use or offer the requested information not made available in any form as evidence in the hearing. The ARB must exclude evidence under Tax Code Section 41.67(d) only if the evidence presented at the hearing establishes that:

- 1) the information sought to be excluded as evidence was not delivered at least 14 days before the hearing; and
- 2) the information sought to be excluded as evidence was previously requested by the protesting party.

Tax Code Section 41.67(e) prohibits the chief appraiser from offering evidence at a hearing in support of a modification or denial of an exemption or application unless:

- 1) the chief appraiser provided the reasoning for the modification or denial to the property owner in writing no later than the 14th day before the hearing date; and
- 2) evidence establishes that the additional reason was not known by the chief appraiser at the time the chief appraiser delivered the original notice of modification or denial.

VII. Other Issues

[Tax Code Section 5.103(17)]

1. Compliance with the Law, Integrity, and Impartiality

ARB members must comply with the law and always act in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the ARB.

2. Patience and Courtesy

ARB members must be patient, dignified, and courteous to parties appearing before the ARB.

3. Bias or Prejudice

ARB members must perform their ARB duties without bias or prejudice.

4. Confidential Information

ARB members must not disclose or use confidential information acquired in performing ARB duties for any purpose unrelated to ARB duties.

5. Required Contents That Vary By ARB

ARB model hearing procedures must comply with Comptroller Rule 9.805 concerning ARB evidence exchange, retention, and audiovisual equipment requirements. The rule requires that ARB procedures include specific items that may vary by ARB. The rule addresses:

- the manner and form, including security requirements, in which a person must provide the other party with evidentiary materials the person intends to offer or submit to the ARB for consideration at the hearing on a small, portable, electronic device;
- how to retain the evidence as part of the ARB's hearing record; and
- the audiovisual equipment provided by an appraisal district, if any, for use by a property owner or the property owner's agent.

This section of the ARB's hearing procedures must address each item required in Comptroller Rule 9.805.

6. Contents that vary by ARB

Comptroller Rule 9.805 requires that "before or immediately after an appraisal review board hearing begins, the appraisal district and the property owner or the owner's agent

shall each provide the other party with a duplicated set of the evidentiary materials the person intends to offer or submit to the appraisal review board for consideration at the hearing. One set of these materials is to be exchanged with and retained by the other party, and another set of these materials is to be provided to and retained by the appraisal review board as evidence for its records." The evidence retained by the appraisal review board must be in either paper or electronic form in accordance with the provisions of Comptroller Rule 9.803.

The appraisal district, property owners, and their agents will have access to a laptop with a VGA connector for use during the appraisal review board hearing. This will allow the appraisal district, property owners, and their agents the ability to project their information on monitors for viewing. If the operation of audiovisual equipment at the hearing requires access to and connection with the internet for the presentation, the parties must provide their own internet connection and access through their own service provider. Property owners and owner's agents may not access the appraisal district's proprietary network, Internet connection, or any other technology.

Any files brought by the property owner or their agent must be configured so that they can be accessed by a Windows-based operating system, such as Windows 7, 8, or 10. File formats accepted include the following:

- Adobe portable document format (PDF)
- Microsoft Word, used for text-based documents (typically ending in .doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel, used for spreadsheets and tables (typically ending in .xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint, used for presentations or slideshows (typically end in .ppt or .pptx)
- Plain text documents (end in .txt)
- JPEG, used for images (end in .jpg or .jpeg)
- PNG, used for images (end in .png)
- TIFF, used for images (end in .tif)

File formats that are not acceptable include the following:

- Files containing MACROS
- Files with external links
- Files that are configured to autoplay
- Executable files (e.g., .exe or .msi file types)
- Password-protected files
- Zipped files (.zip)
- Movie files (examples of file formats are .flv, .wmv, .mp4, .avi or .mov)

Electronic devices suitable for retention by the appraisal district review board include:

- USB Flash Drives (e.g., thumb drive, jump drive, USB memory sticks)
- CDs
- DVDs
- SD Cards (full size, mini SD, and micro SD)

VIII. District Court or Arbitration

After the ARB decides on your case, it must send you a copy of its order by certified mail. If you are unsatisfied with the decision, you can appeal to District Court. If you choose to go to court, you must start the process by filing a petition within 60 days of the date you receive the ARB's order. Alternatively, you may request binding arbitration with the appraisal district in certain cases within the same time period.

IX. Tax payment

If you appeal and your case is pending, you must pay the lesser of the amount of taxes due on the portion of the taxable value not in dispute or the amount of taxes due on the property under the order from which the appeal is taken.