



**CITY OF PORTLAND**  
**Assessor's Office**  
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## **Policy and Procedures of Assessment Staff When Conducting Field Work**

The Assessor and all assessment office field staff have a responsibility to seek, discover, list and value all real and business personal property in the City of Portland. However, we also want to be respectful of property owners' property rights and reasonable expectation of privacy. Accordingly, the City of Portland Assessor's Office has the following policy to govern field staff procedures for conducting field assessments.

### **Policy**

- Most real estate data information can be collected from an exterior inspection or walk around and speaking with a property owner. However, sometimes it is necessary to measure or verify interior characteristics. Permission to enter a home will ALWAYS be sought before doing so.
- While the Assessor's Office annually requests a listing of each business's personal property assets, it is sometimes necessary to visit the business to review what is being reported.
- If the owner does not respond to the initial visit and additional information is needed, staff may make additional visits. If no response is received, you may write a letter or attempt to contact in an effort to gather the information or to set up an appointment to inspect the property. If no response is received, any assessment change will be based on *estimated* data.
- If assessment field staff are denied access to any part of the property, they will collect their information based on what they can see from outside the inaccessible area or from the street. Any data collected in this manner will be *estimated* and the property may be assessed.

### **Procedures for Conducting Field Assessments**

Field staff are expected to adhere to the following procedures while conducting field assessments:

### General rules:

- You must always have a City-issued employee photo ID prominently displayed.
- You should first ring the doorbell, knock on the door, or both. Allow time for the owner to answer the door.
- You must leave the property immediately, if requested to do so.

### If someone is present:

- If someone answers, identify yourself as a City of Portland worker and the reason for your visit.
- Use your best efforts to determine if the person who answers the door has the authority to grant entry onto the property. You can take the answers of that person on good faith.
- Do not enter a house, shed, barn, or other structure under any circumstances unless you have received specific permission to do so.
- Do not enter or walk around the outside of a house if children appear to be home alone.
- Always check with the builder or GC on site before entering new construction.

### If no one is present:

- If no one is home, leave a door hang tag.
- You may generally enter property that appears to be otherwise available to the public, such as walkways and steps, open fields or woods, and front, side, and rear yards if not enclosed or protected.
- However, you may not enter onto a property or portion of property where it is clear the resident or owner has taken affirmative steps to keep the public from that area. For example, staff will not enter those areas clearly marked with “No Trespassing” or “Employee’s Only” signs or if there are chains, gates or fences enclosing that area, unless you have received written or verbal consent to do so from someone authorized to give consent, such as an owner, tenant, or other occupant.
- Assessment field staff are not law enforcement officers and are not visiting property to conduct a criminal investigation. However, you cannot wear blinders when working and you are required to report criminal activity or suspect properties.

Although the instructions above provide general guidance for our staff, it is nearly impossible to provide guidance for every situation. Please ask questions where you need clarification or encounter difficult situations.