

2014-15 METHODS AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND CHECKLISTS
Tier 3
May 20, 2015

These guidelines are meant to assist the Methods and Assistance Program (MAP) reviewers in answering MAP questions during the course of a review. They are not intended to give specific instructions to appraisal districts, although they may be used by appraisal districts to better understand the reviewers' activities and better understand the MAP instrument. Reviewers are trained on the use of these guidelines. That training includes gathering and evaluating evidence, using professional judgment and determining when to contact management concerning processes, procedures or policies that may not, at first sight, meet the requirements of the MAP instrument.

Variation among appraisal districts in complexity, size, topography, property types and duties can result in additional explanation in some areas. These guidelines are periodically reviewed and are subject to changes or additions. Additions or changes may result from:

- law and rule changes;
- changes in appraisal standards;
- changes in generally accepted appraisal practices;
- court and attorney general opinions; or
- opinions issued by appraisal organizations and entities.

The most current version of these procedures is the one with the most recent date.

The reviewer, with management approval, may request a larger sample on any question if it's determined a larger sample will help effectively answer the question. The larger sample may be requested while on site or at any time prior to the completion of the review. In cases where these instructions state that the reviewer will look at a sample of 5 of certain type of property, exemption file, etc., if there are fewer than 5 of those present in the county, the reviewer will look at all that exist.

The steps listed under review questions are steps that can be taken to determine the answers to the questions. A specific outcome to each of those steps is not necessarily required to determine the answer to the question.

Recommendations included in MAP reports will be customized as needed to be applicable to an appraisal district's situation.

GOVERNANCE

1. Did the board of directors meet at least quarterly in the prior year, as required by Tax Code Section 6.04(b)? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

Data needs

- Board of directors' meeting minutes for the prior calendar year

Steps

- Review the meeting minutes and make sure that the appraisal district board met at least once each calendar quarter in the prior year
 - The minutes should show at least one meeting in:
 - January, February or March;
 - April, May or June;
 - July, August or September; and
 - October, November or December
 - If the board of directors did not meet at least once in each month grouping above, the answer to this question is No
- Ensure that each meeting consisted of a quorum
 - To determine a quorum, use the total number of board positions (including vacancies) and determine if at least 50 percent plus 1 of that number is present
 - Non-voting members **do** count towards the quorum
 - If each meeting did not consist of a quorum, the answer to this questions is No

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Ensure that the appraisal district board of directors meets at least once each calendar quarter, as required by Tax Code Section 6.04(b).

2. If the board of directors held an executive or closed session in the prior year, was it shown on the meeting agenda for one of the purposes authorized by law? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

NOTE: If the board of directors did not hold an executive or closed session in the prior year, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Refer to [Government Code Chapter 551](#) for more information about this question.

Data needs

- Board of directors' meeting agendas or minutes for the prior calendar year

Steps

- Review the appraisal district board meeting agendas for the prior calendar year and determine if there were any closed sessions
 - If there were not any closed sessions in the prior year, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE
 - If there were closed sessions, ensure that the reasons listed were one of the following:
 - Seeking advice of its attorney about:
 - pending or contemplated litigation or
 - a settlement offer
 - Deliberation regarding the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if deliberation in an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the position of the governmental body in negotiations with a third person
 - Discussion of personnel matters
 - Deliberating the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline or dismissal of an employee; or
 - Hearing a complaint or charge against an employee
 - Discussion of security devices or security audits

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Ensure that closed sessions of the appraisal district board of directors' meetings are only held for purposes described in Government Code Chapter 551.
- Include the purpose of a closed appraisal district board of directors meeting on the meeting agenda.

3. Did the board of directors evaluate the performance of the chief appraiser and discuss the evaluation with him or her at any time from Jan. 1, 2012 to the time of the issuance of the preliminary MAP report in 2014 or 2015?

TIER(S)

1-3

NOTE: If the current chief appraiser has not been in place for at least a year, as of Sept. 1 of the current year, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data needs

- Board of directors' meeting minutes since Jan. 1, 2012
- Copy of a chief appraiser evaluation since Jan. 1, 2012 (not required)

Steps

- If a copy is provided, review the chief appraiser's most recent evaluation to determine if it was conducted after Jan. 1, 2012 and if it was discussed with the board of directors
- Review appraisal district board meeting minutes to determine if an evaluation of the chief appraiser was discussed in either an open or closed session after Jan. 1, 2012
- If proof of an evaluation discussion is not found, the appraisal district board chair may provide a written statement explaining when and how the most recent chief appraiser's evaluation was conducted
- A No answer can be changed to a Yes if proof of an evaluation is provided between the release of the preliminary report and final report

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Ensure that the chief appraiser is evaluated regularly.
- Ensure that the appraisal district board of directors discusses the results of the chief appraiser's evaluation with him or her.

4. Did the board of directors take official action to select an auditor to prepare the annual financial audit as required by Tax Code Section 6.063 in the prior year?

TIER(S)

1-3

NOTE: This question only has to be answered if the appraisal district received a No answer to any questions relating to audits on any past PRELIMINARY reports (2010-11: appraisal district Board of Directors' Oversight of Appraisal District Contracts and Operations #4; 2012-13: Tiers 1-3 #2).

The following appraisal districts are required to be evaluated for this question: Baylor, Bee, Bosque, Collingsworth, Crockett, Culberson, Dawson, Delta, Eastland, Erath, Falls, Franklin, Henderson, Hutchinson, Kent, McMullen, Medina, Motley, Parmer, Real, Refugio, San Jacinto, San Patricio, Shelby, Somervell, Sterling, Walker, Washington, Yoakum and Zavala

If this question does not have to be answered for an appraisal district, this question should be marked as NOT EVALUATED

Data needs

- Board of directors' meeting minutes for the prior year
- Auditors bid and contract

Steps

- Review the appraisal district board meeting minutes and determine if an auditor was selected within the prior year
 - An extension of the contract for a previous auditor is acceptable

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Take official action to select an auditor to prepare the financial audit as required by Tax Code Section 6.063 each year.

5. Did the board of directors solicit bids for a bank depository in any year since 2009 as required by Tax Code Section 6.09(c)? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

NOTE: This question only has to be answered if the appraisal district received a No answer to any questions relating to bank depositories on any past PRELIMINARY reports (2010-11: appraisal district Board of Directors' Oversight of Appraisal District Contracts and Operations #5; 2012-13: Tiers 1-3 #5).

The following appraisal districts are required to be evaluated for this question: Armstrong, Baylor, Bee, Bosque, Brooks, Cochran, Crockett, Dimmit, Eastland, El Paso, Falls, Fannin, Franklin, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, Kent, Kinney, Live Oak, McMullen, Presidio, Medina, Moore, Motley, Navarro, Real, Refugio, Roberts, Robertson, San Jacinto, San Patricio, Sherman, Sterling, Stonewall, Starr, Terry, Titus, Walker, Washington and Wilson

If this question does not have to be answered for an appraisal district, this question should be marked as NOT EVALUATED

Data needs

- Depository bids received since 2009

Steps

- Determine if the appraisal district has solicited bids for a depository in any year since 2009

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Ensure that the appraisal district board of directors solicits bids for a bank depository as required by Tax Code Section 6.09(c).

6. Did the board of directors designate a bank depository by official action in any year since 2009 as required by Tax Code Section 6.09(b)? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

NOTE: This question only has to be answered if the appraisal district received a No answer to any questions relating to bank depositories on any past PRELIMINARY reports (2010-11: appraisal district Board of Directors' Oversight of Appraisal District Contracts and Operations #5; 2012-13: Tiers 1-3 #5).

The following appraisal districts are required to be evaluated for this question: Armstrong, Baylor, Bee, Bosque, Brooks, Cochran, Crockett, Dimmit, Eastland, El Paso, Falls, Fannin, Franklin, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, Kent, Kinney, Live Oak, McMullen, Presidio, Medina, Moore, Motley, Navarro, Real, Refugio, Roberts, Robertson, San Jacinto, San Patricio, Sherman, Sterling, Stonewall, Starr, Terry, Titus, Walker, Washington and Wilson

If this question does not have to be answered for an appraisal district, this question should be marked as NOT EVALUATED

Data needs

- Depository bids received since 2009
- Most recent depository contract

Steps

- Review documentation and ensure that a bank depository contract has been established since 2009

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Ensure that the appraisal district board of directors designates a bank depository by official action as required by Tax Code Section 6.09(b).

TAXPAYER ASSISTANCE

7. Has the appraisal district implemented its public relations plan described in the IAAO *Standard on Public Relations*?

TIER(S)

1-3

Data Needs

- Public relations plan

Steps

- Use the appraisal district's public relations plan to complete Checklist 1 below
 - Fill in additional elements that are unique to the appraisal district's plan
 - Determine whether each of the required elements listed in the checklist is contained in the appraisal district's plan
 - Have the chief appraiser or designee walk you through the public relations plan implementation process and complete the implementation column of the checklist as appropriate
- The appraisal district's plan must contain all required elements and all plan elements must be implemented to receive a Yes answer on this question

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Complete the development and implementation of the appraisal district's public relations plan.
- Amend the appraisal district's public relations plan to include the elements described in IAAO's *Standard on Public Relations* and implement those elements.
- Begin the implementation of the appraisal district's public relations plan.
- Implement all elements of the appraisal district's public relations plan.

Checklist 1 (Adjust the size of the checklist as necessary)

Public Relations Plan Elements:	Contained in plan (yes/no)?	Implemented (yes/no)?
• Goal – general goal or goals (sometimes listed as part of a mission statement)		
• General Policy Statement – general policy or general guidelines for public relations (sometimes listed as part of a mission statement)		
• Communication Tools to be Used – listing or description of methods of communication (website, press release, newspaper ads, public speaking, customer service counter, etc.)		
• Timeline – addresses items or tasks that relate to the implementation of the plan (a listing of only the tax calendar or Tax Code dates is not sufficient)		
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•		
•		

8. Does the appraisal district have written documents explaining how property is appraised for use by property owners?

TIER(S)

1-3

Data Needs

- Written documents explaining how property is appraised
- Access to the appraisal district's website

Steps

- Determine if the appraisal district has written documents explaining how property is appraised
 - Webpages that include this information are acceptable
 - The reappraisal plan alone is not sufficient for a Yes answer on this question **unless** the plan gives details

- about how various types of properties are appraised and it is made available to the public
- It is not acceptable for the appraisal district to only use Comptroller publications and websites, the documents should be specific to the appraisal district
- Determine if the documents are made available to property owners
 - They can be on the counter, on a bulletin board in the office, on the appraisal district's website, etc.

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Ensure that the appraisal district has written documents explaining how property is appraised for use by property owners.
- Make the appraisal district's written documents explaining how property is appraised available to property owners.

9. Does the appraisal district's website offer the ability to file protests to the appraisal review board online as required by Tax Code Section 41.415? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

NOTE: If the appraisal district does not have a website, ask the chief appraiser for a written statement that the appraisal district has not had a website at any time since Jan. 1, 2008, and the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Access to the appraisal district's website

Steps

- Review the website for the capability to file residence homestead protests online
 - Some appraisal districts do not leave the online protest information on their website year-round, so if this is the case, interview the chief appraiser or designee and have them show you how their online protest process works and verify it was available during the most recent protest period

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Ensure that the appraisal district's website offers the ability to file protests to the appraisal review board online as required by Tax Code Section 41.415.

10. Did the chief appraiser publicize in a manner reasonably designed to notify all property owners of the requirements of law relating to the filing of rendition statements and reports and the availability of forms, as required by Tax Code Section 22.21 in the current or prior year? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

Data Needs

- Most recent notice of the rendition requirement

Steps

- Determine if the appraisal district created a notice of the rendition requirement in the current or prior year
 - The Comptroller's sample notice can be found [here](#)
 - The appraisal district's notice must contain its information
- If the appraisal district does not have a copy of the ad, it may provide a copy of a press release
- Determine if the notice/press release was publicized
 - The following are acceptable methods of publicizing:
 - Newspaper
 - Posting on a website (a link to the Comptroller's notice is not acceptable)
 - Mass mailing
 - T.V./radio public service announcement
 - Have the chief appraiser provide documentation that the announcement was played/displayed

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Publicize in a manner reasonably designed to notify all property owners of the requirements of law relating to the filing of rendition statements and reports and the availability of forms as required by Tax Code Section 22.21.

11. Did the chief appraiser publicize in a manner reasonably designed to notify all residents in the appraisal district of the legal requirements for filing exemption applications and the availability of application forms, as required by Tax Code Section 11.44(b), in the current or prior year?

TIER(S)

1-3

Data Needs

- Most recent homestead exemptions notice

Steps

- Determine if the appraisal district created a homestead exemptions notice in the current or prior year
 - The Comptroller's sample notice can be found [here](#)
 - The appraisal district's notice must contain its information
- If the appraisal district does not have a copy of the ad, it may provide a copy of a press release
- Determine if the notice/press release was publicized
 - The following are acceptable methods of publicizing:
 - Newspaper
 - Posting on a website (a link to the Comptroller's notice is not acceptable)
 - Mass mailing
 - T.V./radio public service announcement
 - Have the chief appraiser provide documentation that the announcement was played/displayed

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Publicize in a manner reasonably designed to notify all property owners the requirements of law for filing exemption applications and the availability of application forms as required by Tax Code Section 11.44(b).

12. Did the chief appraiser publicize in a manner reasonably designed to notify all residents of the appraisal district of the requirements for special appraisal of land used for agricultural, timber, and open-space purposes and the availability of application forms, as required by Tax Code Sections 23.43(f), 23.54(g), and 23.75(g), in the current or prior year?

TIER(S)

1-3

Data Needs

- Most recent productivity appraisal notice

Steps

- Determine if the appraisal district created a productivity appraisal notice in the current or prior year
 - The Comptroller's sample notice can be found [here](#)
 - The appraisal district's notice must contain its information
- If the appraisal district does not have a copy of the ad, it may provide a copy of a press release
- Determine if the notice/press release was publicized
 - The following are acceptable methods of publicizing:
 - Newspaper
 - Posting on a website (a link to the Comptroller's notice is not acceptable)
 - Mass mailing
 - T.V./radio public service announcement
 - Have the chief appraiser provide documentation that the announcement was played/displayed

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Publicize in a manner reasonably designed to notify all property owners the requirements for special appraisal of land used for agricultural, timber, and open-space purposes and the availability of application forms as required by Tax Code Sections 23.43(f), 23.54(g), and 23.75(g).

13. Did the chief appraiser deliver notices to the property owners who were required to receive them stating that exemption applications were required and provide appropriate application forms in the current year, as required by Tax Code Section 11.43(c)?

TIER(S)

1-3

NOTE: If the chief appraiser did not require a new application for any person previously allowed an exemption for any of the exemption types listed in Checklist 2, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Access to mailing records or returned mail
- Copies of notices that a new application is required for an exemption
- Listing of accounts for each exemption type for which the chief appraiser required a new application in the current year

Steps

- Interview the chief appraiser or designee and complete Checklist 2 below
 - Determine if the chief appraiser required new exemption applications to be filed for any of the exemption types listed
 - If new applications were required, obtain a listing of all accounts with each of those types of exemptions
 - Choose a sample of 5 accounts for each exemption type for which the chief appraiser required a new application
 - Determine if a notice of reapplication and a copy of the exemption application form was sent to each property owner in the sample
 - A copy of the specific notices can be observed
 - Mailing records or returned mail can be observed

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Deliver notices to property owners who are required to reapply by the chief appraiser stating that new exemption applications are required and provide the appropriate application form as required by Tax Code Section 11.43(c).

Checklist 2

Exemptions (some can be Not Applicable)	Did the chief appraiser require new applications in the current year?	Evidence that notices were mailed (yes/no)?				
		1	2	3	4	5
Residence Homestead						
Residence Homestead of 100 Percent or Totally Disabled Veteran						
Cemeteries						
Charitable Organizations						
Community Housing Development Organizations Improving Property for Low-Income and Moderate-Income Housing						
Community Land Trust						
Association Providing Assistance to Ambulatory Health Care Centers						
Youth Spiritual, Mental, and Physical Development Associations						
Religious Organizations						
Schools						
Disabled Veterans						
County Fair Associations						
Medical Center Development						
Medical Center Development in Populous Counties						
Nonprofit Community Business Organization Providing Economic Development Services to Local Community						
Intracoastal Waterway Dredge Disposal Site						

Nonprofit Water Supply or Wastewater Service Corporation						
Pollution Control Property						

14. Did the chief appraiser deliver notices to property owners whose exemptions were cancelled in the prior or current year, as required by Tax Code Section 11.43(h)? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

NOTE: If there were not any cancelled exemptions in the current and prior year, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Access to mailing records or returned mail
- Copies of notices of cancellation of an exemption
- Listing of accounts that had cancelled exemptions in the current or prior year

Steps

- Choose a sample of 5 accounts from the listing of accounts that had a cancelled exemption in the current or prior year
- Determine if a cancellation notice was sent to each property owner in the sample and complete Checklist 3
 - A copy of the specific notices can be observed
 - Mailing records or returned mail can be observed
- The 5-day requirement will not be checked for this question

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Deliver notices to property owners whose exemptions are cancelled as required by Tax Code Section 11.43(h).

Checklist 3

Account Numbers	Notice sent (yes/no)?	Documentation (viewed notice, viewed mailing records or returned mail, etc.)

15. Did the chief appraiser deliver appropriate exemption application forms in the current year to persons who in the preceding year were allowed exemptions requiring annual applications, as required by Tax Code Section 11.44(a)? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

NOTE: This question should be answered after Feb. 1

NOTE: If the appraisal district does not have any properties with any of the exemption types listed below, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Access to mailing records or returned mail
- Listing of all accounts with exemptions that require an annual application

Steps

- Review and become familiar with the exemptions that require an annual application:
 - Public Property Used to Provide Transitional Housing for Indigent Persons
 - Charitable Organizations Improving Property for Low-Income Housing

- Organizations Constructing or Rehabilitating Low-Income Housing: Property Not Previously Exempt
- Colonia Model Subdivision Program
- Veteran’s Organizations
- Federation of Women’s Clubs
- Nature Conservancy of Texas
- Congress of Parents and Teachers
- Private Enterprise Demonstration
- Bison, Buffalo, and Cattalo
- Theater Schools
- Community Service Clubs
- Scientific Research Corporations
- Incomplete Improvements
- Historic Sites
- Tangible Personal Property Exempt
- Tangible Personal Property in Transit
- Solar and Wind-Powered Energy Devices
- Offshore Drilling Equipment Not in Use
- Property Exempted from City Taxation by Agreement
- Certain Water Conservation Initiatives
- Choose a sample of 5 accounts with exemptions that require an annual application
- Determine if exemption application forms were sent to each property owner in the sample by Feb. 1 of the current year and complete Checklist 4
 - A copy of the specific notices can be observed
 - Mailing records or returned mail can be observed

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Deliver exemption application forms to property owners who in the preceding year were allowed exemptions requiring annual applications as required by Tax Code Section 11.44(a).

Checklist 4

Account Numbers	Type of Exemption	Application sent (yes/no)?	Documentation (viewed notice, viewed mailing records or returned mail, etc.)	Date Application was Sent

16. Did the chief appraiser deliver notices of modifications or denials of exemption applications that included brief explanations of the procedures for protesting the actions in the current or prior year, as required by Tax Code Section 11.45(d)?

TIER(S)

1-3

NOTE: If there were not any modifications or denials of exemption applications in the current and prior year, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Access to mailing records or returned mail
- Copies of notices of modification or denial of an exemption
- Listing of accounts that had modified or denied exemptions in the current or prior year

Steps

- Choose a sample of 5 accounts that had modified or denied exemptions in the current or prior year
- Determine if a modification or denial notice was sent to each property owner in the sample and complete Checklist 5
 - A copy of the specific notices can be observed
 - Mailing records or returned mail can be observed
- Determine if the modification or denial notices included a brief explanation of the procedures for protesting the action
- Determine if the notices were sent via certified mail
- The 5-day requirement will not be checked for this question

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Deliver notices to property owners whose exemptions are modified or denied as required by Tax Code Section 11.45(d).
- Deliver notices to property owners whose exemptions are modified as required by Tax Code Section 11.45(d).
- Deliver notices to property owners whose exemptions are denied as required by Tax Code Section 11.45(d).
- Ensure that the modification or denial notices contain a brief explanation of the procedures for protesting the action as required by Tax Code Section 11.45(d).
- Ensure that modification or denial of exemption notices are sent via certified mail as required by Tax Code Section 1.07(d).

Checklist 5

Account Numbers	Modification or Denial?	Notice sent via certified mail (yes/no)?	Documentation (viewed notice, viewed mailing records or returned mail, etc.)	Procedures for Protesting (yes/no)?

17. If the chief appraiser received a report of decreased value from a property owner, was a notice of value determination delivered to the property owner, as required by Tax Code Section 22.03(c)?

TIER(S)

1-3

NOTE: If the appraisal district did not receive any reports of decreased value in the current or prior year, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Access to mailing records or returned mail
- Copies of notices of determination in response to reports of decreased value
- Listing of accounts for which a report of decreased value ([50-127](#)) was submitted for the current or prior year

Steps

- Choose a sample of 5 accounts from the listing of accounts for which a report of decreased value was submitted for the current or prior year
- Determine if a written notice of value determination was sent to each property owner in the sample and complete Checklist 6
 - A copy of the specific notices can be observed
 - Mailing records or returned mail can be observed
- The appraiser reviewing the property shall note on the back of the property owner’s report:
 - The appraiser’s name
 - The date the property was viewed
 - Determination of any decrease in appraised value
 - The cause and nature for the decrease

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Deliver a written notice of value determination in response to each report of decreased value received by the appraisal district, as required by Tax Code Section 22.03(c).

Checklist 6

Account Numbers	Notice sent (yes/no)?	Note on the back of the report (yes/no)?	Documentation (viewed notice, viewed mailing records or returned mail, etc.)

18. Did the chief appraiser deliver notices and application forms to property owners whose open-space land use changed or eligibility ended for special appraisal in any year since Jan. 1, 2010, as required by Tax Code Section 23.54(e)?

TIER(S)

1-3

NOTE: This question applies only to properties for which the chief appraiser believed the land use changed or for which the chief appraiser determined a new application would be required. Properties for which a change of use was determined by the chief are addressed in question #21.

NOTE: If the chief appraiser has not required a new application for any person previously allowed open-space land appraisal since Jan. 1, 2010, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Access to mailing records or returned mail
- Copies of notices that a new application is required
- Listing of open-space accounts for which the chief appraiser believed the land use changed or eligibility ended since Jan. 1, 2010

Steps

- Choose a sample of 5 open-space accounts for which the chief appraiser believed the open-space land use changed or eligibility ended since Jan. 1, 2010
- Determine if a notice of reapplication and a copy of the application form was sent to each property owner in the sample and complete Checklist 7
 - A copy of the specific notices can be observed
 - Mailing records or returned mail can be observed
- For notices sent after Jan. 1, 2014, determine if they were sent via certified mail

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- When the chief appraiser has good cause to believe that the land’s eligibility for open-space appraisal has ended, deliver notices to the person who previously filed the application requiring reapplication and provide the appropriate application form as required by Tax Code Section 23.54(e).
- Ensure that notices are sent via certified mail as required by Tax Code Section 1.07(d).

Checklist 7

Account Numbers	Notice sent (if sent after 1/1/14, was it sent via certified mail) (yes/no)?	Documentation (viewed notice, viewed mailing records or returned mail, etc.)	Application Sent (yes/no)?

19. If the chief appraiser imposed a penalty for failure of a property owner to notify the appraisal district that land no longer qualifies for open-space special appraisal in any year since Jan. 1, 2010, was a notice of imposition of the penalty and an explanation of the procedures for protesting the imposition of the penalty delivered to the owner, as required by Tax Code Section 23.54(i)?

TIER(S)

1-3

NOTE: If the chief appraiser has not imposed any penalties for failure of a property owner to notify the appraisal district that land no longer qualifies for open-space special appraisal since Jan. 1, 2010, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Access to mailing records or returned mail
- Copies of notices of imposition of the penalty
- Listing of accounts for which a penalty was imposed for failure of the property owner to notify the appraisal district that land no longer qualifies for open-space special appraisal since Jan. 1, 2010

Steps

- Determine if the chief appraiser imposed any penalties for failure of a property owner to notify the appraisal district that land no longer qualifies for open-space special appraisal since Jan. 1, 2010
- Choose a sample of 5 accounts from the listing of accounts for which a penalty was imposed for failure of the property owner to notify the appraisal district that land no longer qualifies for open-space special appraisal since Jan. 1, 2010
- Determine if a notice of imposition of the penalty was sent to each property owner in the sample and complete Checklist 8
 - A copy of the specific notices can be observed
 - Mailing records or returned mail can be observed
- Determine if the notice included a brief explanation of the procedures for protesting the imposition of the penalty

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- When a penalty is imposed for failure of a property owner to notify the appraisal district that land no longer qualifies for open-space special appraisal, send a notice of imposition of the penalty to the property owner as required by Tax Code Section 23.54(i).
- Include a brief explanation of the procedures for protesting the imposition of a penalty when sending out notices for failure of a property owner to notify the appraisal district that land no longer qualifies for open-space special appraisal.

Checklist 8

Account Numbers	Notice sent (yes/no)?	Documentation (viewed notice, viewed mailing records or returned mail, etc.)	Procedures for Protesting Imposition of Penalty (yes/no)?

20. Did the chief appraiser deliver notices of denials of applications for open-space land designation that include brief explanations of the procedures for protesting the denials and full explanations of the reasons for the denials in the current or prior year, as required by Tax Code Section 23.57(d)? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

NOTE: If the chief appraiser has not denied any open-space land applications, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Access to mailing records or returned mail
- Copies of notices of denials of applications for open-space land designation
- Listing of accounts that were denied open-space land designation in the current or prior year

Steps

- Choose a sample of 5 accounts that were denied open-space land designation in the current or prior year
- Determine if a notice of denial was sent to each property owner in the sample and complete Checklist 9
 - A copy of the specific notices can be observed
 - Mailing records can be observed
- Determine if the notice of denial included a brief explanation of the procedures for protesting the action and a full explanation of the reasons for denial
- For notices sent after Jan. 1, 2014, determine if they were sent via certified mail
- The 5-day requirement will not be checked for this question

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Deliver notices to property owners whose open-space land designation applications are denied as required by Tax Code Section 23.57(d).
- Include a brief explanation of the procedures for protesting the denial of an application for open-space land designation when sending out denial notices.
- Include a full explanation of the reason for denial when sending out denial notices to property owners whose open-space land designation applications are denied.
- Deliver notices of denials of applications for open-space land via certified mail as required by Tax Code Section 1.07(d).

Checklist 9

Account Numbers	Notice sent (if sent after 1/1/14, was it sent via certified mail) (yes/no)?	Documentation (viewed notice, viewed mailing records or returned mail, etc.)	Procedures for Protesting (yes/no)?	Reason for Denial (yes/no)?

21. In the current or prior year, did the chief appraiser deliver notices of determinations that a change in use of open-space land has occurred and include in the notices an explanation of the owner’s right to protest the determinations, as required by Tax Code Section 23.55(e)?

TIER(S)

1-3

NOTE: If the chief appraiser has not determined that a change in use of open-space land has occurred, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Access to mailing records or returned mail
- Copies of notices of determination that a change in use of open-space land has occurred
- Listing of accounts that were determined to have a change in use of open-space land in the current or prior year

Steps

- Choose a sample of 5 accounts from the listing of accounts that determined to have a change in use of open-space land in the current or prior year
- Determine if a notice of determination that a change in use of open-space land has occurred was sent to each property owner in the sample and complete Checklist 10
 - A copy of the specific notices can be observed
 - Mailing records or returned mail can be observed
- Determine if the notice included an explanation of the owner’s right to protest the determination
- For notices sent after Jan. 1, 2014, determine if they were sent via certified mail

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Deliver notices of determination to property owners who are determined to have a change in use of open-space land as required by Tax Code Section 23.55(e).
- Include an explanation of the property owner’s right to protest the determination when sending out notices to property owners who are determined to have a change in use of open-space land.
- Delivery notices of determination that a change in use of open-space property has occurred via certified mail as required by Tax Code Section 1.07(d).

Checklist 10

Account Numbers	Notice sent (if sent after 1/1/14, was it sent via certified mail) (yes/no)?	Documentation (viewed notice, viewed mailing records or returned mail, etc.)	Explanation of Right to Protest (yes/no)?

22. In the current or prior year, did the chief appraiser include with the notice of appraised value an application form for a residence homestead

TIER(S)

1-3

exemption if the property did not qualify for a residence homestead exemption in the current tax year, as required by Tax Code Section 25.19(b-2)?

NOTE: This question should be answered after notices of appraised value have been mailed

Data Needs

- Access to mailing records or returned mail
- Copies of notices of appraised value for residential real property that has not qualified for a residence homestead exemption in the current tax year
- Listing of all residential real property that has not qualified for a residence homestead exemption in the current tax year AND that have matching property and homeowner addresses

Steps

- Choose a sample of 5 accounts from the listing of all residential real property that has not qualified for a residence homestead exemption in the current tax year AND that have matching property and homeowner addresses
- Determine if a notice of appraised value was sent to each property owner in the sample and complete Checklist 11
 - The following statement must be included with each notice in bold, 12-point type:
 - **“According to the records of the appraisal district, the residential real property described in this notice of appraised value is not currently being allowed a residence homestead exemption from ad valorem taxation. If the property is your home and you occupy it as your principal place of residence, the property may qualify for one or more residence homestead exemptions, which will reduce the amount of taxes imposed on the property. The form needed to apply for a residence homestead exemption is enclosed. Although the form may state that the deadline for filing an application for a residence homestead exemption is April 30, a late application for a residence homestead exemption will be accepted if filed before February 1, (insert year application must be filed). There is no fee or charge for filing an application or a late application for a residence homestead exemption.”**
- Determine if the notice was accompanied by an application form for a residence homestead exemption

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Send a notice of appraised value containing the language specified in Tax Code Section 25.19(b-2) and a copy of the application form for a residence homestead exemption to all residential real property owners that do not qualify for a residence homestead exemption in the current tax year and have matching property and owner addresses.

Checklist 11

Account Numbers	Notice sent (yes/no)?	Documentation (viewed notice, viewed mailing records or returned mail, etc.)	Required Statement in Bold, 12-Point Type (yes/no)?	Application Sent (yes/no)?

23. Has the appraisal district’s board of directors implemented its procedures explaining how taxpayer complaints are handled, as required

TIER(S)

1-3

by Tax Code Sections 6.04(f) and (g)?

NOTE: If no written taxpayer complaints have been received by the appraisal district board of directors within the past two years, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Copies of written taxpayer complaints received for the past two years
- Board of directors’ procedures by which complaints are filed and resolved
- Board of directors’ meeting minutes relating to the status of complaints within the past two years

Steps

- Review the board of directors’ procedures by which complaints are filed and resolved and ensure that they address at least quarterly notices of the status of complaints unless the notice would jeopardize an undercover investigation
 - Fill in Checklist 12
- Review the complaints received within the past two years and ensure that the procedures for handling and resolving complaints are being followed and complete Checklist 12

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Ensure that the appraisal district board of directors has written procedures that explain how complaints are filed and resolved.
- Ensure that the appraisal district board of directors’ written procedures explaining how complaints are filed and resolved contain the information required by Tax Code Section 6.04(g).
- Ensure that the procedures for handling and resolving complaints are followed for every written taxpayer complaint received by the appraisal district.

Checklist 12 (Adjust the size of the checklist as necessary)

Steps in the board of directors’ procedures for handling and resolving complaints:	Complaint 1: Steps completed (yes/no)?	Complaint 2: Steps completed (yes/no)?	Complaint 3: Steps completed (yes/no)?
•			
•			
•			
•			
•			
•			

OPERATING PROCEDURES

24. Did the appraisal district maintain a partial exemption list as required by Tax Code Section 11.46 and Comptroller Rule 9.3010 in the current or prior year? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

For more information on partial exemption list requirements, see the [Rules Handbook](#)

Data Needs

- Partial exemption list

Steps

- Review the appraisal district's partial exemption list and complete Checklist 13
 - If an appraisal district does not offer one of the optional exemptions, those may be marked as Not Applicable
- Review and become familiar with the taxing units in the appraisal district
 - A listing of the taxing units in each appraisal district can be found in the [appraisal district directory](#)
 - If there is not a listing of partial exemptions for a taxing unit, interview the chief appraiser or designee and determine if those units offer any partial exemptions
- Interview the chief appraiser or designee and determine if the list is made available to the public
- *NOTE: the partial exemption list is not required to be maintained in hard copy format*

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Maintain a partial exemption list as required by Tax Code Section 11.46 and Comptroller Rule 9.3010.
- Ensure that the appraisal district's partial exemption list is made available to the public.

Checklist 13

Exemption Type	Total Number for Each Taxing Unit (yes/no)?	Observed Total Value Exempted for Each Taxing Unit (yes/no)?
State-Mandated Homestead Exemption		
State-Mandated Over-65 Homestead Exemption		
State-Mandated Disability Homestead Exemption		
Local-Option Percentage Homestead Exemption		
Optional Over-65 or Disability Homestead Exemption		
Disabled Veteran's Exemption		

25. Do the exemption forms used by the appraisal district comply with Comptroller Rule 9.415? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

Data Needs

- Appraisal district's exemption forms

Steps

- Review the appraisal district's exemption application for residence homestead and determine if the following is included with the application:
 - A list of taxing units served by the appraisal districts, together with all residential homestead exemptions each offers; OR
 - The appraisal district's name and phone number with instructions that the property owner may call the appraisal district to determine what homestead exemptions are offered by the property owner's taxing units
- Review the appraisal district's exemption forms and complete Checklist 14
 - Appraisal districts must use either the most recently prescribed Comptroller form OR a comparable form created by the appraisal district

- A link to the Comptroller’s forms website is acceptable for this question
- If the appraisal district is not using the Comptroller’s form, ensure that any additional data that is requested is listed as optional and not required
 - Interview the chief appraiser or designee and have them explain how the appraisal district processes exemption applications and ensure that optional data is not a requirement for exemption approval
- If an appraisal district does not offer certain exemptions, those may be marked as Not Applicable

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Ensure that the most current exemption forms are being used in accordance with Comptroller Rule 9.415.
- Ensure that the residence homestead exemption application contains the requirements of Comptroller Rule 9.415.

Checklist 14

Exemption Form	Using Comptroller or Custom?	Current (yes/no)?
50-113 Application for Exemption of Goods Exported from Texas ("Freeport Exemption")		
50-114 Application for Residence Homestead Exemption		
50-115 Application for Charitable Organization Property Tax Exemption		
50-116 Application for Property Tax Abatement Exemption		
50-117 Application for Religious Organization Property Tax Exemption		
50-118 Application for Youth Development Organization Property Tax Exemption		
50-119 Application for Private School Property Tax Exemption		
50-120 Application for Cemetery Property Tax Exemption		
50-121 Application for Dredge Disposal Site Exemption		
50-122 Application for Historic or Archeological Site Property Tax Exemption		
50-123 Exemption Application for Solar or Wind-Powered Energy Devices		
50-124 Application for Stored Offshore Drilling Rig Exemption		
50-125 Application for Theater School Property Tax Exemption		
50-128 Application for Miscellaneous Property Tax Exemptions		
50-135 Application for Disabled Veteran's or Survivor's Exemptions		
50-140 Application for Transitional Housing Property Tax Exemption		
50-214 Application for Nonprofit Water Supply or Wastewater Service Corporation Property Tax Exemption		
50-242 Application for Charitable Organizations Improving Property for Low-Income Housing Property Tax Exemption		
50-245 Application for Exemption for Cotton Stored in a Warehouse		
50-248 Application for Pollution Control Property Tax Exemption		
50-263 Application for Community Housing Development Organization Improving Property for Low-Income and Moderate-Income Housing Property Tax Exemption		
50-264 List of Property Acquired or Sold - Tax Code Section 11.182 - Community Housing Development Organization Improving Property for Low-Income and Moderate-Income Housing Property Previously Exempt		
50-270 Application for Water Conservation Initiatives Property Tax Exemption		
50-282 Application for Ambulatory Health Care Center Assistance Exemption		
50-285 Lessee's Affidavit of Primarily Non Income Producing Vehicle Use		
50-286 Lessor's Application for Personal Use Lease Automobile Exemptions		

50-297 Application for Exemption of Raw Cocoa and Green Coffee Held in Harris County		
50-299 Primarily Charitable Organization Property Tax Exemption		
50-310 Application for Constructing or Rehabilitating Low-Income Housing Property Tax Exemption		
50-758 Application for Exemption of Goods-in-Transit		
50-759 Application for Property Tax Exemption: for Vehicle Used to Produce Income and Personal Non-Income Producing Activities		
50-776 Application for Nonprofit Community Business Organization Providing Economic Development Services to Local Community Property Tax Exemption		
50-805 Application for Community Land Trust Exemption		
AP-199 Application for Organizations Engaged Primarily in Performing Charitable Functions		

26. Has the appraisal district implemented procedures for applying “capped” homestead property values as required by Tax Code Section 23.23? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

Data Needs

- Procedures for applying capped homestead property values

Steps

- Review the written procedures for applying capped homestead property values (if the appraisal district has written procedures)
- Interview the chief appraiser or designee and have them walk you through the system and show you how the cap is applied, with 5 examples
- Determine if the appraisal district is following the written procedures
- If the chief appraiser or designee is unable to show you how the cap is applied in the appraisal system:
 - Obtain a list of all accounts that have had a homestead exemption for at least the previous two years
 - Choose a sample of 5 accounts and compare the appraised values from the two most recent years
 - Determine if the value was raised by more than 10 percent
 - If the value was raised by more than 10 percent on any of the properties in the sample, have the chief appraiser provide an explanation for the increase
 - Determine if the explanation for the increase aligns with the requirements of Tax Code Section 23.23, which allows for the increase in valuation to be greater than 10 percent only if the additional beyond a 10 percent increase is the value of new improvements to the property

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Implement the written procedures for applying capped homestead property values as required by Tax Code Section 23.23.
- Modify the written procedures for applying capped homestead property values to reflect the actual appraisal district activities.

27. Does the appraisal district have written procedures concerning disaster recovery and mitigation? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

Data Needs

- Disaster recovery and mitigation plan or procedures

Steps

- If there is no disaster recovery and mitigation plan or procedures, this answer is no
- Review the appraisal district’s disaster recovery and mitigation plan or procedures and determine if it addresses both recovery and mitigation by completing Checklists 15a and 15b
 - Mitigation planning involves lessening the impact of a disaster by taking action now
 - Disaster recovery means having a plan to recovery once a disaster has occurred
- If the review shows the appraisal district has a written plan or procedures, meets all the criteria in Checklist 15a, and includes at least two items on Checklist 15b, then the answer is yes

NOTE: This review does not determine whether a disaster recovery and mitigation plan is viable or operational. Only that a plan is in place and includes some items, as some level of description, of what is typically included in a disaster recovery and mitigation plan or procedures. Under no circumstances should the answer of this question as yes assure any individual that a plan or procedures has any likelihood of guaranteeing an appraisal district can recover from a disaster using its existing plan.

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Develop written procedures concerning disaster recovery and mitigation.
- Amend the appraisal district’s disaster recovery plan to address mitigation.

Checklist 15a

Disaster Recovery and Mitigation Plan or Procedures:	Addressed in appraisal district’s plan (yes/no)? – include page numbers
• Plan or procedures is in written form	
• Plan or procedures specifically mentions appraisal district name	
• Plan or procedures includes some steps related to recovery	
• Plan or procedures includes more than once instance outlining mitigation	
• Plan or procedures identifies a decision maker in the event of a disaster	

Checklist 15b – answer all items and include page numbers

Elements of a Disaster Recovery Plan:	Addressed in appraisal district’s plan (yes/no)? – include page numbers
• Data storage – how data is stored (where are backup copies of the data stored, etc.)	
• Data backup – how data is backed up (on tapes, location onsite, offsite server, etc.)	
• Testing program –test the plan to make sure it is detailed enough to be viable, including a test where not all staff identified in the plan are available	
• Identifies systems and software – listing of the computer systems and software used to maintain and backup data	
• Offsite recovery – how and where the appraisal district will function and operate if normal operations at the office is interrupted	
• Employee preparedness – how employees are prepared for a disaster (outlining responsibilities of employees, how employees are trained, drills that are run, etc.)	
• Contact list or call trees—a list of managers and staff by name and contact information	
• Contact procedures—procedures explaining who to contact and when, including call scripts for specific incidents	
• Offsite locations established—actual offsite location identified in plan	
• Software and hardware—specific lists of hardware and software, including the types, numbers, license agreements, etc. to purchase or lease equipment during and after the recovery period	
• Timelines—details of what and who will be recovered, including detailed timeframes for recovery, for example, 24 hours, 48 hours, 72 hours, one week, two weeks, one month etc. after a disaster has occurred. Can include procedures for recovery by department or work type.	
• Disaster declaration policies and procedures—what is a disaster, who decides, who is notified	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for contacting the press—written procedures and contact information, including press releases to use to provide information to the press and the public 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for contacting vendors 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for contacting customers 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Software license agreements and purchase orders 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardware purchase agreements and purchase orders 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reclamation of useable hardware and software 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reclamation of existing work 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reclamation of records not stored offsite 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for protesting records offsite 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offsite floor plans for staff 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of work procedures 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of reference materials used in work 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of assumptions—list the assumptions that the plan is based on. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of objectives for the plan 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disaster recovery center 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed and ongoing mitigation efforts 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety assessments 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage assessments 	

APPRAISAL STANDARDS, PROCEDURES AND METHODOLOGY

28. Has the appraisal district begun implementation of the 2013 Texas Property Tax Assistance Property Classification Guide? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

Data Needs

- Documentation showing implementation of the 2013 classification guide

Steps

- Review and become familiar with the [Texas Property Tax Assistance Property Classification Guide](#)
- Interview the chief appraiser or designee and have him/her show you how the 2013 classification guide is being implemented
- Pull a sample of 5 Category E properties from the most recent electronic appraisal roll submission by the appraisal district
- Pull the appraisal records for each sample property while onsite
- Review electronic appraisal roll submission data that was sent to PTAD and compare the sample and the appraisal records
 - Each appraisal record must show that both the improvement and land are in the record. The record may only show land. If any of the appraisal records show only an improvement, have the appraisal district pull the corresponding land account and ensure that the land is categorized as E. The appraisal record must show that the property value is set at the market value for the land and may not show that the land has special agricultural appraisal
 - If there are parent/master accounts listed, that is also evidence that the changes are being implemented
- If 1 out of the 5 accounts in the sample is done incorrectly, contact management
- If more than 1 out of the sample are done incorrectly, the answer is “No”

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Begin implementation of the 2013 Texas Property Tax Assistance Property Classification Guide.

29. Did the appraisal district supplement its appraisal records with omitted property in the prior or current year, according to the requirements of Tax Code Section 25.21? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

NOTE: This question is only NOT APPLICABLE if the chief appraiser provides a statement in writing stating that there was not any omitted property that was discovered in the previous two years

Data Needs

- Supplemental appraisal roll(s) for the previous two years
- Supplemental notices of appraised value

Steps

- Interview the chief appraiser or designee and have them show you how the appraisal records are supplemented with omitted property, with examples
- Verify that the appraisal district has supplemented the appraisal roll with previously omitted property that was not mineral accounts at least once in the current or prior year
- If at least one supplement has not been done to the roll in the current or prior year, the answer will be NOT APPLICABLE **only** if it can be verified that the appraisal district is using at least one of these tools to check for omitted property:
 - Google Earth,
 - Pictometry,
 - aerial surveys or photos,
 - 911 maps, or
 - yearly inspections of all properties in the county that are not large ranches
- If at least one supplement was not done and the appraisal district is not using one of the tools listed above to discover omitted property, then the answer to the question is No

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Supplement appraisal records with omitted property according to the requirements of Tax Code Section 25.21.

30. Do the appraisal district’s appraisal practices conform to its appraisal manual and procedures for residential property?

TIER(S)

1-3

NOTE: If the appraisal district does not have written appraisal procedures, the answer to this question is No

NOTE: These instructions also answer Mandatory Question 3, Step 1

Data Needs

- Access to appraisal records
- Residential appraisal manual and procedures

Steps

- Review and become familiar with the appraisal district’s residential appraisal procedures and fill in Checklist 16a
- Select a random sample of 25 residential properties using the appraisal district’s appraisal roll submission
 - Request appraisal records for the properties in the sample
- Determine what steps in the appraisal process are done at the appraisal district (steps that do not involve property inspection)
- Complete Checklist 16a to determine if the appraiser is following the written residential appraisal procedures for the onsite portion of the appraisal process
 - This will include checking market sales comparison approach steps, cost approach steps and any others steps used to value the sample properties
- Perform field inspections of the sample properties to determine if appraisal district procedures were followed and that all needed components are noted in the appraisal records for the sample, including property characteristics and depreciation and complete Checklist 16b

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Develop and follow written procedures for appraising residential property.
- Modify the appraisal district’s written residential appraisal procedures to match the actual appraisal activities of the appraisal district.
- Ensure that residential appraisers are following the appraisal district’s written appraisal procedures.

Checklist 16a (Adjust the size of the checklist as necessary)

Steps in the procedures for appraising residential property:	Addressed in walk-through (yes/no)?	Documentation/Examples
•		
•		
•		
•		
•		
•		

Checklist 16b

Sample Property Account Numbers:	Are components current (roof, siding, garage, etc.)? (yes/no) include Notes	Property Characteristics Noted Correctly (yes/no)?	Depreciation Noted (yes/no)?
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			
16.			
17.			
18.			
19.			
20.			
21.			
22.			
23.			
24.			
25.			

31. Do the appraisal district’s appraisal practices conform to its appraisal manual and procedures for land valuation? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

NOTE: If the appraisal district does not have written appraisal procedures, the answer to this question is No

NOTE: If there are no Category C1 properties in the county, this question is NOT APPLICABLE

NOTE: These instructions also answer Mandatory Question 3, Step 2

Data Needs

- Land appraisal manual and procedures
- Access to appraisal records

Steps

- Review and become familiar with the appraisal district’s land appraisal procedures and fill in Checklist 17
- Select a random sample of 15 category C1 properties using the appraisal district’s appraisal roll submission
 - Request appraisal records for the properties in the sample
- Interview the chief appraiser or designee and have them walk you through the process the appraisal district uses to appraise vacant land using the sample properties, with documentation
 - This will include checking all steps used in the market sales comparison approach valuations and any other steps used to value each of the sample properties
- Complete Checklists 17 to determine if the appraisal district is following the written land appraisal procedures

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Develop and follow written procedures for appraising land.
- Modify the appraisal district’s written land appraisal procedures to match the actual appraisal activities of the appraisal district.
- Ensure that appraisers are following the appraisal district’s written procedures for the appraisal of land.

Checklist 17 (Adjust the size of the checklist as necessary)

Steps in the procedures for appraising land (Category C1):	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
•															
•															
•															
•															
•															
•															
•															
•															
•															
•															
•															
•															

32. Do the appraisal district’s appraisal practices conform to its appraisal manual and procedures for commercial property?

TIER(S)

1-3

NOTE: If the appraisal district does not have written appraisal procedures, the answer to this question is No

NOTE: These instructions also answer Mandatory Question 3, Step 3

Data Needs

- Access to appraisal records
- Commercial appraisal manual and procedures

Steps

- Review and become familiar with the appraisal district’s commercial appraisal procedures and fill in Checklist 18a
- Select a random sample of 10 commercial properties using the appraisal district’s appraisal roll submission
 - Request appraisal records for the properties in the sample
- Determine what steps in the appraisal process are done at the appraisal district (steps that do not involve property inspection)
- Complete Checklist 18a to determine if the appraiser is following the written commercial appraisal procedures for the onsite portion of the appraisal process
 - This will include checking market sales comparison approach steps, income approach steps, cost approach steps and any others steps used to value the sample properties
- Perform field inspections of the sample properties to determine if appraisal district procedures were followed and that all needed components are noted in the appraisal records for the sample, including property characteristics and depreciation and complete Checklist 18b

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Develop and follow written procedures for appraising commercial property.
- Modify the appraisal district’s written commercial appraisal procedures to match the actual appraisal activities of the appraisal district.
- Ensure that commercial appraisers are following the appraisal district’s written appraisal procedures.

Checklist 18a (Adjust the size of the checklist as necessary)

Steps in the procedures for appraising commercial property:	Addressed in walk-through (yes/no)?	Documentation/Examples
•		
•		
•		
•		
•		
•		

Checklist 18b

Sample Property Account Numbers:	Property Exists as Described (yes/no)?	Property Characteristics Noted Correctly (yes/no)?	Depreciation Noted (yes/no)?
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

33. Do the appraisal district’s appraisal practices conform to its appraisal manual and procedures for business personal property?

TIER(S)

1-3

NOTE: If the appraisal district does not have written appraisal procedures, the answer to this question is No

NOTE: If the appraisal district is not doing field checks for personal property, the answer to this question is No

NOTE: These instructions also answer Mandatory Question 3, Step 4

Data Needs

- Access to appraisal records
- Access to rendition data
- Business personal property appraisal manual and procedures

Steps

- Review and become familiar with the appraisal district’s business personal property appraisal procedures and fill in Checklist 19
- Select a random sample of 10 personal property accounts using the appraisal district’s appraisal roll submission
 - Request appraisal records for the properties in the sample
- Interview the chief appraiser or designee and have them walk you through the process the appraisal district uses to appraise business personal property using the sample properties, with documentation
 - Check to see what steps the appraisal district took to verify information submitted on renditions, and determine if those steps match the written procedures
 - Check the steps taken to value the accounts regardless of whether renditions were or were not submitted
- Complete Checklist 19 to determine if the appraisal district is following the business personal property appraisal procedures

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Develop and follow written procedures for appraising business personal property.
- Modify the appraisal district’s written business personal property appraisal procedures to match the actual appraisal activities of the appraisal district.
- Ensure that appraisers are following the appraisal district’s written procedures for the appraisal of business

personal property.

Checklist 19 (Adjust the size of the checklist as necessary)

Steps in the procedures for appraising business personal property:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
•										
•										
•										
•										
•										
•										
•										
•										
•										
•										
•										

34. Do the appraisal district’s appraisal manual and procedures for business personal property include up-to-date depreciation tables?

TIER(S)

1-3

Data Needs

- Business personal property depreciation tables

Steps

- Review the business personal property depreciation tables and determine the date they were last updated
- Determine if the depreciation tables have been reviewed and updated within the last year
 - If the tables are set up by asset age, they do not need to be updated every year
- If the appraisal district uses PTAD’s depreciation schedule, have the chief appraiser or designee walk you through 5 examples

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Ensure that the appraisal district’s business personal property depreciation tables are up-to-date.

35. Do the appraisal district’s appraisal practices conform to its appraisal manual and procedures for open-space or agricultural land?

TIER(S)

1-3

Data Needs

- Appraisal district’s manual or procedures for appraising open-space or agricultural land
- Appraisal records with agricultural valuation
- Copy of applications for agricultural valuation from the previous five years

Steps

- Review and become familiar with the appraisal district’s agricultural manual and procedures and fill in Checklist 20
- Select 5 properties with open-space or agricultural valuation applications within the previous five years and have the appraisal district pull the appraisal records and open-space or agricultural valuation applications for those properties
- Interview the chief appraiser or designee and have them walk through the sample records and applications
- Complete Checklist 20 and determine if the appraisal district is following its procedures for open-space or agricultural land appraisal

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Modify appraisal practices to match the appraisal district’s procedures for open-space and agricultural land valuation.
- Follow the appraisal district’s procedures for open-space and agricultural land valuation.
- Develop procedures for agricultural land valuation.

Checklist 20 (Adjust the size of the checklist as necessary)

Steps in the procedures for valuing open-space or agricultural land:	Sample Property 1	Sample Property 2	Sample Property 3	Sample Property 4	Sample Property 5
•					
•					
•					
•					
•					
•					
•					
•					
•					
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•					

36. Do the appraisal district’s procedures comply with the *Manual for the Appraisal of Timberland* with regard to classifying qualified timberland by forest and soil type? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

NOTE: The following appraisal districts have timberland:** Anderson, Angelina, Bowie, Camp, Cass, Chambers, Cherokee, Franklin, Gregg, Hardin, Harris, Harrison, Henderson, Houston, Jasper, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Marion, Montgomery, Morris, Nacogdoches, Newton, Orange, Panola, Polk, Red River, Rusk, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, Shelby, Smith, Titus, Trinity, Tyler, Upshur, Walker, Waller and Wood. **For all other appraisal districts, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Procedures for appraising timberland

Steps

- Review and become familiar with the [Manual for the Appraisal of Timberland](#)
- Determine if the appraisal district’s procedures address how to determine forest type
 - Pine
 - Hardwood
 - Mixed forest
- Determine if the appraisal district’s procedures address how to determine soil type
 - Types 1 – 4

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Amend the appraisal district’s timberland appraisal procedures to comply with the *Manual for the Appraisal of Timberland* with regard to classifying qualified timberland by forest and soil type.
- Develop timberland appraisal procedures that comply with the *Manual for the Appraisal of Timberland* with regard to classifying qualified timberland by forest and soil type.

37. Does the appraisal district properly value qualified timberland based on forest and soil type? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

NOTE: The following appraisal districts have timberland:** Anderson, Angelina, Bowie, Camp, Cass, Chambers, Cherokee, Franklin, Gregg, Hardin, Harris, Harrison, Henderson, Houston, Jasper, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Marion, Montgomery, Morris, Nacogdoches, Newton, Orange, Panola, Polk, Red River, Rusk, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, Shelby, Smith, Titus, Trinity, Tyler, Upshur, Walker, Waller and Wood. **For all other appraisal districts, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

NOTE: If the appraisal district does not have the Texas A&M Forest Service report or data, Natural Conservation Resource Service data or an independent report from a licensed forester concerning timberland in the county that identifies forest and soil types, the answer to this question is NO

NOTE: If the appraisal district has only mixed forest timberland, follow additional instructions below for Mixed Forest Only

Data Needs

- Access to appraisal records for timberland properties
- Access to the productivity value schedule
- Texas A&M Forest Service data or report or Natural Conservation Resource Service data on the types of timberland in the county or an independent report from a licensed forester showing types of forest and soil in county

Steps

- Review and become familiar with the [Manual for the Appraisal of Timberland](#) and fill in Checklist 21
- Choose a sample of 5 timberland accounts for pine, hardwood and mixed forest (total sample of 15 accounts)
- Interview the chief appraiser or designee and have them walk you through the process used to determine the proper property forest and soil types for the accounts in the sample
- Review the appraisal district’s productivity value schedule
- Verify that the properties in the sample are valued according to the forest and soil types and the productivity value schedule and complete Checklist 21

Steps – Mixed Forest Only

***NOTE: The following appraisal districts have only Mixed Forest timberland:** Chambers, Harris, Madison and Waller

- Interview the chief appraiser or designee and have him or her explain how there is no exclusively pine forest and no exclusively hard wood forest in the county
- Establish what method or methods were used to determine that all timberland is Mixed Forest (ex: Texas A&M Forest Service report or data, Natural Conservation Resource Service data or forester findings)

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Properly value property qualified as timberland based on forest and soil type.
- Properly value property qualified as timberland based on the appraisal district’s productivity value schedule.

Checklist 21 (Adjust the size of the checklist as necessary)

Steps in the procedures for valuing qualified timberland based on forest and soil type:	Sample Property1	Sample Property 2	Sample Property 3	Sample Property 4	Sample Property 5
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38. Do the appraisal district’s appraisal practices conform to its appraisal manual and procedures for the qualification and appraisal of land used for wildlife management? TIER(S) 1-3

NOTE: If the appraisal district does not have any land used for wildlife management, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Appraisal district’s manual or procedures for appraising wildlife management designated land

- Copies of appraisal records with wildlife management valuation
- Copy of applications for wildlife management valuation matching appraisal records

Steps

- Review and become familiar with the appraisal district's procedures for the qualification and appraisal of land used for wildlife management
- Select five properties that have qualified as land used for wildlife management and have the appraisal district pull the appraisal records and applications for those properties
- Interview the chief appraiser or designee and have them walk through the sample records and applications
- Determine if the appraisal district is following its procedures for qualifying and appraising land used for wildlife management

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Modify appraisal practices to match the appraisal district's procedures for wildlife management land qualification and valuation.
- Follow the appraisal district's procedures for wildlife management qualification and valuation.
- Develop procedures for wildlife management qualification and valuation.

39. Did the appraisal district use internally prepared ratio studies in the preparation or implementation of its reappraisal plan? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

Data Needs

- Access to ratio studies
- Most recent reappraisal plan

Steps

- Review and become familiar with the appraisal district's reappraisal plan and determine what it says about ratio studies
- Interview the chief appraiser or designee and have them explain how ratio studies are used in the preparation or implementation of the reappraisal plan, with examples
- Determine if ratio studies are used in the preparation and implementation of the reappraisal plan and determine if ratio studies are used in the manner described in the reappraisal plan

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Use internally prepared ratio studies in the preparation and implementation of the reappraisal plan.
- Use internally prepared ratio studies in the preparation of the reappraisal plan.
- Use internally prepared ratio studies in the implementation of the reappraisal plan.
- Use ratio studies in the manner described in the reappraisal plan.
- Amend the appraisal district's reappraisal plan to accurately reflect how ratio studies are used in the process.

40. Are net-to-land calculations for the open-space land designated as native pasture reproducible from the appraisal records? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

NOTE: If the appraisal district does not have any open-space land properties designated as native pasture, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Resource materials used in determining productivity values for native pastureland (survey data/third-party data)
- Spreadsheets or other documents used to compile survey results for native pastureland
- Most current calculations of net-to-land for native pastureland

Steps

- Determine which income and expense items the appraisal district uses in its calculations of net-to-land
- Using resource materials, determine if you can reproduce the expense items and the income items
- Sum the income items, sum the expense items, and subtract expense items from income items
 - This is net-to-land
- Determine if the appraisal district calculated net-to-land for each of the five years in the appropriate period and

determined a five-year average net-to-land

- The appropriate period for 2013 is 2007-2011; for 2014 is 2008-2012; for 2015 is 2009-2013
- Determine if the appraisal district determined the values by applying the appropriate cap rate to the five-year average net-to-land
 - The appropriate cap rate for 2013 and 2014 is 10 percent

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Use the correct five-year averages when calculating net-to-land values for native pasture.
- Use the correct cap rate when calculating net-to-land values for native pasture.
- Ensure that net-to-land calculations are reproducible from the appraisal district's appraisal records.

41. Are net-to-land calculations for the open-space land designated as dry and irrigated cropland reproducible from the appraisal records? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

NOTE: If the appraisal district does not have any open-space land properties designated as dry or irrigated cropland, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

Data Needs

- Resource materials used in determining productivity values for dry and irrigated cropland (survey data/third-party data)
- Spreadsheets or other documents used to compile survey results for dry and irrigated cropland
- Most current calculations of net-to-land for dry and irrigated cropland

Steps

- Determine which income and expense items the appraisal district uses in its calculations of net-to-land
- Using resource materials, determine if you can reproduce the expense items and the income items
- Sum the income items, sum the expense items, and subtract expense items from income items
 - This is net-to-land
- Determine if the appraisal district calculated net-to-land for each of the five years in the appropriate period and determined a five-year average net-to-land
 - The appropriate period for 2013 is 2007-2011; for 2014 is 2008-2012; for 2015 is 2009-2013
- Determine if the appraisal district determined the values by applying the appropriate cap rate to the five-year average net-to-land
 - The appropriate cap rate for 2013 and 2014 is 10 percent

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Use the correct five-year averages when calculating net-to-land values for dry and irrigated cropland.
- Use the correct cap rate when calculating net-to-land values for dry and irrigated cropland.
- Ensure that net-to-land calculations are reproducible from the appraisal district's appraisal records.

42. Since Jan. 1, 2012, did the appraisal district recognize that beekeeping is an agricultural use for 5 - 20 acres devoted to such a purpose for purposes of open-space land designations through the creation of guidelines and/or the approval of applications, pursuant to Tax Code Section 23.51(2)? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

Data Needs

- Approved agricultural applications for beekeeping OR
- Copy of appraisal district guidelines, policies or procedures on beekeeping

Steps

- Review appraisal district publications or notices concerning beekeeping
- Review procedures concerning beekeeping
- Review applications where beekeeping was applied and was either granted or denied
 - The review should show in each instance that the granting or denial of the special appraisal followed the appraisal districts procedures
- Determine if the appraisal district has set intensity standards for beekeeping for land tracts that are 5 to 20 acres

- If the appraisal district does not have any beekeeping accounts, they should at least have guidelines for beekeeping appraisal

Recommendation Options (Edit the recommendation to address the specific issue in the appraisal district)

- Develop guidelines for beekeeping appraisal pursuant to Tax Code Section 23.51(2).
- Approve or deny beekeeping appraisal applications according to the guidelines described in Tax Code Section 23.51(2).

43. Did the appraisal district provide all the data in the format requested relating to Tax Code Sections 23.01(e) and 41.43(a-3)? **TIER(S)** **1-3**

NOTE: If the appraisal district did not have any properties that went to the ARB, arbitration, district court or SOAH in the previous year, the answer to this question is NOT APPLICABLE

NOTE: This question will be answered after the current year's protest process has been completed; it will be marked as PENDING until then.

Data Needs

- For each property (categories A and B only) that had a value **changed** in the previous year by the ARB, in arbitration, in district court, or by SOAH, the following data is needed:
 - Property account number
 - Property state category (A or B)
 - Previous year's notice appraised value
 - Previous year's final appraised value (after ARB, arbitration, district court or SOAH)
 - Listing of whether the protest was for appraised or market value or for unequal appraisal
 - Listing of where the value was changed (ARB, arbitration, district court or SOAH)
 - Current year's notice appraised value
- Additionally, **for those properties that had a value changed in the previous year by the ARB**, the following data is needed:
 - Listing of whether or not the property values were protested to the ARB in the current year (to be provided after ARB hearings for the current year have been completed) (yes/no)
 - Listing of whether the protest was for appraised or market value or for unequal appraisal (for those properties that were protested to the ARB in the current year)
 - Listing of whether the property owner provided the information listed in Tax Code Section 41.43(a-3)(3) not later than the 14th day before the date of the hearing (yes/no)
 - Current year's final appraised value (after the ARB determination)
 - Listing of whether the property went to binding arbitration or had a lawsuit filed
 - Copies of all agreed judgments

Steps

- Provide all of the data listed above in a spreadsheet format

Recommendation

- Provide the data requested relating to Tax Code Section 23.01(e) and 41.43(a-3) in a spreadsheet format.