

Instructions for Form HS-131

Vermont Homestead Declaration

A Homestead Declaration must be filed when you purchase a property that will be used as your homestead or there is a change in the use of your current homestead. The declaration identifies property as the homestead of a VT resident and the property is taxed at the homestead school property tax rate. A different school property tax rate applies to nonresidential properties.

SELLING THE HOMESTEAD If you sold your homestead, you must file Form HS-132 within thirty (30) days of the closing date to withdraw the declaration.

DECEASED HOMEOWNER If the homeowner filed a declaration but dies before April 1, the property may remain classified as a homestead until the following April 1 after the homeowner's death provided the property was the deceased homeowner's principal residence at the time of death and the property is not rented. After the one-year period, Form HS-132 must be filed to withdraw the declaration.

BUYING A HOMESTEAD If you buy a homestead on or before April 1, you are responsible for filing Form HS-131, Homestead Declaration. If you buy a homestead after April 1, the seller is responsible for filing the declaration if the seller used the property as a principal home.

DUE DATE Form HS-131 is due APRIL 15

Form HS-131 may be filed separately from your income tax return. Filings after April 15, but on or before September 1, are late but you can still declare a homestead. Late filing penalties apply for filings after April 15. Property where the Homestead Declaration is filed after September 1 is taxed at the higher school tax rate and is ineligible for a property tax adjustment. **No extension of time to file is available.** An extension of time to file an income tax return does not apply to the Form HS-131.

TIMELY FILING A return mailed through the U.S. Post Office is considered timely if received at the Department within 3 business days of the due date. Electronically filed or hand delivered declarations must be received by the Department on or before the due date to be timely.

LINE-BY-LINE INSTRUCTIONS

Who Must File: You must file a declaration if you

(1) **Purchase A New Principal Residence** You file a declaration if you (1) expect to be a VT resident on April 1, and (2) own and occupy the VT property as your principal home on April 1. Only one owner needs to file the Homestead Declaration. The declaration must be filed even if it is after September 1.

(2) **Changed the Business or Rental Use of the Homestead.**

Homeowner Information Enter your Social Security number, name, and address and, if applicable, the Social Security number and name for your spouse or civil union partner. Enter your date of birth. *Example:* Enter March 7, 1946 as 03 27 1946

Location Enter the physical location of the homestead (street or road name). *Examples:* 123 Maple Street 276 Route 12A

Please do not enter post office box, "same", "see above", or town name here.

Line 1 VT School District Code Enter the 3-digit school district code where you lived on April 1 of the year you are filing the declaration. Most towns print this code on the property tax bill. A school district code chart is available on our web site at <http://tax.vermont.gov> or see the list in the

income tax booklet. If you are not sure of your school district code, check with your town clerk.

Be sure to use the school district code and town where your homestead is located. This may be different from the town used as your mailing address.

Line 2 Legal Residence Enter the town or city name of legal residence. If you live where there is both a city and town with the same name, please specify city or town. *Examples:* Rutland City or Rutland Town Barre City or Barre Town

Line 3 SPAN (School Property Account Number) This is a unique identification number assigned by the town. Enter the 11-digit number printed in the Housesite information on your property tax bill.

Homestead Declaration Enter the date you owned and occupied property as your principal residence.

Notice of Homestead Use Change Enter the date the change of use began.

Line 4 Special Situations Check situation applicable.

→ Use whole numbers and round to the nearest percentage for Lines 5 and 6.

Line 5 Business Use of Home Enter percentage of the property used for business. Enter 00.00% if there is no business use or the business use is 25% or less. If the business use changed since you filed the 2010 Homestead Declaration, enter the new percentage and the date of the change. See the income tax booklet for further information.

Line 6 Rental Use of Home Enter percentage of the property that is rented. All rental use is required to be reported. There is NO exempt de minimus like business use. If the percent of rental use changed since you filed the 2010 Homestead Declaration, enter the new percentage and the date of the change. See the income tax booklet for further information.

Line 7 Business or Rental Use of Improvements and Other Buildings on the Property ☒ Check the applicable "Yes" or "No" box. Check the "Yes" box if any improvements or other buildings are rented out or used for business. If the business or rental use of improvements or buildings on the property changed since you filed the 2010 Homestead Declaration, enter the new percentage and the date of the change.

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date Write the date on which the form was signed.

Telephone Number Enter the daytime telephone number

Disclosure Authorization To give the Department authorization to discuss your VT Homestead Declaration with your tax preparer, ☒ check this box and include the preparer's name.

Preparer If you are a paid preparer, you must also sign the claim, enter your Social Security number or PTIN and, if employed by a business, the EIN of the business. If someone other than the filer(s) prepared the return without charging a fee, then that preparer's signature is optional.

If mailing this return separate from your income tax return, send to:

VT Department of Taxes
PO Box 1881
Montpelier, VT 05601-1881