

**CITY COUNCIL RESEARCH DIVISION
LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY**



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Bill Type and Number: Ordinance 2020-117

Introducer/Sponsor(s): Council Member Dennis

Date of Introduction: January 28, 2020

Committee(s) of Reference: F, R

Date of Analysis: January 30, 2020

Type of Action: Ordinance Code amendment; direction to Chief of Legislative Services Division

Bill Summary: The bill amends Ordinance Code Chapter 780 – Property Tax – to increase the amount of the homestead exemption for low income persons aged 65 and older from \$25,000 to \$50,000, pursuant to authorization in state law. It directs the Council’s Legislative Services Division to provide a copy of this enacted ordinance to the Duval County Property Appraiser’s office.

Background Information: The *Florida Statutes* authorize several local option property tax exemptions for different categories of property owners. In 1999 the City Council authorized a homestead exemption for persons age 65 and older who hold title to property that is their primary residence and who are “low income” as defined by Sec. 196.075, *Florida Statutes*, which became effective in 2000 and has been amended several times in the intervening years. State law permitted localities to grant an exemption of up to \$50,000 originally; Jacksonville chose to authorize a \$25,000 exemption. This bill will increase the low income senior exemption from \$25,000 to the full \$50,000 authorized by statute. State law requires that additional homestead exemptions must be adopted by county governing bodies as non-emergency legislation. The definition of “low income” was defined as a household income of no more than \$20,000 in 1999, and increases by a U.S. Department of Labor cost-of-living index each year. In 2020 the “low income” definition for purposes of this exemption is a household income of \$30,721.

Policy Impact Area: Homestead exemption for low income seniors.

Fiscal Impact: The Property Appraiser’s Office estimates that the additional \$25,000 exemption would apply to 2,476 senior-owned properties and would reduce the City’s property tax collections in 2020 by \$553,219.65 based on the current in-progress 2020 tax roll and using the millage rate from 2019.

Analyst: Clements