PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENT REVIEW

A California homeowner guide to Prop 8 decline-in-value reviews and assessment appeals

THE CORE TEST

Market Value < Factored Base-Year Value

If true as of January 1, a temporary Prop 8 reduction may apply.

California-focused • County procedures and deadlines vary

Educational guide — not legal, tax, or appraisal advice

FOUNDATION

Know the rule before you start

A decline in market value does not automatically mean your assessment must be reduced.

Proposition 13

• Base-year value is generally set at change in ownership or new construction.

• The factored base-year value generally increases by no more than 2% per year.

• The basic property tax rate is 1% of assessed value, plus voter-approved bonded debt.

Proposition 8

• Allows a temporary reduction when January 1 market value is below the factored base-year value.

• The assessor enrolls the lower of market value or factored base-year value.

• A Prop 8 value is reviewed annually and can rise faster than 2% until the factored base-year value is reached.

Source: California State Board of Equalization — Decline in Value (Proposition 8)

STEP 1

Confirm what you are actually challenging

This guide focuses on the annual January 1 decline-in-value / Prop 8 path.

Annual assessment / Prop 8

Your January 1 market value may be below the value on the regular assessment roll. This is the classic decline-in-value review.

Supplemental / base-year value

A change in ownership or new construction created a new value. Different deadlines apply; supplemental appeals are generally time-limited after notice or bill.

Calamity / other assessment

Fire, flood, escape assessments, roll changes, and exemptions follow different procedures. Do not use the Prop 8 timeline by default.

If you are unsure, contact your County Assessor or Clerk of the Board — or Ruben Regalado for professional assistance.

Source: California BOE — Assessment Appeals FAQ

STEP 2

Gather the file before you value the property

Build one clean evidence packet. You will use the same facts for the informal review and any formal appeal.

IDENTITY + ASSESSMENT

- Parcel number (APN) and property address
- Current assessed value / assessment notice
- Property tax bill and relevant county correspondence
- Purchase date and purchase price

PROPERTY + MARKET EVIDENCE

- Living area, beds/baths, lot size, year built
- Major improvements or permitted additions
- Condition issues that existed near the valuation date
- Comparable closed sales and supporting photos/data

Tip: save PDFs or screenshots of the source data you relied on so your evidence is reproducible later.

Source: California BOE — Assessment Appeals FAQ (supporting evidence)

STEP 3

Use the correct valuation date: January 1

For a Prop 8 decline-in-value review, today's market value is not the test.



LIEN DATE / VALUE DATE

What to do

Select market evidence that reflects what a typical buyer would have paid for the property as of January 1. Sales nearest that date are usually the most useful.

What not to do

Do not build your case around a value from months later just because it is lower. The question is value on the applicable January 1 — not the day you file.

For the 2026/27 assessment roll, the relevant value date is January 1, 2026.

STEP 4

Build a defensible comparable-sales set

For residential property, comparable closed sales are usually the strongest evidence.

Location

Same neighborhood or a truly competing area

Property type

Single-family to single-family; condo to condo

Size & layout

Similar living area, beds, baths, garage

Age & condition

Renovation level and physical condition matter

Lot & features

Lot size, pool, view, ADU, location influences

Timing

Sales closest to January 1 are strongest

Important: an appeals board may not consider comparable sales that occurred more than 90 days after the valuation date.

STEP 5

Turn the comps into an opinion of market value

Keep the conclusion simple, explainable, and supported — not over-engineered.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

Sale	Price	Why it matters
Comp A	$610,000	Similar size; slightly better condition
Comp B	$595,000	Very similar; closest sale date
Comp C	$605,000	Similar layout; slightly larger lot

Indicated range: $595,000–$610,000

Concluded market value: $600,000

Good practice

- Use 3–5 of the best sales, not 20 weak ones.
- Explain major differences.
- Avoid unsupported “$ per feature” adjustments.
- Give more weight to the most comparable sale.

Illustrative numbers only — not an appraisal.

STEP 6

Compare the values and estimate the potential impact

The Prop 8 test is based on assessed value — not simply whether home prices declined.

Current factored / assessed value	**$650,000**
Your supported January 1 market value	**$600,000**
Potential assessed-value difference	**$50,000**

Illustrative 1% tax component: about $500/year

Do not overpromise savings

California's basic property tax rate is 1% of assessed value, plus voter-approved bonded debt. Special assessments and other charges may not move with assessed value.

Actual tax-bill impact can differ from the simple 1% illustration.

Example only — eligibility and final value are determined by the county process.

Source: California BOE — Prop 13 / Prop 8 rules

STEP 7

Submit the review or appeal before the deadline

An informal review is often the first move, but it does not automatically protect a formal appeal deadline.

1

Informal review

Ask the County Assessor to review the January 1 value; many counties provide a form or online process.

2

Protect the deadline

If the result is unresolved and the formal deadline is approaching, consider filing the formal appeal on time.

3

Formal appeal

Use the county's Assessment Appeal Application (BOE-305-AH / county form) with the Clerk of the Board.

4

Keep paying taxes

An appeal does not postpone tax payment. Pay on time; a successful reduction can lead to a refund.

California regular annual appeal period: July 2–September 15 OR July 2–November 30, depending on county. Sacramento 2026 example: informal review July 1–December 31; formal annual appeal by November 30.

Sources: CA BOE filing rules; Sacramento County Assessor & Clerk of the Board (2026)

STEP 8

Organize a review-ready evidence packet

Make the Assessor or Appeals Board easy to follow: one value conclusion, supported by organized evidence.

1

Cover sheet

Property address, APN, owner name, January 1 valuation date, current assessed value, and the value you are requesting.

2

Assessment records

Include the assessment notice or tax bill plus any relevant Assessor correspondence so the issue is clearly identified.

3

Comparable sales

Summarize 3–5 strong closed sales, explain the key differences, and attach the supporting sale details or screenshots.

4

Value conclusion

End with a concise explanation of why the evidence supports your January 1 market value. Keep a complete copy of the packet.

If a formal hearing is needed, bring the evidence you want considered and stay focused on the January 1 market value. The board may leave the assessment unchanged, reduce it, or increase it.

Source: California State Board of Equalization — Assessment Appeals FAQ

FINISH

DIY submission checklist

Use this as the final quality-control page for your packet before you submit anything.

- [ ] Confirmed the type of assessment I am challenging
- [ ] Verified the correct January 1 valuation date
- [ ] Saved my assessed value / notice / tax bill
- [ ] Selected 3–5 strong comparable closed sales
- [ ] Explained major differences between the comps and my home
- [ ] Stated one clear, supportable opinion of market value
- [ ] Verified my county's current filing deadline and filing method
- [ ] Kept a complete copy of everything submitted

OFFICIAL RESOURCES

California State Board of Equalization
• Decline in Value — Prop 8
• Assessment Appeals FAQ
• County filing deadlines

Your County Assessor + Clerk of the Board

IMPORTANT

An appeals board may leave the value unchanged, reduce it, or increase it. Bring your evidence to the hearing; material sent earlier is not automatically considered unless presented.

Educational material only. Rules, forms, and deadlines can change. Verify current requirements with the county where the property is located.

Official starting point: California BOE — Assessment Appeals

DONE-FOR-YOU OPTION

Prefer to have the research and documentation handled for you?

For a fee, Ruben Regalado can prepare the market-value research and supporting documentation for a decline-in-value review, saving you the time of building the evidence yourself.

- ☐ Research the property and current assessment information
- ☐ Identify 3–5 strong comparable closed sales near January 1
- ☐ Review market differences that affect the property's value
- ☐ Organize MLS/public-record data, PDFs, screenshots, and photos
- ☐ Develop a clear, supportable market-value conclusion
- ☐ Prepare a clean evidence packet for your review
- ☐ Flag filing dates and county-specific steps you need to verify
- ☐ Save you hours of research across multiple real estate sources

WHY THE DONE-FOR-YOU OPTION HAS VALUE

- Professional real estate research tools
- Focused comparable-sales analysis
- Organized documentation instead of scattered screenshots
- A packet you can review and use with the county process

IMPORTANT

Ruben provides fee-based property-value research and documentation support. The County Assessor or Appeals Board makes the final assessment decision. No reduction is guaranteed, and this service is not legal, tax, or appraisal advice.

DONE-FOR-YOU VALUE: spend your time on what matters while Ruben handles the research, comparable-sales support, and documentation.

Contact Ruben Regalado for pricing and availability.