

## GENERAL DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF ASSESSMENTS AND TAXATION

The State Department of Assessments and Taxation was created by Chapter 757 of the Acts of 1959 of the General Assembly and was assigned the administrative functions formerly given to the State Tax Commission which was abolished by the same Act. The judicial function of the State Tax Commission was assigned to the Maryland Tax Court which was established by the same Act. The State Department of Assessments and Taxation was charged with three basic obligations: (1) to be legal guardian of corporate records; (2) to supervise the real and personal property tax structure of the State; and (3) to administer the corporate personal property tax laws.

The Department is vested with the responsibility for making rules and regulations, including the determination of owners of property for tax purposes, to classify corporations, to intervene in tax litigation, to propose changes to the tax laws, and to collect and tabulate statistics.

To facilitate the achievement of these ends, the Department is organized into several functional groupings, including Administration; Real Property Assessment; Personal Property Assessment; Corporate Chartering; Property Location Mapping; and Tax Credits and Exempt Property.

### *ADMINISTRATION*

The administrative group has the responsibility for general accounting, personnel and payroll, budget, purchasing, and general office services. Cash receipts are in payment of certain taxes, filing fees, and services offered through the facilities of the Department. Collections include organization and capitalization fees, recording fees, dissolution fees, fees for certifying copies, fees for service of process, revival fees, fees covering filing of financial statements under the Uniform Commercial Code, financial franchise tax payments, personal property penalties, foreign corporation qualification fees, certificates of qualification, filing fees for both domestic and foreign corporations, foreign building and loan association renewal fees, and license fees for electric cooperatives.

The departmental support services and sections are organized within Administration and include: Administrative Services; Budgeting; Accounting; Personnel; Data Processing; Research & Development; Legal Counsel; and Communications and Training.

### *REAL PROPERTY ASSESSMENT*

This group functions under the tax laws covering the assessment of real property. The actual valuation of property is performed by the assessors who work locally in each of the counties, including Baltimore City. Real property assessing is based on a three-year cycle in which a third of all real property is reviewed once in a three-year period. Assessments are based upon estimates of the market value. Estimating is completed each year by January 1, the date of finality.

The Department maintains the *Maryland Assessment Manual* covering construction standards and local conversion factors for the use of assessors in arriving at estimates of the replacement cost values of various types of real property improvements. The manual has been made available to various departments of the state and local governments, as well as to the general public through the public libraries.

New assessors receive instruction in the techniques of appraising. This training program has been designed to provide theoretical instruction by means of classroom lectures