Wisconsin Real Estate Transfer Return (RETR) Overview



Wisconsin Department of Revenue
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I. Getting Started

A. Items needed to file a real estate transfer return (RETR):

- Completed deed (instrument of conveyance)
- Grantor/grantee information – name, address, phone number, email address
- Grantor/grantee Social Security Numbers (SSN), Individual Tax Identification Numbers (ITIN) or Federal Employer Identification Numbers (FEIN)
- Parcel number(s) from the property tax bill(s)

B. Start a new return, find a saved RETR, or change a submitted one:

- Go to My Tax Accoun (MTA)
- Locate the "Real Estate Transfer (RETR)" section in the lower right-hand corner and click the applicable link:
  - **File a new RETR** – complete the captcha, confirm you have the documents needed to complete the RETR, and click "Next"
  - **Find a saved RETR** – complete the captcha, click "Next," then click "Find Saved Request." Enter the email address you used for the submission and the confirmation code. Once your file is opened, click "Continue Editing" at the top of the page to resume filing your saved RETR
  - **Change a submitted RETR** – enter the receipt number, total value or sale price, and the last name or business name of the grantor or grantee

II. County

- Select the county where the parcel is located from the dropdown list
- If a transfer includes parcels in more than one county, a separate RETR must be filed for each county
  - Click "Yes" if this transfer involves a parcel in more than one county
  - Use the dropdown to select all counties tinvolved in the transfer, then enter the number returns will be filed for the conveyances

III. Document

- County – select the county where the parcel is located from the drop-down list
- If the transfer involves more than one transfer return, click Yes
- If within the same county, click Yes and then enter the number of additional returns
- Click Yes if this transfer involves a parcel in more than one county. Use the dropdown list to select all counties involved in the transfer, then provide the number of RETRs that will be filed for the conveyances.
- Note: If a transfer includes parcels in more than one county, a separate RETR must be filed for each county

IV. Conveyance

After you select the document type, the applicable conveyance types are displayed.

- Select the conveyance type that best fits your conveyance from the dropdown
- If you select "Other" as your conveyance type, you must enter an explanation
- Select the conveyance date on the calendar
  - If unsure of the date, enter the date the document was signed by the grantor
  - Date of conveyance – is the date the instrument is signed and delivered per state law (sec. 706.02(1), Wis. Stats.). Note: Conveyance date cannot be after the date the document is recorded.
- Grantor/Grantee Relationship – select type from the dropdown and provide an explanation, if required

- Ownership – select from the dropdown. This is based on the grantor ownership interest (ex: if the grantor owns 50% and transfers all ownership, select "Full").
- Rights Retained by Grantor – select from the dropdown and provide explanation, if required

V. Grantor (Seller)

- Click "Add a grantor" for each grantor listed on the deed
- Determine if the grantor is an individual, revocable trust, decedent, or estate
- Select "Yes" or "No" to navigate through the choices in this section
- Complete the SSN, ITIN, or FEIN, name, phone number, and email address; also include grantor's name and full mailing address. Click "Verify Address" to validate the address entered.
- Add additional grantors, if applicable
- Note: All grantors on the instrument of conveyance must be listed on the RETR separately

VI. Grantee (Buyer)

- Click "Add a grantee" for each grantee listed on the deed
- Determine if the grantee is an individual or revocable trust
- Select "Yes" or "No" to navigate through the choices in this section
- Complete the SSN, ITIN, or FEIN, name, phone number and email address; also include grantee's name and full mailing address. Click "Verify Address" to validate the address entered.
- Add additional grantees, if applicable
- Note: All grantees on the instrument of conveyance must be listed on the RETR separately

VII. Fee Calculation

A. Transfer fee exemption number

- Exemptions listed in the dropdown are based on the document, conveyance, grantor type and/or grantee type previously entered in the RETR
  - If an exemption number isn't listed, review these four areas: Document, Conveyance, Grantor, Grantee and correct the information if needed
  - If all information is correct, the exemptions listed in the dropdown provides the only options available
- Be sure to review sec. 77.25, Wis. Stats. – and the RETR Transfer Fee Exemption Guide if you are not seeing the exemption from transfer fee you expected
- Note: If you selected the correct document type, grantor/grantee type, and conveyance type and no exemption is available, or the exemption you expected is not available, your conveyance is subject to transfer fee

B. Sale price

- Enter the amount paid or to be paid for the real estate, including any liens (mortgages)
- Sale price will automatically round to a whole dollar amount (e.g., 245,216.91 = 245,217.00)

C. Estimated value

- Enter the estimated market value of the real estate transferred
  - If partial interest, enter the portion of the value conveyed
  - If the property was not appraised, use the estimated full value from the most recent property tax bill
  - Do not include personal property in the estimated value field

Note:

- Penalties are assessed for improperly claimed exemptions and understatement of values. The penalties for use of an improper exemption or understating value are imposed per state law (sec. 77.26(8), Wis. Stats.).

- If the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) determines the value reported on a RETR, under sec. 77.22, Wis. Stats., is understated by 25% or more, or that an exemption was improperly claimed under sec. 77.25, Wis. Stats., DOR will assess and collect a penalty of $25 or 25% of the additional fee due, whichever is greater, in the manner that additional transfer fees are collected
- Penalty for falsifying value is imposed per sec. 77.27, Wis. Stats. – any person who intentionally falsifies value on a RETR required to be filed under this subchapter may for each such offense be fined not more than $1,000 or imprisoned in the county jail not more than one year, or both

D. Value subject to fee

- Automatically calculated by the system, except when "partition" is the conveyance type. If partition chosen, you must enter the value subject to fee
- System calculates the fee based on the sale price or estimated value entered with no exemption, or an exemption selected from the dropdown list

E. Transfer fee due

- A grantor of real estate must pay a real estate transfer fee at the rate of 30 cents for each $100 of value or fraction thereof, on every conveyance not exempted or excluded under state law (sec. 77.22(1), Wis. Stats.).
- System automatically calculates a transfer fee based on the sale price or estimated value entered with no exemption, or an exemption selected (ex: Value of real estate subject to fee is $100,000 x .003 = $300.00 transfer fee)
- **Note:** The transfer fee is calculated at a rate of 10 cents per $100 for deeds that satisfy original land contracts dated between December 17, 1971, and August 31, 1981

F. Value of personal property transferred but EXCLUDED from Total Value of REAL ESTATE transferred

- Enter value of personal property included in the sale. If there is no personal property, leave $0.00 in the field.
- **Do not include** this amount in total value of real estate transferred
- Personal property items – include, but are not limited to refrigerators, stoves, household/office furnishings, boats, and farm machinery

G. Value of property exempt from local property tax INCLUDED on Total Value of REAL ESTATE transferred

- Enter the value of property exempt from local property tax. If there is no exempt property from local property tax, leave $0.00 in the field.
- **Do include** this amount in total value of real estate transferred
- Local property tax exempt items – include, but are not limited to solar and wind energy systems, waste treatment, manufacturing machinery and equipment, conveyors, vines and trees of perennial crops, and manure storage facilities

VIII. Chapter 77.25 Exemptions From Transfer Fee

No.	Explanation
(1)	Prior to October 1, 1969.
(2)	From the United States or from this state or from any instrumentality, agency or subdivision of either.
(2g)	By gift, to the United States or to this state or to any instrumentality, agency or subdivision of either.
(2r)	Under s. 236.29 (1) or (2) or 236.34 (1m) (e) or for the purpose of a road, street, or highway, to the United States or to this state or to any instrumentality, agency, or subdivision of either.
(3)	Which, executed for nominal, inadequate or no consideration, confirms, corrects or reforms a conveyance previously recorded.
(4)	On sale for delinquent taxes or assessments.
(5)	On partition.
(6)	Pursuant to mergers of entities.
(6d)	Pursuant to partnerships filing or cancelling a statement of qualification under s. 178.0901 or a corresponding statement under the law of another jurisdiction.
(6m)	Pursuant to the conversion of a business entity to another form of business entity under s. 178.1141, 179.1141, 180.1161, 181.1161, or 183.1041, if, after the conversion, the ownership interests in the new entity are identical with the ownership interests in the original entity immediately preceding the conversion.
(6q)	Pursuant to an interest exchange under s. 178.1131, 179.1131, 180.1102, 181.1131, or 183.1031.
(6t)	Pursuant to a domestication under s. 178.1151, 179.1151, 180.1171, 181.1171, or 183.1051.
(7)	By a subsidiary corporation to its parent corporation for no consideration, nominal consideration or in sole consideration of cancellation, surrender or transfer of capital stock between parent and subsidiary corporation.
(8)	Between parent and child, stepparent and stepchild, parent and son-in-law, parent and daughter-in-law, or grandparent and grandchild for nominal or no consideration.
(8m)	Between spouses.
(8n)	Between an individual and his or her domestic partner under ch. 770.
(9)	Between agent and principal or from a trustee to a beneficiary without actual consideration.
(10)	Solely in order to provide or release security for a debt or obligation, if the debt or obligation was not incurred as the result of a conveyance.
(10m)	Solely to designate a TOD beneficiary under s. 705.15.
(11)	By will, descent or survivorship.
(11m)	By nonprobate transfer on death under s. 705.15.
(12)	Pursuant to or in lieu of condemnation.
(13)	Of real estate having a value of $1,000 or less.
(14)	Under a foreclosure or a deed in lieu of a foreclosure to a person holding a mortgage or to a seller under a land contract
(15)	Between a corporation and its shareholders if all of the stock is owned by persons who are related to each other as spouses, as lineal ascendants, lineal descendants or siblings, whether by blood or by adoption, or as spouses of siblings, if the transfer is for no consideration except the assumption of debt or stock of the corporation and if the corporation owned the property for at least 3 years.
(15m)	Between a partnership and one or more of its partners if all of the partners are related to each other as spouses, as lineal ascendants, lineal descendants or siblings, whether by blood or by adoption, or as spouses of siblings and if the transfer is for no consideration other than the assumption of debt or an interest in the partnership.

No.	Explanation
(15s)	Between a limited liability company and one or more of its members if all of the members are related to each other as spouses, as lineal ascendants, lineal descendants or siblings, whether by blood or by adoption, or as spouses of siblings and if the transfer is for no consideration other than the assumption of debt or an interest in the limited liability company.
(16)	To a trust if a transfer from the grantor to the beneficiary of the trust would be exempt under this section.
(17)	Of a deed executed in fulfillment of a land contract if the proper fee was paid when the land contract or an instrument evidencing the land contract was recorded.
(18)	To a local exposition district under subch. II of ch. 229.
(20)	Made under s. 184.15.
(21)	Of transmission facilities or land rights to the transmission company, as defined in s. 196.485 (1) (ge), under s. 196.485 (5) (b) or (c) or (6) (a) 1. in exchange for securities, as defined in s. 196.485 (1) (fe).

Note: Penalties are assessed for **improperly claimed exemptions** and understatement of values: The penalties for use of an improper exemption or understating value are imposed per state law (sec. 77.26(8), Wis. Stats.). If the Wisconsin Department of Revenue determines that the value reported on the RETR under sec. 77.22, Wis. Stats. is understated by 25% or more, or that an exemption was improperly claimed under sec. 77.25, Wis. Stats., the department will assess and collect a penalty of $25 or 25% of the additional fee due, whichever is greater, in the manner that additional transfer fees are collected. The penalty for falsifying value is imposed per sec. 77.27, Wis. Stats. – any person who intentionally falsifies value on a RETR required to be filed under this subchapter may for each such offense be fined not more than $1,000 or imprisoned in the county jail not more than one year, or both.

IX. Parcel

Click "Add parcel" to enter the parcel's information. All parcels listed on the instrument of conveyance must be included on the RETR. If more than 10 parcels, the first 10 parcels must be listed in the RETR's "Parcel" section. The remainder can be listed in the "Legal Description" section under "Legal Description."

A. Parcel Information

- **Municipality**
  - Select the municipality where the property is located – the municipalities for the selected county are listed in alpha order . This field defaults to the first alpha municipality.
  - Important – be sure to select the correct municipality type, as many municipal names maybe listed twice for different types (ex: "Sun Prairie, City of" and "Sun Prairie, Town of")
  - What portion of the parcel is being transferred? – selection is based on the total parcel:
  - Entire parcel (100% of parcel) – parcel conveyed is the entire parcel, not subdivided (split) into smaller parcels
  - Improvements only
  - Less than 100% of parcel – parcel was created (split) from a larger parcel into a smaller parcel (ex: If the grantor owns 50% of the parcel and is transferring full ownership, select "Less than 100% of parcel" from dropdown list)
- **Parcel Number**
  - Enter the parcel number or tax ID
  - "Format Rule" and "Examples" – show the proper format for the municipality
  - Parcel number is located on the property tax bill and is also shown on the deed as "Parcel Identification Number (PIN)"
  - If this conveyance is a "split" (part of), enter the existing parcel number from which this parcel was created

B. Property Type and Use Type

Select one property type, then one use type from the dropdown:

Buildings/improvements only	Land and buildings/improvements	Land only	Miscellaneous
• Residential (Class 1) • Commercial (Class 2) • Manufacturing (Class 3) • Other (Class 7) • Utility • Telephone company	• Residential (Class 1) • Commercial (Class 2) • Manufacturing (Class 3) • Other (Class 7) • Utility • Telephone company	• Residential (Class 1) • Commercial (Class 2) • Manufacturing (Class 3) • Agriculture (Class 4) • Undeveloped land (Class 5) • Agricultural forest land (Class 6) • Other (Class 7) • Utility • Telephone company	• Enter an explanation
Condominium			**Timeshare**
• Residential (Class 1) • Commercial (Class 2)			• No selection or explanation needed

C. Property Location

- Will the parcel be the grantee's primary residence?
  - If recording multiple parcels, only one parcel can be designated as the primary residence – select "Yes" for the principal parcel only
  - Principal parcel is defined as the parcel where the primary residence is located
- Physical property address or street address
  - Enter the street address of the property transferred
  - For improved rural property with no street address, list the fire lane number
  - If property is vacant or does not have a physical address, list an abutting road, road name, or intersection that is used to access the property

D. Parcel Location Type

Select one of the parcel location types:

- **Condominium/ Unit** – enter Condominium Name and Unit Number
  - Use this type to enter Timeshare Name and Week Number
- **Section/Township/Range** – enter Section, Township, Range, and East or West
- **Subdivision/Lot/Block** – enter Subdivision Name, Lot Number, and if any, Block Number
  - Also include the following under this type:
    - » Certified Survey Maps
    - » Private Claims
    - » Indian Claims
  - Examples:
    - » Certified Survey Map #18 – Lot 18
    - » Private Claim 18, West of the Fox River – Lot 18
    - » Indian Claim 18 – Lot 18

E. Lot Size

Enter the lot square footage or acres.

F. MFL/PFC Acres

Enter number of acres in the Managed Forest Lands (MFL) or Private Forest Crop (PFC) program. These are DNR Forestry Programs located in Chapter 77 of the Wisconsin Statutes. **Note:** Owners of managed forest lands and forest crops are required by law to notify the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources when transferring ownership. For information on the below laws, visit:

- Managed forest law
- Forest tax laws

G. Feet of Water Frontage

Enter number of water frontage footage. If you do not know the exact footage, enter your best estimate.

X. Legal Description

- The description is the legally accepted statement identifying the location and boundaries of the transferred property. It is listed on the instrument of conveyance (ex: deed).
- Enter the legal description as shown on the instrument of conveyance. – it can be entered manually or copied and pasted from another application. **Note:** The abbreviated legal description from a tax bill is not acceptable.

XI. Preparer and Agent

If the grantor or grantee is an individual, select Yes; if they have an agent for the agent section to be completed, otherwise select No.

Note: If the grantor or grantee is an entity, trust, or deceased, the agent section must be completed.

- **Preparer**
  - If applicable, enter the full name, email, phone type, phone number, and extension of the person who prepared the form. If a firm is the preparer, enter the firm's name but also a contact person. The email provided must be verified.
  - Phone number – enter if the register of deeds, local assessor or Wisconsin Department of Revenue needs clarification. Questions can often be resolved over the phone.
  - Email – an email address is only used to send notification when the document is recorded
- **Grantor's Agent and Grantee's Agent**
  - If an agent is signing for the grantor or grantee, you must enter the agent's name, phone type, phone number, extension, if applicable, email and mailing address. You must also verify the address.
  - This section is required for any entity, trust, or deceased person that is conveying or receiving an interest in real property, as indicated in the Grantor and Grantee Sections
  - Phone number – is needed if the Register of Deeds, local assessor or Wisconsin Department of Revenue needs clarification. Questions can often be resolved over the phone.
  - Email – an email address is only used to send notification when the document is recorded

XII. Financing

The financing section will only appear if the conveyance is a sale.

- **Is any financing being used for this sale?**
- No – you may go to the next section
- Yes – select at least one of the financing options:
  - Financial institution – conventional
  - Assumed existing financingFinancial institution – government

- Obtained from seller
- Other third-party financing

- **Note:** Select the best description of your financing source(s) by sliding the button. You may select more than one
- **Example:** Buyer is getting a bank loan, and the seller is providing a short-term loan. Check both boxes: "Financial institution – conventional" and "Obtained from seller."

Financing Terms
Optional: Enter the amount financed, rate (APR) % and term. Use the Term (months) help link to determine number of months (ex: 30 years = 360 months).

XIII. Marketing

The marketing page only appears if one of these conveyance types is selected – sale partition, gift, land contract, amendment, satisfaction of a land contract, foreclosure or a sheriff's deed to a person with no prior interest, or mineral lease. Note: this section is optional.

Marketing Method and Availability
Select one marketing method, then select from the required fields for each:

- For sale by owner – available only to buyer or available to general public
- Realtor/Broker – days on market, realtor/broker phone, realtor/broker name
- Other – enter an explanation; if not marketed, select Other, and provide an explanation

XIV. Summary

- Data entry sections are summarized for you to review
- Do not provide the summary page with the RETR receipt
- Summary is designed solely for the preparer's use for verification at closing
- It only includes the most critical information from the RETR

XV. Confirm Submission

- In this section, the preparer affirms all information entered is accurate and true by clicking "Submit"
- If you have changes after the submission, select "Change or Amend a RETR" under the Real Estate Transfer section on MTA's home page
- **Note:** It is important that you correct any errors on your return before submitting to the register of deeds for recording

XVI. Confirmation

After successful submission the confirmation page indicates the receipt number. You need the receipt number, total value of the real estate or sale price, and the last name of the grantor or grantee to change, amend or view a RETR.

Confirmation page displays three buttons:

- **Print Receipt** – displays the required receipt to print
  - To finalize the RETR, visit the county register of deeds with your printed receipt, notarized deed and payment
  - Note: Some counties accept the submission of this information electronically. Visit the county's website to see if this option is available
- **View Submission button** – displays each section of the RETR; no changes can be made with this selection
- **OK** – brings you back to the MTA RETR home page

XVII. Amend or Change RETR

Unrecorded RETR Amendment (Change)

- You are able to change (amend) an unrecorded RETR
  - On the department's MyTaxAccount (MTA) page, under Real Estate Transfer Return (RETR) click "Change or Amend a RETR" and enter the receipt number, total value or sale price, and the last name or business name of the grantor or grantee
  - Update fields that need correcting and submit your RETR.

Recorded RETR Amendment

- This option is only for a recorded RETR:
  - Pay additional transfer fee
  - Request a refund of transfer fee
  - Correct information that is only incorrect on the RETR
- **To correct a RETR, pay additional transfer fee due or obtain a refund of transfer fee paid before it has been recorded by the county:**
  - On the department's MyTaxAccount (MTA) page, under Real Estate Transfer Return (RETR) click "Change or Amend a RETR" and enter the receipt number, total value or sale price, and the last name or business name of the grantor or grantee
  - Update fields that need correcting, attach the required documentation, and submit the RETR. Once received DOR will review the submission.

Note: If you need to correct an error on the instrument of conveyance (i.e. Affidavit of Correction) you will need to complete a new RETR. You cannot amend your original submission and then submit it to the Register of Deeds. This will not be accepted.

XVIII. Resources/Contact Information

Web pages

- RETR – revenue.wi.gov/Pages/retr/Home.aspx
- MTA – tap.revenue.wi.gov/mta/_/
- Subscribe to DOR E-News – sign up for RETR email updates

Questions? – contact us:

- Email: RETR@wisconsin.gov
- Phone: 608-264-6885 or 608-266-1594