

Easthampton is voting on a Prop 2½ override on June 9th

A quick guide to the upcoming Proposition 2½ override vote in Easthampton (based on the most recent info)

- Election Day: Tuesday, June 9, 2026
- Question: a permanent \$6.9 million increase to the city's tax levy
- Why it matters: city services for FY27 and beyond depend on the outcome

What is Proposition 2½?

A Massachusetts law that limits how much cities can raise in property taxes each year.

- Passed by Massachusetts voters in 1980
- Caps annual property-tax growth at 2.5% per year (plus taxes from new construction)
- Allows one exception: voters can approve a permanent increase through a local "override" referendum

Why is there a budget gap?

Costs have been growing faster than the 2.5% cap allows the city to raise.

- Healthcare premiums rose roughly 20% twice in the last year, plus 12.48% in February 2026 — about \$1 million in new costs
- Special education, transportation, energy, and union contract obligations are all rising
- ARPA and other federal pandemic funds that helped cover gaps in recent years are running out
- Many surrounding Massachusetts municipalities are facing the same pressures



What's on the ballot

A permanent increase to the amount of property tax the city is allowed to raise.

- Amount: \$6.9 million added to the tax levy
- Permanent — the new levy then continues to grow at 2.5% per year
- Mayor Derby identified about \$8 million as the full need; the override covers most of it, with cuts and restructuring covering the rest
- Even if it passes, expect staffing reductions across departments

How would it affect my taxes?

If the override passes, property tax bills would go up by about 19.7%.

- Home assessed at \$350,000 → about +\$917 per year (roughly \$76 per month)
- Home assessed at \$450,000 → about +\$1,179 per year (roughly \$98 per month)
- Renters: property taxes are paid through your rent, so you may see rent increases as landlords pass this cost on to you

How and when to vote

- Saturday, May 30, 5pm — last day to register in person
- Monday, June 1 — last day to vote absentee in person
- Tuesday, June 2, 5pm — last day to apply for a vote-by-mail ballot
- Tuesday, June 9 — Election Day
- Questions? Contact the City Clerk at cityclerk@easthamptonma.gov