

Appendix C. Comparison of Federal and Tennessee Bankruptcy Exemptions

Federal Bankruptcy Exemptions	
Homestead	Real property, including mobile homes and co-ops, or burial plots up to \$22,975; Unused portion of homestead, up to \$11,500 may be used for other property
Personal Property	Motor vehicle up to \$3,675; Animals, crops, clothing, appliances and furnishings, books, household goods, and musical instruments up to \$575 per item, and up to \$12,250 total; Jewelry up to \$1,550; Health aids. Wrongful death recovery for person you depended upon; Personal injury recovery up to \$22,975 except for pain and suffering or for pecuniary loss; Lost earnings payments
Pensions	Tax exempt retirement accounts (including 401(k)s, 403(b)s, profit-sharing and money purchase plans, SEP and SIMPLE IRAs, and defined benefit plans); IRAs and Roth IRAs to \$1,245,475
Public Benefits	Public assistance, Social Security, Veteran's benefits, Unemployment Compensation; Crime victim's compensation
Tools of Trade	Implements, books and tools of trade, up to \$2,300
Alimony and Child Support	Alimony and child support
Insurance	Unmatured life insurance policy except credit insurance; Life insurance policy with loan value up to \$12,250; Disability, unemployment or illness benefits; Life insurance payments for a person you depended on, which you need for support
Wildcard	\$1,225 of any property, and unused portion of homestead up to \$11,500

Tennessee Bankruptcy Exemptions	
Homestead	\$5,000, \$7,500 for joint owners, 12,500 for an individual 62 or older, 20,000 for married couples with one person age 62 or older, 25,000 for married couples who are both age 62 or older, 25,000 for individuals with a minor child in their custody (may double exemption for married couples with joint custody); Life estates and leaseholds (ranging 2-15 years)
Personal Property	Bible, schoolbooks, pictures, portraits, clothing & storage containers; burial plot to 1 acre; Health aids; Lost earnings payments; Personal injury recoveries to \$7,500; wrongful death recoveries to \$10,000 (not more than \$15,000 total for personal injury, wrongful death & crime victims' compensation)
Pensions	ERISA-qualified benefits; Public employees; State & local government employees; Teachers
Public Benefits	Aid to blind and disabled; Crime victims' compensation to \$5,000; Local public assistance; Old-age assistance; Social security; Unemployment; Veterans' benefits; Workers' compensation
Tools of trade	Implements, books and tools of trade to \$1,900
Wages and other	Minimum 75% of earned but unpaid wages, plus \$2.50/week/child; bankruptcy judge may authorize more for low-income debtors; Alimony owed for 30 days before filing for bankruptcy; Property of business partnership
Insurance	Accident, health or disability benefits; Disability or illness benefits; Fraternal benefit society benefits; Homeowners' insurance proceeds to \$5,000; Life insurance or annuity for spouse/children/dependent relatives - exempt from all claims
Wildcard	\$10,000 on any personal property