

COVID-19 Delinquent Tax Sale Policy

Purpose Statement:

A state of emergency throughout the State of Vermont, pursuant to Executive Order 01-20 was issued by the Governor of the State of Vermont and dated March 13, 2020, and supplemented by Addenda issued since that date. The Executive Order and addenda have significantly limited the conduct of business and daily life in the State in order to restrict and halt the spread of the COVID-19 virus. By virtue of such restrictions, the businesses, livelihoods, and income of Winooski residents and taxpayers have been disrupted. Such disruption will make it difficult for some taxpayers to make payments for property taxes in a timely manner, and thus may threaten the security of their homes, or the viability of their businesses or work environment.

The goal of this policy is to provide relief to property owners in the City of Winooski experiencing financial hardship relating to COVID-19. Holding tax sales for amounts solely related to an inability to pay caused by the pandemic restrictions would create undue stress in a time of crisis.

Definitions:

Delinquent Property Taxes: Property taxes that remain unpaid after the final installment due date has passed.

Penalty: the 8% fee charged for failure to pay property taxes due to the City of Winooski by midnight on the last day taxes are due for the year.

Property Taxes: Payment based on assessment of property – both real and personal – including both the City and Education portions of the bill.

Policy Statement:

Delinquent property tax balances shall continue to accrue interest monthly following June 15, 2020 in accordance with state statute. City staff shall have no authority to grant requests for waiver of property taxes, interest, or principal not related to a posting error. Any requests for waivers must follow the processes of the Board of Abatement provided in V.S.A. 24 § 1533-1536.

In light of the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic the City has instructed the tax collector to suspend tax sale processes immediately and through June 30, 2021 for any accounts with delinquent taxes outstanding only for the installment due on May 15, 2020. After this date



balances associated with the COVID-19 pandemic covered by this policy that remain outstanding shall no longer be exempted from future tax sale.

References:

V.S.A. 24 § 1533-1536
32 V.S.A. as appropriate

Author:

Angela Aldieri, Finance Director

Dates:

Submitted to Council – 6/15/2020

Approved By:

This _____ day of _____, 20__ .

City Council

Attest:

Mayor Kristine Lott

Carol J Barrett, City Clerk

Councilor Hal Colston

Councilor James Duncan

Councilor Amy Lafayette

Councilor Michael Myers

