

## **Purpose/General Information**

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### **What is a county tax sale?**

A Tax Sale is a public auction of tax deeds and/or tax liens used to recover delinquent real property taxes.

### **Why does a County sell tax-defaulted property?**

The primary purpose is to collect delinquent taxes. The back taxes, penalties and interest due are recouped by: (1) forcing payment of property taxes by a current property owner via threat of sale, or (2) via a public auction of delinquent property or tax liens. In some states, if a property is sold (tax deed sale) at auction, the proceeds in excess of the taxes and costs of a sale may be claimed by the former owner and other lien holders.

### **What is an Internet tax sale?**

An Internet tax sale is an online public auction of tax deeds or tax certificates used to collect delinquent real property taxes due to a County or other taxing authority. Bids are placed using a computer and a Web browser.

### **Who can participate in a Bid4Assets county tax sale?**

Anyone who wishes to bid at the online public auction must register with Bid4Assets and submit a pre-bid deposit within the posted deadlines to qualify as a bidder.

### **What is a Tax Deed?**

A written document used to convey title to real property after property is sold at public auction by a local governmental authority for nonpayment of taxes.

### **What is a Tax Deed Sale?**

A public auction, mandated by state statute, of tax-defaulted real property. Tax deeds are sold to the highest bidder. Typically, bidding begins at the amount of delinquent taxes, interest charges and related fees due to a County. Click here to view a list of states that conduct tax deed sales on Bid4Assets.

### **What is a Tax Lien Sale?**

A public auction, mandated by state statute, of tax liens. Tax liens are sold for the amount of delinquent taxes, interest charges and related fees due to a County. A tax lien does NOT convey ownership to a property. Rather, it entitles a purchaser to full payment by a delinquent taxpayer of the full lien amount paid at the time of auction plus interest. The percentage interest varies from state to state. If taxes remain delinquent (period of time may vary by state), a purchaser has a right to foreclose on their lien with the hopes of attaining ownership of a property. View list of states that conduct tax lien sales.

### **What laws govern tax sales?**

Tax sales are conducted pursuant to individual state revenue and taxation codes. As a bidder, you are responsible for becoming familiar with the laws pertaining to a tax auction you are participating in.

### **What is a Standard Data List?**

A list of tax-defaulted parcels available for purchase for a tax sale. It is published by a taxing jurisdiction and may include the following information: parcel number, owner's name, delinquent taxes owed, and legal description. The amount of information provided on each parcel is at the discretion of a jurisdiction conducting an auction. Long legal descriptions are generally included ONLY if parcel numbers or other parcel identifiers are not available. Lists are usually delivered within 12 business hours of receipt of order. They are e-mailed to your desktop in either Microsoft Excel or ASCII format.

**What is an Enhanced Data List?**

An Enhanced Data List expands on a Standard Data List to include the following Assessor information on each parcel: situs address (if assigned), assessed value for land and improvements, property type, and owners' mailing address. Often, it also includes last sale price, last sale date, square footage of land and improvements, and type of construction. These lists should be ordered at least three business days before needed and are delivered to your desktop as an e-mail attachment.

**How much does it cost to participate?**

There are no fees to participate in a county tax sale auction; however, Counties require bidders to place bid deposits as a pre-condition to bidding.

**How are properties available for so cheap?**

The primary purpose of the County Tax Sale auction is the collection of delinquent taxes. The starting price (minimum bid) is set equal to the recorded back taxes and interest only and is irrespective of the property's assessed value.

**What is the redemption period for the properties being auctioned?**

The answer depends on the statutes for that jurisdiction/County.

**What does it mean if a property is redeemed?**

Redeemed properties are those in which the delinquent taxes are paid prior to the issuance of the Tax Deed. If the delinquent taxes are paid prior to the start of the sale, the property will not be offered for sale.

**What does it mean if a property is withdrawn?**

A property can be withdrawn from an auction at any given point for various reasons. Please make sure to frequently check for updates and postings in regards to withdrawn properties.

**How do I know which properties have been removed from the sale?**

When a property is withdrawn from a Bid4Assets County Tax Sale auction the word "withdrawn" is added to the auction listing title alerting bidders that the property is no longer available.

**Will I be responsible for back taxes owed to the county for property that I purchase?****Who is responsible for any mortgages, liens, back taxes, association fees, or other encumbrances attached to the property?**

Tax Sale properties may have other, non-county, liens against them. It is the responsibility of the bidder to determine the liabilities that may exist on a property before bidding.

**Why is a deposit required to bid on the auction?**

A Bid Deposit helps a taxing authority ensure that only qualified and authorized bidders participate in its auction. Funding of a Bid Deposit Account demonstrates a bidder's ability to comply with a County's Conditions of Sale and ensures performance of a winning bidder. A winning bidder's deposit becomes a non-refundable down payment on purchases. However if you do not win any tax sale auctions your deposit will be refunded to you.

**What happens to property that is not sold?**

The County determines what they want to do with properties that do not sell during the auction. Often Counties will re-offer the unsold properties during their next scheduled County Tax Sale.

**Before the Auction****How do I register to participate?**

Registering on Bid4Assets is free, easy and only takes a couple of minutes. Click [here](#) to register now.

### **What information do I need to know in order to place a bid?**

Interested bidders are urged to examine the title, location and desirability of the available properties to their own satisfaction **prior** to the sale. When you find an item you are interested in bidding on, make sure you read the entire listing description and any additional information included within the auction listing.

After reviewing the information, if you have additional questions you are encouraged to contact the Tax Collector's Office of the County in which the property you are interested in is located. This information can be found in the center of the County specific storefronts.

### **How do I place a bid deposit?**

Only registered users of Bid4Assets can place bids on an auction. Click [here](#) to Register. If you are already registered and are interested in bidding on an auction with a deposit requirement, please review our [How to Place a Bid Deposit](#) Step by Step guide.

### **What is the last day that I can place a deposit?**

Deposit deadlines vary by County. Deposit deadline information is included on the front page of each individual County Tax Sale storefront. Click [here](#) to see list of active County storefronts.

### **What payment methods are accepted for placing a deposit?**

Deposit payment methods are determined by the County and may include the following options:

- Personal/Company Check:
- Online Check (ACH): An online check is an electronic transaction that enables a person to pay online with his/her checking account. Payment is automatically deducted from their checking account through the ACH (Automated Clearing House) system. Currently, ACH only supports U.S. currency customers with U.S. checking accounts.
- Certified Check/Money Order: A certified check/money order is a form of check for which a bank verifies that sufficient funds exist in the bidders account to cover the check.
- Wire Transfer: A wire transfer is an electronic transfer of funds.

Please note that you CANNOT place a deposit using a major credit card

### **How do I know Bid4Assets received my deposit?**

You can track all of your auction activity – including your deposit - in the **MyB4A** section of the website. Log into **My B4A** and select [My Bid Deposits](#) to view the status of your deposit.

Please note: the deposit transaction history will display **Checks as Received** while **Wire transfers and ACH's display as Deposited**.

### **I placed a deposit but am still not qualified to bid. What can I do?**

Please confirm the status of your Bid Deposit in the [My Bid Deposits](#) section of MyB4A and review the deposit deadlines, included in the deposit instructions, to ensure sufficient time has passed to process your deposit.

If you placed your deposit and sufficient time has passed for processing and you remain unable to bid, please send an e-mail to [deposits@bid4assets.com](mailto:deposits@bid4assets.com) with the information outlined below.

Your name and user ID #

How you sent the deposit (ACH, Check, Wire)

Date of the deposit

Auction ID #

Name of originating bank/financial institution

Name on account from which the funds were sent

If you placed your deposit by Wire Transfer you must also include the FEDWIRE (IMAD#) tracking number. Your bank or financial institution can provide you with that tracking number.

Please consider that Bid4Assets receives and processes thousands of deposits. To ensure we can quickly provide you an update regarding your deposit, it is essential you include all the information requested above.

### **How do I research the property I am interested in bidding on?**

The amount of information provided to the public varies from county to county, from detailed descriptions to only the parcel number. Regardless of the amount of data provided, buyers are encouraged to do their own due diligence on the property.

### **What is due diligence? What due diligence information does the county provide for the properties being auctioned?**

Due diligence is the process of gathering information about the condition and legal status of an asset being sold. The Due Diligence information included in property listing varies from County to County.

### **How do I obtain additional information about the property, such as photographs or maps?**

Depending on jurisdiction, the Assessor's Office or planning office can help you. In most cases, the Assessor's Office will be able to provide this information. Again, you will need a property identification number to research this information. Contact information for each County is found on the front page of the County's storefront; [click here](#) for a list of active County storefronts.

### **How do I determine the value of a property?**

You may refer to assessed value of a property as determined by the Assessor for a taxing jurisdiction as a guide. It is important to talk to the Assessor's Office to learn how a value is derived - i.e. based on full market value assessment or a specific formula. Then, determine how assessed value relates to actual market value. This is done by looking for comparable properties that have sold recently. You can check "comps" through a number of Web sites: [www.domania.com](http://www.domania.com), [www.realtor.com](http://www.realtor.com), <http://realestate.yahoo.com/re/homevalues>, or other resources you may find.

### **How can I determine what use I can make of a tax sale property before I purchase it?**

County Recorder's records may be examined for any recorded easements on a property. Keep in mind, no expressed or implied warranty is given with respect to parcels, and they are sold on an "as is basis". Bidders are responsible for knowing what they are purchasing. County offices may provide zoning, General Plan designation, water source and other information, but it is up to you to do your requisite homework before purchasing any properties at tax sale.

### **How long does the default tax payer have to redeem a property being auctioned?**

The answer depends on the county and state statutes a jurisdiction. Overall, redemption periods can be as short as 30 days or as long as four years.

### **Does purchase of a tax deed at tax sale guarantee ownership to the property?**

In most cases, yes, purchasing a deed at tax sale means the winning bidder has purchased the property. However, some deed sales grant the delinquent property owner the right to redeem their property for a period of time after the sale. Called Redeemable Deed Sales, the period of redemption varies from state to state from as short as 30 days to a few years. Therefore, ownership is not guaranteed immediately after these sales. It is very important that interested bidders carefully read a County's terms and conditions of sale before participating. The terms of sale will always indicate a County's requirements and a bidder's rights before, during and after an auction.

### **Does a tax-defaulted property have other outstanding taxes or liens on it other than property tax?**

The Treasurer, Tax Collector, and/or Auditor of a jurisdiction conducting a sale can help you determine what, if any, other taxes or liens may be outstanding on a property. You will need an APN or property identification number to research this information.

## **Bid Deposit Services**

### **Why is a deposit required to bid on the auction?**

A Bid Deposit helps a taxing authority ensure that only qualified and authorized bidders are participating in its auction. Funding of a Bid Deposit Account demonstrates a bidder's ability to comply with a County's Conditions of Sale and ensures performance of a winning bidder. A winning bidder's deposit becomes a non-refundable down payment on purchases.

### **The property that I wanted to bid on has been withdrawn, how do I request a refund of my deposit?**

If the property that you wanted to bid on was withdrawn or you are not the winning bidder on the auction, your deposit will automatically be refunded within 10 business days of the close of the auction.

- **Online check** deposits are refunded by online check (ACH) to the originating bank account within ten business days of the day the auction closes.
- **Check or wire deposits** are refunded by check, to the name and address provided in your Bid4Assets profile, within 10 business days after the close of the auction. To confirm your profile information, click on the **My Profile** link located in **My B4A**.

### **When will my deposit be refunded if I do not win an auction?**

If you are not the winning bidder on the auction, your deposit will automatically be refunded within 10 business days of the close of the auction.

- **Online check** deposits are refunded by online check (ACH) to the originating bank account within ten business days of the day the auction closes.
- **Check or wire deposits** are refunded by check, to the name and address provided in your Bid4Assets profile, within 10 business days after the close of the auction. To confirm your profile information, click on the **My Profile** link located in **My B4A**.

### **What happens to my deposit when I win an auction?**

- If you are the winning bidder of a County Tax Sale auction, you will receive an e-mail (and message in your [My Messages](#) in-box) from Bid4Assets with settlement and deed transfer instructions and your deposit is transferred to the County Tax Collector as a non-refundable down payment for the property. As a reminder, your bid is a binding contract. If you do not perform on the auction, your deposit(s) will be forfeited to the County and the county may take legal actions against you.

## **During the Auction**

### **How do I place a bid?**

Before placing your first bid, thoroughly review the auction description and any additional information included in the listing. Remember, it is incumbent upon the bidder to verify all information provided and conduct additional research before placing a bid.

- When you are ready to place a bid - choose a bid type, enter your **bid amount** in the Bid Amount box and click on the **Bid on this item** button. You will be prompted to login (or register, if you haven't already.)
- Verify your bid amount. Also included on the conformation page is a check box confirming that "I have reviewed and researched asset details to my satisfaction and Bid4Assets [Terms of Service](#)". You cannot proceed without acknowledging you have reviewed and

researched asset details and the Bid4Assets Terms of Service. Enter your password and click on the **Bid Now** button. Confirming your bid also activates the credit card authorization process.

[Click here](#) for a more comprehensive, step-by-step How to Bid guide.

#### **How do I know if my bid has been accepted?**

Once you've submitted your bid, we will send you a bid confirmation notice via e-mail and send a similar notice to your My Messages in-box located within [My B4A](#).

#### **How do I know if I have been out bid?**

You will be sent an outbid notification by e-mail and in your My Messages in-box located within [My B4A](#).

#### **What is an Auto Bid?**

**Auto Bid** is a maximum bid which is held in confidence by the system. Bid4Assets will use only as much of the maximum bid as is necessary to maintain the bidder's high bid position or to meet the reserve. *[Please Note: In Reserve Price Auctions, if your maximum bid is the first to meet or exceed the seller's reserve price, the system will automatically move your bid up to meet the reserve, and bidding will continue from there.]*

#### **I placed a bid by mistake, how do I cancel my bid?**

A bid amount cannot be removed or cancelled from an auction once it is placed. A bid is a binding contract between buyer and seller; an irrevocable offer to purchase an item from the seller at the stated bid price.

Buyers are required to conduct any research or due diligence of an asset prior to placing a bid. If you have made a typographical error in your Auto Bid amount (i.e. intended to place an Auto Bid of \$100 but accidentally typed \$1000), you must contact Support Services at [service@Bid4Assets.com](mailto:service@Bid4Assets.com) or call 877-427-7387 IMMEDIATELY to report the error. Bid4Assets will review each situation separately and use its discretion as to honoring the request.

#### **I am unable to place a bid. What do I do?**

You must be registered and submit a deposit, leaving sufficient time for processing, prior to placing a bid.

#### **How can I find out if a property I am interested in has been withdrawn from an online Bid4Assets sale (for payment of taxes or any other reason)?**

Check the Bid4Assets.com Web site often for updates. Counties may withdraw properties for any reason, even during and after an auction; even if there are bid on the property.

#### **The property that I wanted to bid on has been withdrawn. Can I transfer my deposit to another auction?**

No, your deposits may not be transferred from one auction to another. Once a County auction ends, your **Bid Deposit** funds are refunded to you. If you wish to participate in another auction requiring a deposit, you must place a new deposit in the amount required for that auction.

### **After the Auction**

#### **What happens when I win an auction?**

- If you are the winning bidder of a County Tax Sale auction, you will receive an e-mail (and message in your [My Messages](#) in-box) from Bid4Assets with settlement and deed transfer instructions and your deposit is transferred to the County Tax Collector as a non-

refundable down payment for the property. As a reminder, your bid is a binding contract. If you do not perform on the auction, your deposit(s) will be forfeited to the County.

#### **How do I know what properties I won?**

- If you are the winning bidder of a County Tax Sale auction, you will receive an e-mail (and message in you're [My Messages](#) in-box) from Bid4Assets with settlement and deed transfer instructions and your deposit is transferred to the County Tax Collector as a non-refundable down payment for the property. As a reminder, your bid is a binding contract. If you do not perform on the auction, your deposit(s) will be forfeited to the County.

#### **What happens if the auction ends in a tie?**

There are no ties in County Tax Deed Sales. Similar to when an auctioneer continues to take bids until the last bidder bids; Bid4Assets Overtime Bidding keeps an auction open for bidding until there are no further bids for 5 consecutive minutes.

#### **When will I receive my deed?**

Deed transfer processing times vary from County to County.

#### **What happens if I do not complete the settlement terms of the auction?**

Failure to consummate a sale within the specified time shall result in forfeiture of any deposit made and all rights a purchaser may have with respect to a property. A County may also be required to take legal action against you. It's important to remember that **Bids are binding contracts**; if you are the winning bidder, you are legally obligated to purchase the item. Make sure you have done all necessary research before moving forward with your bid. **ALL SALES ARE FINAL AND THERE ARE ABSOLUTELY NO REFUNDS.**

#### **The property I won is not as described. Who do I contact?**

You will need to contact the County directly if you think the property you won was not described accurately.