



March 14, 2025

Notice Requirements

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website (ctas.tennessee.edu). This website is maintained by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

The University of Tennessee
County Technical Assistance Service
226 Anne Dallas Dudley Boulevard, Suite 400
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
615.532.3555 phone
615.532.3699 fax
www.ctas.tennessee.edu

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Notice Requirements

Reference Number: CTAS-1589

The trustee and the court clerk have several important notification responsibilities regarding delinquent taxes; the validity of the subsequent proceedings to sell property to satisfy the lien for taxes often depends upon strict compliance with statutory requirements. The trustee is not required to publish a delinquent tax list, but may do so.¹

Notice of Delinquent Taxes on Current Bill. The trustee must send with the current tax bill for any taxpayer having delinquent taxes as of June 1 of each year a notice with the following or equivalent language:²

IN ADDITION TO THIS AMOUNT, YOU OWE BACK TAXES. CONTACT THIS OFFICE IMMEDIATELY OR YOUR PROPERTY MAY BE SOLD.

County Trustee

The property owners to whom this notice is sent is obtained from the delinquent taxpayers list in the trustee's office, and from the list of property owners whose property is subject to a lawsuit to enforce the tax lien which is required to be provided to the trustee by the appropriate court clerk between June 1 and July 1 of each year.³

Publication of Notice of Intent to File Suit. The trustee must also publish the following notice before the lawsuit is filed:

You are advised that after February 1, additional penalties and costs will be imposed in consequence of suits to be filed for enforcement of the lien for property taxes for prior tax years; until the filing of such suits, taxes may be paid in my office.

County Trustee

This notice must appear in one or more county newspapers, at least once a week for two consecutive weeks in January. The county pays the publication costs. If there is no newspaper published in the county, this notice must be posted on the courthouse door.⁴ It is advisable for the county trustee to also post this notice at other suitable locations both within the courthouse and at other public places.

Notice of Nonpossessory Interest. Under previous law⁵ the owner of a nonpossessory interest in real property was required to file a statement of that interest annually with the assessor, or waive any right to notice of a delinquent tax suit or sale. In 1996 the General Assembly deleted that requirement.⁶ Consequently, the trustee no longer has the duty to publish an annual notice regarding this former provision. The new law specifies that the delinquent tax attorney is to make a reasonable search for those owners and give them notice of the proceedings, receiving a reasonable fee set by the court for this service.⁷

Notice to Surface Owners of Sale of Mineral Interest. The owner of a surface interest in property overlying a mineral interest may record that interest in the office of the county register of deeds where the land is located. If the mineral interest is sold in a delinquent tax sale, the court clerk must send, by certified return receipt mail, a notice of these proceedings to any registered owner, who then has certain rights to purchase the mineral interest.⁸

¹T.C.A. § 67-5-2002.

²T.C.A. § 67-5-2402.

³T.C.A. §§ 67-5-2402, 67-5-2403.

⁴T.C.A. § 67-5-2401.

⁵T.C.A. § 67-5-2502.

⁶1996 Public Chapter 787.

⁷T.C.A. § 67-5-2502(c).

⁸T.C.A. § 67-5-2502(e).

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