



Media Release

Oakland County Treasurer Robert Wittenberg Launches Multimedia Campaign to Help Property Owners Prevent Tax Foreclosure

- Beginning his term on July 1, 2021, Oakland County Treasurer Robert Wittenberg has placed a high priority on preventing the loss of residential and commercial property ownership rights due to tax foreclosure. During Mar. 2022, a multimedia campaign has been launched to encourage Oakland County property owners with unpaid 2019 or prior taxes to act now and prevent tax foreclosure of their property.
- As of Mar. 1, 2021, there were 8,887 properties forfeited—a legal procedure to place a lien on the properties—in the tax foreclosure process. Since the forfeiture process began, the Oakland County Treasurer's Office has taken additional actions beyond the required mailings to notify the property owners and offer assistance to prevent the loss of their property.
- Per state law, property tax foreclosure is a three-year process that results in the loss of ownership rights, if delinquent property taxes are not paid. Oakland County residential and commercial property owners with unpaid 2019 and prior year property taxes must pay the full balance or contact the Oakland County Treasurer's Office for assistance by **Mar. 31, 2022**.

Pontiac, Mich., Mar. 10, 2022, — Oakland County Treasurer Robert Wittenberg encourages residential and commercial property owners with unpaid 2019 or prior year taxes to pay in full or contact the Oakland County Treasurer's Office for assistance by Mar. 31, 2022. During the month of Mar. 2022, a multimedia campaign—including broadcast, print, digital and social media channels—has been launched to help prevent tax foreclosure and the loss of property ownership rights.

"One of the highest priorities for the Oakland County Treasurer's Office is to prevent tax foreclosure and ensure our residents and businesses continue to thrive," said Robert Wittenberg, Oakland County Treasurer. "We are doing all we can to help prevent the destabilization of our neighborhoods, a decrease in property values and the loss of our businesses."

Since beginning his first-term on July 1, 2021, Treasurer Wittenberg and his dedicated team have diligently worked to contact Oakland County residents and business owners in jeopardy of losing their property and provide assistance to help them retain their ownership rights.

As of Mar. 1, 2021, there were 8,887 properties forfeited—a legal procedure to place a lien on the properties—in the tax foreclosure process. The Oakland County Treasurer's Office has taken additional actions beyond the required mailings to notify the property owners and provide assistance, including:

- Presentations and outreach activities across Oakland County have been conducted with community groups and leaders along with local and county officials to share information regarding the foreclosure process and available assistance programs to prevent property tax foreclosure.



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- Beginning in Oct. 2021 and concluding in Jan. 2022, in-person personal service visits were conducted to more than 8,000 property owners to provide notification for the pending foreclosures of 5,988 properties. For properties with multiple owners and mailing address, visits were made to all owners and locations.
- A Notice of Impending Foreclosure supplement to The Oakland Press was published in December 2021 and included a list of the properties subject to tax foreclosure and prevention information.
- Since December 2021, the Oakland County Treasurer's Office has conducted 1,231 Taxpayer Assistance Meetings—one-on-one confidential calls—to help taxpayers with unpaid 2019 or prior year taxes. The meetings have resulted in 1,328 repayment plans that enable residential and commercial property owners to retain their property rights and prevent tax foreclosure.
- In Feb. 2022, the Oakland County Treasurer's Office became a partner with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority's Michigan Homeowners Assistance Fund (MiHAF) program to help Oakland County residents prevent tax foreclosure.

As a result of these efforts, there are approximately 1,000 property owners currently in jeopardy of losing their property rights on Apr. 1, 2022. The Oakland County Treasurer's Office has expanded its efforts through a multimedia campaign including broadcast, print, digital and social media channels to encourage these property owners to pay in full or contact the Treasurer's office by the Mar. 31, 2022 deadline.

For more information and community resources, visit the Oakland County Treasurer's Office website at <https://www.oakgov.com/treasurer/property-taxes/Pages/prevent-tax-foreclosure.aspx>.

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