**Town of Gretna - Delinquent Collections**

**The following Delinquent Collections Policy applies to all monies owed to the Town of Gretna, including utility billing, taxes, business license and miscellaneous charges.**

The Office of the Clerk/Treasurer for the Town of Gretna is tasked with the billing and collection of all Town of Gretna taxes. It is our goal to achieve the full collection of all current and delinquent taxes, license fees, and miscellaneous revenues (including utility billing) while providing quality customer service.

The Delinquent Collection section has several enforcement and collection methods to aid in the collection of past due taxes and utility billings that do not require court intervention. These methods include the following:

**Collection Agencies** - Pursuant to Virginia Code §58.1-3919.1 and §58.1-3934, the Clerk/Treasurer is allowed to place tax accounts with private collectors if delinquent longer than 90 days and longer than 180 days for non-tax accounts (including utility billings). Collection fees are paid by those with delinquent debt.

**Payment Plans** - On occasion, owners cannot pay all of their tax liability. The payment plan, which spreads the total tax liability over time, is designed only to stop legal action for collection of delinquent taxes in cases of financial stress or hardship and where the taxpayer **is working cooperatively** with the department to liquidate the liability. It is a formal, signed agreement between the Clerk/Treasurer and the taxpayer. The typical payment plan requires that the taxpayer make an initial payment of 50% of the taxes due; the remaining balance will then be paid in installments over a time period that falls within the statute of limitations. Other arrangements may be negotiated. However, if the taxpayer fails to make the agreed upon payments when due, the account will then be turned over to the collection agency.

**Wage Liens** – The Clerk/Treasurer makes arrangements with the delinquent taxpayer's employer to garnish the wages of the delinquent taxpayer in the amount that is owed. It may be necessary to garnish more than one paycheck in order to satisfy the tax liability.

**Bank Liens** - The Clerk/Treasurer makes arrangements with the delinquent taxpayer's bank to recover from the taxpayers' account(s) the amount that is owed.

**Boot/Tow Orders** - In cooperation with the Chief of Police, the Clerk/Treasurer may "boot" or tow the delinquent taxpayer's vehicle until such time that the taxpayer pays all outstanding taxes.

**Public Auctions of Real Estate** - Selling properties at public auction for delinquent real estate taxes in the Town of Gretna is generally a last resort collection action inasmuch as the Clerk/Treasurer has a wide array of collection tools and the Town has an outstanding collection rate. If real estate must be sold to collect delinquent taxes, any tax sale would be handled by the Town's contract legal firm for such collections, with oversight from the Town Attorney's Office.

**Public Auctions of Personal Property** – The Clerk/Treasurer may also sell vehicles and certain business equipment at public auction for the collection of delinquent taxes.

**Set-off Debt** – The Clerk/Treasurer notifies the State of Virginia that the taxpayer owes delinquent Town of Gretna taxes. The State notifies the Town when the taxpayer has funds available at the State level that may be used to satisfy the local tax liabilities. Typically, the State will notify the Town of the taxpayer's pending state income tax refunds and lottery winnings.

If you have any questions regarding the collection of delinquent taxes, call the Clerk/Treasurer at 434-656-6572. If you have received a letter from our collection agent or private collection attorney, call the number provided on the letter. The collection firm currently used by the Town of Gretna is:

Taxing Authority Consulting Services, P.C. (TACS) - 703-880-1078 - http://www.taxva.com/

As authorized by the Town Council, TACS serves as the Clerk/Treasurer’s collection agent for real estate taxes, contracted by the Office of the County Attorney.

Real Estate accounts are referred to TACS once delinquent over 90 days (Va. Code §58.1-3919.1) and other non-tax accounts that are delinquent past 180.

A 20% collection fee is charged to the debtor by TACS as authorized by Va. Code §58.1-3958.