

## WHAT IF THE TAXES ARE NOT PAID

If the taxes are not paid within two years from the date the tax became delinquent, the certificate holder may apply for a tax deed and bring the land to sale at public auction. Example: 2024 taxes are delinquent April 1, 2025: therefore, a tax deed application may be made on or after April 1, 2027. A certificate holder who wishes to apply for a tax deed must redeem all other certificates and pay all other fees as mandated by state law.

## WHAT IS THE LIFE OF A TAX CERTIFICATE

The life of a tax certificate is seven years from the date of issuance. If the certificate holder does not apply for a tax deed within seven years, the certificate is null and void.

## WHAT HAPPENS AT THE PUBLIC AUCTION

Tax Deed Auctions are conducted by the Clerk of Court's office via [www.citrus.realtaxdeed.com](http://www.citrus.realtaxdeed.com). If the land goes to public sale, the starting bid is the total amount of the tax deed application plus other outstanding certificates and delinquent taxes not included in the application. When the property is assessed on the latest tax roll as homestead property, the starting bid also includes one half of the assessed value of the property as listed on the current year's tax roll. The highest bidder will receive a tax deed from the Clerk of the Circuit Court.

This is not the same as a warranty Deed and more steps may be necessary to obtain a clear title. If the applicant is not the highest bidder, he/ she will be reimbursed for the total amount paid at the time of application plus 1.5% interest per month. If the highest bid is greater than the amount paid in the application, all parties with a recorded interest are notified. After all claims have been satisfied, any additional money is available for claim by the property owner.

A lien of record held by a municipal or county governmental unit survives the issuance of a tax deed if not satisfied from the sale proceeds.

## CAN A PROPERTY OWNER STOP A LAND SALE

Yes. The owner of the property can prevent the loss of the land by paying all accrued costs and interest at any time before the tax deed is issued.

## WHAT IS THE "LIST OF LANDS AVAILABLE"

If there are no bids when a tax deed is offered at auction, and the applicant does not wish to acquire the parcel, the land is placed on a List of Lands Available. The property can be purchased any time during the next 3 years by paying the original opening bid plus interest, any additional years taxes and the clerk's fees. If no one purchases the property, the county becomes the owner. To obtain information on the List of Lands Available, visit the Clerk of Court's website at [www.citrusclerk.org](http://www.citrusclerk.org) > (scroll down to) Tax Deeds > [Tax Deed Search website](#) > Proceed to Site > Lands Available > Search for Lands Available. You may also reach them by email at [TaxDeeds@CitrusClerk.org](mailto:TaxDeeds@CitrusClerk.org). Please provide the Alternate Key (account number), Application Number and physical address of the property you are interested in.



*Integrity • Innovation*

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*Citrus County Tax Collector*



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TWO LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU!

Monday-Friday 8:30-4:00

### Main Office

210 N. Apopka Ave, Suite 100  
Inverness, FL 34450

Phone: 352-341-6500  
Fax: 352-341-6514

### Branch Office

1540 N Meadowcrest Blvd, Suite 200  
Crystal River, FL 34429

**[www.citrustc.us](http://www.citrustc.us)**

**Property  
Taxes**

***Delinquent Tax  
Process***

## WHEN DO REAL ESTATE TAXES BECOME DELINQUENT

Real estate taxes become delinquent April 1st each year. Example: 2024 taxes become delinquent April 1, 2025. At that time, 3% interest is added to the gross amount.

## ARE DELINQUENT TAXES ADVERTISED

Yes. A list of all real property with delinquent taxes is advertised once a week for three consecutive weeks in a local newspaper during the month of May. The advertisement specifies the place, date and time of the Tax Certificate Sale.

## WHAT IS A TAX CERTIFICATE

A tax certificate represents a lien on real property and earns interest at a maximum rate of 18% **per year**. The cost to purchase a certificate is listed beside each parcel in the delinquent advertisement.

## WHAT IS A TAX CERTIFICATE SALE

On the advertised day and time, beginning no later than June 1st, the Tax Collector auctions and sells a tax certificate on each delinquent parcel. Since the taxes on some parcels will have been paid prior to sale, those paid parcels that appeared in the newspaper will be skipped. Bidding begins at 18% and the certificate is sold to the person bidding the **LOWEST** annual interest rate.

## HOW DO I BECOME A CERTIFICATE BIDDER

Beginning on the 1st date of advertising, bidders may register at [www.lienhub.com](http://www.lienhub.com) and start placing bids.

## WHAT IF THERE ARE NO BIDS FOR A TAX CERTIFICATE

If there are no bids for a tax certificate, it is issued to the County at 18% interest.

## ARE THE COUNTY CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

Yes, county held tax certificates are available for purchase at [www.lienhub.com](http://www.lienhub.com). County held certificates may be purchased over the counter, however the bidder must pre-register at [lienhub.com](http://lienhub.com)

To register—Click – Sign In > Create a User. You will receive an email from LienHub that you must confirm. Once registered, Click – Select a County > Citrus. Click – Manage Bidders (from the left-hand column). Click - Add Bidder (from the middle of the page). Click - Submit a new W-9 (under Obtain a bidder number). Enter banking information for ACH redemptions (required). Complete the W-9 form. Click - OK

When someone buys a county tax certificate the lien is transferred to the buyer. The purchase price is the amount of the original certificate plus interest due to the date of purchase. The interest rate of the purchased certificate is 18% annually.

## CAN A TAX CERTIFICATE BE CANCELLED OR CHANGED

Yes, a tax certificate can be cancelled or changed if there was an error in the original tax bill or in the issuance of the tax certificate. The portion in error will be refunded to the tax certificate holder at the interest bid or 8% whichever is less, calculated monthly to the date of cancellation/ correction.

## IS THIS A RISK FREE INVESTMENT

No. Although it is a secure investment in most cases, there is an element of risk. Some possible risks include:

- In the event of a correction to the original taxes, interest would be paid as previously indicated.
- If the property value drops significantly in subsequent tax years, it may cost more to bring the property to sale than the value gained by owning the property.
- If the landowner enters into bankruptcy, the certificate holder is prevented from enforcing the lien until the bankruptcy is released. The bankruptcy court can lower the interest rate and order payments to be made over a period of years.
- If the County holds another year's certificate and applies for a tax deed, no other certificate holders are paid off until the property is redeemed or purchased. If the property is not redeemed or purchased the land reverts to the county and the investment is lost.

## HOW ARE TAX CERTIFICATES REDEEMED

In order to clear the property of the tax lien, the tax certificate plus interest calculated from the month of the certificate sale to the month of payment must be received by the Tax Collector's office. All payments are made to the Tax Collector.

## AFTER PAYMENT, WHEN DOES THE TAX CERTIFICATE HOLDER RECEIVE THEIR MONEY

When a certificate has been redeemed, the holder is entitled to the face value plus any interest it has earned at the time of redemption. Redemption monies are issued approximately two weeks after the certificate is redeemed.

## IS CERTIFICATE INTEREST TAXABLE

Yes. When a certificate is redeemed, the interest earned is reported to the IRS. In January, form 1099 INT is sent to each certificate holder for earnings in the previous year.

