



Ohio Revised Code

Section 2981.12 Disposal of unclaimed or forfeited property.

Effective: September 29, 2015

Legislation: House Bill 64 - 131st General Assembly

(A) Unclaimed or forfeited property in the custody of a law enforcement agency, other than property described in division (A)(2) of section 2981.11 of the Revised Code, shall be disposed of by order of any court of record that has territorial jurisdiction over the political subdivision that employs the law enforcement agency, as follows:

(1) Drugs shall be disposed of pursuant to section 3719.11 of the Revised Code or placed in the custody of the secretary of the treasury of the United States for disposal or use for medical or scientific purposes under applicable federal law.

(2) Firearms and dangerous ordnance suitable for police work may be given to a law enforcement agency for that purpose. Firearms suitable for sporting use or as museum pieces or collectors' items may be sold at public auction pursuant to division (B) of this section. The agency may sell other firearms and dangerous ordnance to a federally licensed firearms dealer in a manner that the court considers proper. The agency shall destroy any firearms or dangerous ordnance not given to a law enforcement agency or sold or shall send them to the bureau of criminal identification and investigation for destruction by the bureau.

(3) Obscene materials shall be destroyed.

(4) Beer, intoxicating liquor, or alcohol seized from a person who does not hold a permit issued under Chapters 4301. and 4303. of the Revised Code or otherwise forfeited to the state for an offense under section 4301.45 or 4301.53 of the Revised Code shall be sold by the division of liquor control if the division determines that it is fit for sale or shall be placed in the custody of the investigations unit in the department of public safety and be used for training relating to law enforcement activities. The department, with the assistance of the division of liquor control, shall adopt rules in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code to provide for the distribution to state or local law enforcement agencies upon their request. If any tax imposed under Title XLIII of the Revised Code has not been paid in relation to the beer, intoxicating liquor, or alcohol, any moneys acquired from



the sale shall first be used to pay the tax. All other money collected under this division shall be paid into the state treasury. Any beer, intoxicating liquor, or alcohol that the division determines to be unfit for sale shall be destroyed.

(5) Money received by an inmate of a correctional institution from an unauthorized source or in an unauthorized manner shall be returned to the sender, if known, or deposited in the inmates' industrial and entertainment fund of the institution if the sender is not known.

(6)(a) Any mobile instrumentality forfeited under this chapter may be given to the law enforcement agency that initially seized the mobile instrumentality for use in performing its duties, if the agency wants the mobile instrumentality. The agency shall take the mobile instrumentality subject to any security interest or lien on the mobile instrumentality.

(b) Vehicles and vehicle parts forfeited under sections 4549.61 to 4549.63 of the Revised Code may be given to a law enforcement agency for use in performing its duties. Those parts may be incorporated into any other official vehicle. Parts that do not bear vehicle identification numbers or derivatives of them may be sold or disposed of as provided by rules of the director of public safety. Parts from which a vehicle identification number or derivative of it has been removed, defaced, covered, altered, or destroyed and that are not suitable for police work or incorporation into an official vehicle shall be destroyed and sold as junk or scrap.

(7) Computers, computer networks, computer systems, and computer software suitable for police work may be given to a law enforcement agency for that purpose or disposed of under division (B) of this section.

(8) Money seized in connection with a violation of section 2905.32, 2907.21, or 2907.22 of the Revised Code shall be deposited in the victims of human trafficking fund created by section 5101.87 of the Revised Code.

(B) Unclaimed or forfeited property that is not described in division (A) of this section or division (A)(2) of section 2981.11 of the Revised Code, with court approval, may be used by the law enforcement agency in possession of it. If it is not used by the agency, it may be sold without appraisal at a public auction to the highest bidder for cash or disposed of in another manner that the



court considers proper.

(C) Except as provided in divisions (A) and (F) of this section and after compliance with division (D) of this section when applicable, any moneys acquired from the sale of property disposed of pursuant to this section shall be placed in the general revenue fund of the state, or the general fund of the county, the township, or the municipal corporation of which the law enforcement agency involved is an agency.

(D) If the property was in the possession of the law enforcement agency in relation to a delinquent child proceeding in a juvenile court, ten per cent of any moneys acquired from the sale of property disposed of under this section shall be applied to one or more community addiction services providers, as defined in section 5119.01 of the Revised Code. A juvenile court shall not specify a services provider, except as provided in this division, unless the services provider is in the same county as the court or in a contiguous county. If no services provider is located in any of those counties, the juvenile court may specify a services provider anywhere in Ohio. The remaining ninety per cent of the proceeds or cash shall be applied as provided in division (C) of this section.

Each services provider that receives in any calendar year forfeited money under this division shall file an annual report for that year with the attorney general and with the court of common pleas and board of county commissioners of the county in which the services provider is located and of any other county from which the services provider received forfeited money. The services provider shall file the report on or before the first day of March in the calendar year following the calendar year in which the services provider received the money. The report shall include statistics on the number of persons the services provider served, identify the types of treatment services it provided to them, and include a specific accounting of the purposes for which it used the money so received. No information contained in the report shall identify, or enable a person to determine the identity of, any person served by the services provider.

(E) Each community addiction services provider that receives in any calendar year money under this section or under section 2981.13 of the Revised Code as the result of a juvenile forfeiture order shall file an annual report for that calendar year with the attorney general and with the court of common pleas and board of county commissioners of the county in which the services provider is located and of any other county from which the services provider received the money. The services provider



shall file the report on or before the first day of March in the calendar year following the year in which the services provider received the money. The report shall include statistics on the number of persons served with the money, identify the types of treatment services provided, and specifically account for how the money was used. No information in the report shall identify or enable a person to determine the identity of anyone served by the services provider.

As used in this division, "juvenile-related forfeiture order" means any forfeiture order issued by a juvenile court under section 2981.04 or 2981.05 of the Revised Code and any disposal of property ordered by a court under section 2981.11 of the Revised Code regarding property that was in the possession of a law enforcement agency in relation to a delinquent child proceeding in a juvenile court.

(F) Each board of county commissioners that recognizes a citizens' reward program under section 9.92 of the Revised Code shall notify each law enforcement agency of that county and of a township or municipal corporation wholly located in that county of the recognition by filing a copy of its resolution conferring that recognition with each of those agencies. When the board recognizes a citizens' reward program and the county includes a part, but not all, of the territory of a municipal corporation, the board shall so notify the law enforcement agency of that municipal corporation of the recognition of the citizens' reward program only if the county contains the highest percentage of the municipal corporation's population.

Upon being so notified, each law enforcement agency shall pay twenty-five per cent of any forfeited proceeds or cash derived from each sale of property disposed of pursuant to this section to the citizens' reward program for use exclusively to pay rewards. No part of the funds may be used to pay expenses associated with the program. If a citizens' reward program that operates in more than one county or in another state in addition to this state receives funds under this section, the funds shall be used to pay rewards only for tips and information to law enforcement agencies concerning offenses committed in the county from which the funds were received.

Receiving funds under this section or section 2981.11 of the Revised Code does not make the citizens' reward program a governmental unit or public office for purposes of section 149.43 of the Revised Code.



(G) Any property forfeited under this chapter shall not be used to pay any fine imposed upon a person who is convicted of or pleads guilty to an underlying criminal offense or a different offense arising out of the same facts and circumstances.

(H) Any moneys acquired from the sale of personal effects, tools, or other property seized because the personal effects, tools, or other property were used in the commission of a violation of section 2905.32, 2907.21, or 2907.22 of the Revised Code or derived from the proceeds of the commission of a violation of section 2905.32, 2907.21, or 2907.22 of the Revised Code and disposed of pursuant to this section shall be placed in the victims of human trafficking fund created by section 5101.87 of the Revised Code.