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**Automatic Transfer of
Unclaimed Property to Government Agencies**
Frequently Asked Questions

Why is some unclaimed property automatically transferred to government agencies?

For many years, the State Controller has been safeguarding unclaimed properties affiliated with state and local government agencies who needed to submit claims in order to receive the properties. A California law that took effect January 1, 2020, allows the State Controller's Office (SCO) to automatically pay out many types of unclaimed properties held in the name of state and local government agencies without the claims paperwork. This law, sponsored by SCO, was enacted by Assembly Bill 1637 of 2019 (Smith and Wilk) and revised to include school districts and community colleges via Assembly Bill 3364 of 2020.

What is considered a local government agency?

California law defines "local agency" as a city, county, district, school district, and community college district in addition to state agencies, University of California, and California State University systems.

How are the properties identified?

The unclaimed property database is a public record available online at claimit.ca.gov. SCO staff will search the database annually on behalf of the government agencies using multiple identifiers such as the name (including acronyms and abbreviations) and location.

How will a government agency receive unclaimed property?

After SCO staff identify property held in the name of a government agency, they will issue a payment for the total value and mail it (in the form of a paper check) to the agency along with a detailed Property Information Report.

How do I apply the payment received from SCO?

The Property Information Report accompanying the payment identifies the agency name, address, type of property, and dollar amount, as well as who originally remitted the property to SCO. This report may be helpful in determining where to deposit the payment.

Why didn't SCO send all properties being held for our government agency?

SCO searches for all types of unclaimed properties held in the name of state and local government agencies. However, some properties (e.g., original instruments, items with multiple owners) require further research before payment can be issued. In these cases, SCO staff will contact agencies for additional information.

Can state and local agencies claim properties on their own?

A government agency may submit a traditional claim for property; however, in doing so, the process may take up to 180 days from receipt of the complete claim package. Auto-pay payments to government agencies are generally issued within 60 to 90 days of SCO completing the property search process.

What if I have questions or do not agree with the payment?

Please contact us by phone at (916) 464-4477 or email at upgovpay@sco.ca.gov with questions or concerns about unclaimed property payments to government agencies.