

STATE OF NEW YORK

6918--A

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

May 15, 2023

Introduced by Sen. ROLISON -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Local Government -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the real property tax law, in relation to authorizing the city of Newburgh to add unpaid housing code violation penalties, costs and fines to such city's annual tax levy in accordance with applicable law

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The real property tax law is amended by adding a new
2 section 903 to read as follows:

3 § 903. Collection of unpaid housing code violation penalties; levy. 1.
4 Authorization. In addition to and not in limitation of any power other-
5 wise granted by law, the city of Newburgh is hereby authorized to
6 collect any unpaid housing, building and fire code violation penalties,
7 costs and fines through placement by the city's director of finance,
8 treasurer, or other public official charged with the duties of oversee-
9 ing tax collections on the city's annual tax levy in accordance with the
10 provisions of this section.

11 2. Eligibility. In order to be eligible for placement on the munici-
12 pality's annual tax levy such unpaid code violation penalties, costs and
13 finances shall have been adjudicated and imposed through a judgment in a
14 court of competent jurisdiction on an owner of real property within the
15 city and recorded by the county clerk, as certified by the city's corpo-
16 ration counsel to the director of finance, treasurer or other public
17 official charged with the duties of overseeing tax collections and have
18 remained unpaid for one year after the final adjudication and exhaustion
19 of all appeals relating to the imposition of the fines for a code
20 violation preceding the placement on the city's tax levy.

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 3. Minimum amount owed. To qualify for placement on the tax levy the
2 amount owed for unpaid code violations must be at least five percent of
3 the amount of the tax assessed value of the property.

4 4. Levy. Such code violation penalty, cost or fine as set forth in a
5 copy of the judgment certified by the city's corporation counsel to the
6 director of finance, treasurer or other public official charged with the
7 duties of overseeing tax collections shall be set down in the annual tax
8 levy under the heading uncollected fines and penalties and in accordance
9 with this section shall be levied, enforced and collected in the same
10 manner, by the same proceedings, at the same time, under the same penal-
11 ties and having the same lien upon the property assessed as the general
12 city tax and as a part thereof.

13 5. Notice. The city shall notify all owners of record of the placement
14 of the code violations on the city tax levy as uncollected fines and
15 penalties within thirty days of placement, pursuant to section three
16 hundred eight of the civil practice law and rules. The notice shall
17 include the date or dates of such violations, the description of the
18 violations, the amount owed, a statement detailing the foreclosure proc-
19 ess that will occur if the violations remain unpaid and the contact
20 information for the city office in charge of receiving payments.

21 6. Tax year. Any unpaid code violations shall be placed on the tax
22 roll the city is currently in and shall not be placed on a list, roll or
23 levy of delinquent taxes.

24 7. Owner occupied. Notwithstanding any other applicable provisions of
25 law, nothing in this section shall be applied to a residential dwelling
26 that is owner-occupied or is the primary residence of a homeowner.

27 8. Tenants. Prior to the placement of any property with unpaid code
28 violations on the tax levy, the city shall develop a program to assist
29 tenants residing in a dwelling at risk for tax foreclosure due to unpaid
30 code violations. Such program shall include housing counseling assist-
31 ance or other support in relocating the tenants to suitable housing
32 prior to the tax foreclosure.

33 9. Payment plan. Nothing in this section shall preclude an owner or
34 landlord from entering into a payment plan with the city for past
35 amounts due for code violations in accordance with section eleven
36 hundred eighty-four of this chapter.

37 10. Curing code violations. (a) If all of the violations for which the
38 penalties, fees and costs have been assessed are cured, removed or
39 corrected prior to the expiration of the period for redemption pursuant
40 to section eleven hundred ten of this chapter, and penalties, costs and
41 fines are paid in full, the property shall be removed from the levy and
42 auction and the balance of the amount owed shall be placed as a lien on
43 the property pursuant to applicable laws for debt collection and an
44 action for foreclosure of the property shall not be maintained for the
45 amount owed.

46 (b) The determination of whether or not the code violations have been
47 cured shall be made by the city enforcing officer in charge of ensuring
48 compliance with applicable housing, building, and fire codes such as a
49 code enforcement officer. An appeal of this determination may be made
50 to the city's zoning board of appeals or other local administrative body
51 as provided for in local law. The final determination made by the admin-
52 istrative body shall be reviewable pursuant to article seventy-eight of
53 the civil practice law and rules.

54 11. Payment prior to auction. (a) If the balance owed for code
55 violations placed on the tax levy is paid prior to the expiration of the
56 period for redemption pursuant to section eleven hundred ten of this

1 chapter and there is no balance due for unpaid real property taxes, the
2 property may not be auctioned, and the property shall be removed from
3 the tax levy.

4 (b) The owner shall have the right to pay the full balance prior to
5 the expiration of the period for redemption pursuant to section eleven
6 hundred ten of this chapter in order to redeem the property.

7 12. Surplus. Any surplus funds remaining after the sale of a property
8 at a tax foreclosure for unpaid code violations shall be returned to the
9 former owner of the property in a manner provided under local law. This
10 provision shall not apply to a sale of a property at a tax foreclosure
11 due to unpaid taxes. If a property has both unpaid taxes and unpaid code
12 violations on the same tax levy and is auctioned at a tax foreclosure
13 the amount of the surplus funds returned to the former owner shall be
14 proportionate to the amount of unpaid code violations owed in the total
15 amount of debt owed to the municipality. For the purpose of this
16 section, "surplus funds" shall mean the balance of money received after
17 auction of a property at a tax foreclosure sale minus the amount owed
18 for code violations and the costs and attorneys fees incurred in the
19 collection of the fees by the municipalities.

20 13. Balance due. If after an auction a balance is due for code
21 violations, the city may proceed with any action against the former
22 owner pursuant to applicable laws.

23 14. Exclusions. The provisions of this section shall not apply to the
24 city if the city sells its tax liens in a tax lien sale.

25 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.