§ 972. County may become collection agency. 1. Adoption. Notwithstanding any provisions of this chapter, or any other general, special or local law to the contrary, the legislative body of a county may, by local law, provide that thereafter and until such local law is repealed, the county shall become the tax collection agency for the purpose of collecting taxes in installments as prescribed by this title and by sections thirteen hundred thirty-six through thirteen hundred forty-two of this chapter. The term "taxes" as used in this title shall include special assessments which are levied by the county legislative body at the time and in the manner provided by law for the levy of county and town taxes.

2. Payment schedule. Such local law shall provide the number of installments and the respective dates upon which each installment shall be due, the first not later than the last day of the month in which the respective taxes may be paid without interest without regard to this title, and the last not later than the last day of the fiscal year for which it was levied, or in the case of a school district, not later than the thirty-first day of August following the conclusion of such fiscal year. Unless the local law provides otherwise, each installment shall be as nearly equal as possible.

3. Interest. (a) Each installment other than the first shall be subject to interest at the rate determined pursuant to section nine hundred twenty-four-a of this article, or such other law as may be locally applicable, up to and including the date on which it is to be paid. Such interest shall be amortized over all scheduled payments, unless the local law provides for unequal installments, in which case interest shall be calculated and imposed separately upon each installment.

(b) If an installment is not paid on or before the date it is due, additional interest shall be added as provided by section nine hundred seventy-five or section thirteen hundred forty of this chapter.

(c) The amount of any interest which shall be added to any installment pursuant to this section and section nine hundred seventy-five or section thirteen hundred forty of this chapter shall belong to the county.

4. Eligible property. (a) A local law establishing an installment program pursuant to this section may provide that the program shall be limited to one or more of the following types of property:

(i) property which has been assessed as a one, two or three family residence; or

(ii) property which is exempt from taxation pursuant to section four hundred sixty-seven of this chapter; or

(iii) property which is exempt from taxation pursuant to section four hundred fifty-nine of this chapter, or which is owned and occupied by a person or persons who qualify as physically disabled pursuant to that statute; or

(iv) property which is owned by, and used as, the principal residence of, a person who receives supplemental security income.

(b) If the local law does not provide otherwise, the program shall apply to all types of property.

(c) Notwithstanding the foregoing, taxes which are paid through a real property tax escrow account may not be paid in installments pursuant to this title.

5. Adoption by certain cities and towns. Any city or town having the power to collect and enforce taxes levied or imposed pursuant to law may elect, by local law or ordinance, to have the provisions of this title apply to such city or town, in which case all references to the county legislative body shall refer to the legislative body of such city or town and the references to other local officers shall refer to the corresponding officers of such city or town; provided however, that the manner and time provided by law for paying taxes imposed on behalf of another municipal corporation or special district shall not be modified by the enactment of such local law or ordinance.