

Help available to residents behind on property taxes

About \$700K set aside for struggling Miami Valley homeowners.



“There are far too many parcels in this county that are tax delinquent,” said Montgomery County Treasurer John McManus, who noted that some properties have owed taxes for years. So far 37 county residents have taken advantage of a program meant to help catch them up on taxes. CORNELIUS FROLIK / STAFF

BY PARKER PERRY – STAFF WRITER

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There are more than \$190 million in delinquent property taxes owed in Montgomery County and now there is a rare opportunity for property owners who were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic to get assistance to pay these taxes.

The Mortgage Assistance Program through the HomeOwnership Center can help people catch up on their mortgage, property taxes and utility bills, said executive director Julie Deacon. She said there's about \$700,000 available for property owners in Montgomery, Greene, Warren, Darke and Preble Counties.

"Homeowners who suffered some sort of financial hardship due to COVID-19, and that can be any type of financial hardship like an increase in expenses, a decrease in income, there's really a lot of flexibility there, we can get them current," she said.

The money is part of the Community Development Block Grant- CARES Act, a federal COVID relief program. The HomeOwnership Center has a contract with the Miami Valley Community Action Partnership.

So far 37 Montgomery County residents have taken advantage of the program which has resulted in about \$100,000 being disbursed.

The deadline to apply for the money is May 15 and can be done at homeownershipdayton.org.

The applications must be for a primary residence (not a rental property) and households cannot owe taxes due prior to April 2020.

Deacon said the center will try to work with those who apply to get them the most funding possible.

Delinquent property taxes is a major problem in Montgomery County,

Treasurer John McManus said.

“There are far too many parcels in this county that are tax delinquent,” McManus said, noting that some properties have owed property taxes for years.

The unpaid money is supposed to go to local schools, municipalities, the county government and voter-approved levies.

“We always tell people that their property taxes are really important. It’s going to make sure kids in your community can have a thriving school system in addition to other things,” McManus said.

And the consequences of not paying property taxes can be severe. McManus says his office works with property owners to help them catch up on overdue taxes, but failure to pay can result in tax liens and foreclosure.

Hearing the stories of people who have suffered during the pandemic is heartbreaking, Deacon said, but knowing the program she’s overseeing is helping is also heartwarming.

“We’ve worked with people who were very successful and had higher income jobs and then COVID hit them in some way and all of the sudden they weren’t able to keep up with everything,”

Deacon said. “But then we worked on one where a mother and a daughter were both living in a home and they both went on disability recently and their income was drastically changed with COVID and we were able to bring them current.”

Those unsure whether they qualify for the assistance can contact The HomeOwnership Center at 937-853-1600.

Contact this reporter at 937- 610-7441 or email parker.perry@coxinc.com.