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Controller of Delaware County
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County Controller Releases Unclaimed Funds

New website helps residents claim thousands of dollars left uncashed

Hundreds of Delaware County residents and organizations are owed hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of dollars in unclaimed property at the county level. For a wide variety of reasons, these checks were either uncashed or undeliverable, and people who did business with Delaware County government are leaving money on the table.

Delaware County Controller Joanne Phillips has worked to make it easier for people to identify and claim money that might be owed to them from the past several years at the County level. To facilitate that process, the Controller's Office launched an Unclaimed Funds section on the county's website on July 1. The website lists the funds, the names of their owners in alphabetical order, the amount, and provides a user-friendly process to claim those funds.

The unclaimed monies belong to individuals and organizations who previously did business with Delaware County government and for various reasons failed to cash the payments owed them. If owed money, recipients can access a form on the Controller's website, fill out the required information and mail it via the U.S. Postal Service. Forms cannot be Faxed or emailed.

"Our goal is to provide residents and organizations with an easy, expeditious way to receive the funds that are owed them. It's their money and, during these challenging economic times, any amount of found money can help someone make ends meet," said Delaware County Controller Joanne Phillips.

Most of the checks were either not cashed or returned as undeliverable by the post office. If a check remains uncashed for six months, it will be put in the Unclaimed Funds account which is held by the county for a period of time, and then turned over to the state.

There are more than 750 listings with amounts that range from a few dollars to \$8,000. The total of unclaimed funds currently exceeds \$113,000. Many of the organizations are non-profits such as churches, or other institutions. There are several unclaimed amounts for \$70, which Phillips said is likely a payment for their site to be used as a polling place during an election. The money could be from an escrow for an estate, a vendor payment, property rental for a special event or reimbursement for expenses.

“Most often the payee has moved and does not leave a forwarding address, or the forwarding order expired,” Phillips said. “Checks may go uncashed because they are lost in the mail, misplaced or accidentally destroyed. The most common types of unclaimed monies include, payments to people for goods or services provided to the county.”

Phillips said the County is mandated to hold the unclaimed monies for three years, and then the funds are sent to the state where they become part of a larger unclaimed fund. Phillips noted that it is easier for people to access unclaimed County monies while they are still at the County level. The current listings date from 2017- 2018, and 2019 will be added later this summer when the County closes its financial report. The list will be routinely updated. Efforts are also made to contact the individuals at their last known address before funds are sent to the state.

Phillips also warns individuals to access their funds directly through the County or the Pennsylvania Treasury Department. Agencies may offer to secure the money for a fee or commission but that’s not necessary.

“You can only claim funds owed directly to you. People will find instructions on the website on how to claim funds for businesses, as well as heirs or individual asset finders,” said Phillips. “The Controller acts as an independent watchdog over County funds. It is my office’s job to work for the best interest of Delaware County taxpayers. This is one helpful, important way that we can help people find some money that they are owed and put in back in their pockets.”

The Controller’s Unclaimed Funds can be found here:

www.delcopa.gov/controller/unclaimed.html

Search the list by name and if you are owed money, complete and mail the form with requested documentation to the Controller’s Office:

Attention Delaware County Controller
201 W. Front Street
Media, PA 19063