WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §36-8-2A

§36-8-2a. Escheat of United States savings bonds.

(a) Notwithstanding any other section of this article or any other section of this code to the contrary, United States savings bonds held or owing in this state by any person, or issued, or owed, in the course of a holder's business, by a state or other government, governmental subdivision, agency, or instrumentality, and all proceeds thereof, shall be presumed abandoned in the state if:

(1) The last known address of the owner of the United States savings bond is in this state; and

(2) The United States savings bond has remained unclaimed and unredeemed for a period of five years after final maturity.

(b) United States savings bonds which are presumed abandoned under §36-8-2a(a) of this code, including bonds in the possession of the administrator, and those lost, stolen or destroyed bonds registered to persons with last known addresses in this state, shall, upon satisfaction by the administrator of the requirements of §36-8-2a(c) through (e) of this code, escheat to the State of West Virginia one year after such bonds are presumed abandoned, and all property rights and legal title to, and ownership of, the United States savings bonds or proceeds from the bonds, including all rights, powers and privileges of survivorship of any owner, co-owner, or beneficiary, shall vest solely in the State of West Virginia, subject only to the provisions of §36-8-15 and §36-8-16 of this code.

(c) After the expiration of the one-year period prescribed in §36-8-2a(b) of this code, if no claim has been filed pursuant to the provisions of §36-8-15 and §36-8-16 of this code for such United States savings bonds, but before such savings bonds escheat to the State of West Virginia, a civil action must be commenced by the administrator in the circuit court of Kanawha County, or in any other court of competent jurisdiction, for a determination that such United States savings bonds shall escheat to the State of West Virginia.

(d) The administrator shall make service by publication of the civil action in accordance with Rule 4(e) of the West Virginia Rules of Civil Procedure.

(e) Any person claiming ownership, including all persons claiming rights, powers and privileges of survivorship and any co-owner or beneficiary, or his or her agent, may appear and defend his or her rights to the subject bond or bonds, and if the court is satisfied that the claimant is entitled to the bond or bonds, the court may award judgment in the claimant's favor. If no person files a claim or appears at the hearing to substantiate a claim, or if the court determines that a claimant is not entitled to the property claimed by such claimant, then the court, if satisfied by evidence that the administrator has substantially complied with this section, shall enter a judgment that the subject United States savings

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bonds have escheated to the State of West Virginia, and all property rights and legal title to and ownership of such United States savings bonds or proceeds from such bonds, including all rights, powers and privileges of survivorship of any owner, co-owner or beneficiary, shall vest solely in the State of West Virginia.

(f) Upon being awarded a judgment that the United States savings bond or bonds have escheated to the State of West Virginia, the administrator shall redeem such United States savings bonds. Upon recovery of the proceeds of any United States savings bonds, the administrator shall first pay all costs incident to the collection and recovery of such proceeds from the proceeds of such United States savings bonds and shall thereafter promptly deposit the remaining balance of such proceeds into the Unclaimed Property Fund pursuant to §36-8-13 of this code.

(g) Notwithstanding any other section of this article or any other section of this code to the contrary, any person making a claim for a United States savings bond escheated to the State of West Virginia under this section, or for the proceeds of such bond, may file a claim with the administrator pursuant to §36-8-15 of this code. Upon receipt of sufficient proof of the validity of such person’s claim, the administrator may, in his or her sole discretion, pay such claim less any expenses and costs which have been incurred by the state in securing full title and ownership of such property by escheat. If payment has been made to any claimant, no action thereafter may be maintained by any other claimant against the state or any officer thereof, for, or on account of, such funds.

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