WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §36-8-9

§36-8-9. Notice and publication of lists of abandoned property.

(a) Publication of bulletin. —

(1) The administrator shall publish a bulletin no later than November 30 of each year, listing the names of the apparent owners of up to 15,000 properties recently paid or delivered to the administrator. The bulletin must be published in a newspaper of general circulation in each county of this state. The bulletin must be in a form that, in the judgment of the administrator, is likely to attract the attention of the apparent owner of the unclaimed property. The bulletin must contain:

(A) The name of each person appearing to be the owner of the property listed, as set forth in the report filed by the holder;

(B) The municipality in which the last known address or location of each person appearing to be the owner of the listed property is located, if an address or location is set forth in the report filed by the holder;

(C) A statement explaining that property of the owner is presumed to be abandoned and has been taken into the protective custody of the administrator; and

(D) A statement that information about unclaimed property and its return to the owner is available to a person having a legal or beneficial interest in the property, upon request to the administrator.

(2) The administrator is not required to include any property in the bulletin described in this subsection that has a total value of less than $50 or any property that is a traveler's check, money order, or similar instrument.

(b) Exception to bulletin requirement. —

(1) The administrator is not required to publish the bulletin described in subsection (a) of this section in a county if the administrator makes a determination that the bulletin is not a cost-effective method of promoting awareness of unclaimed property in that county. The determination shall be based on the cost to publish the bulletin in the county and the following criteria:

(A) The population of the county;

(B) Relevant geographic or demographic characteristics of the county;

(C) Residents' access to Internet within the county;

WV Legislature

(D) Available data on the circulation and readership of newspapers within the county;

(E) The existence of alternative media outlets to newspapers in the county, through which the administrator may more effectively promote awareness of unclaimed property; and

(F) County-specific data collected by the administrator in previous years concerning the most effective methods of promoting awareness of unclaimed property within the county.

(2) During each year in which the administrator does not publish the bulletin described in subsection (a) of this subsection in a county, pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, the administrator shall publish an advertisement in a newspaper of general circulation in the county by November 30 of that year. The advertisement must be in a form that, in the judgment of the administrator, is likely to attract the attention of the apparent owner of the unclaimed property and must contain:

(A) A statement notifying the reader that the administrator holds unclaimed property and that the reader might be entitled to claim unclaimed property in the administrator's custody;

(B) A brief description of the types of property that are commonly held by the administrator;

(C) Instructions for accessing the searchable database of unclaimed property on the administrator's website; and

(D) Instructions for requesting information regarding unclaimed property from the administrator by telephone or by mail.

(c) Online database. — The administrator shall maintain a database on the administrator's website that is accessible by the public and electronically searchable which contains the names reported to the administrator of all apparent owners for whom property is being held by the administrator: *Provided*, That the administrator is not required to include in the database the name or location of an owner of property having a total value less than $50 or information concerning a traveler's check, money order, or similar instrument.

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