

ORDINANCE NO. 36-15

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE TO ENTER IN AN AGREEMENT WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE STATE OF OHIO FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEBT COLLECTION; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Whereas, the Director of Finance of the City of Ashland, Ohio, desires to enter into agreement with the Attorney General of the State of Ohio office for local government debt collection; and

Whereas, it is immediately necessary to enter into such agreement so that the City of Ashland, Ohio, may proceed with the collection of outstanding debt owed the City, this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, property, health, safety and welfare, now therefore,

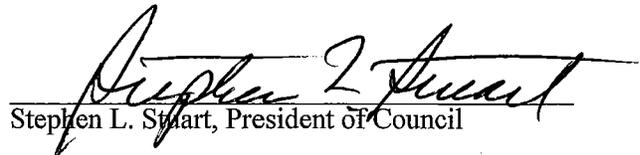
Be It Ordained by the Council of the City of Ashland, State of Ohio, 5 members thereto concurring:

Section 1. That the Director of Finance be, and is hereby, authorized and directed to enter into an agreement with the Attorney General of the State of Ohio office for local government debt collection for the purpose of collecting municipal debt owed to the City of Ashland, Ohio;

Section 2. For the reason that it is necessary to authorize the Director of Finance to enter into said agreement for the benefit of the City of Ashland, Ohio, this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, property, health, safety and welfare.

Section 3. That this Ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage by Council and approval pursuant to Section 12 of the Charter of the City of Ashland, Ohio.

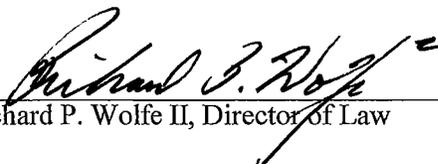
Passed: May 19, 2015


Stephen L. Stuart, President of Council

Attest: 
Elizabeth A. McClurg, Interim Clerk of Council

Approved: 
Glen P. Stewart, Mayor

Approved as to form and correctness:


Richard P. Wolfe II, Director of Law

Date: May 19, 2015



**DELINQUENT DEBT COLLECTION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL
AND
CITY OF ASHLAND, OHIO**

I. PARTIES

1.1. THIS DELINQUENT DEBT COLLECTION AGREEMENT (this "Agreement") is between the Ohio Attorney General (hereinafter "Attorney General") and CITY OF ASHLAND, OHIO ("Political Subdivision"), collectively referenced herein as the "Parties."

II. PURPOSE

2.1. The Political Subdivision has requested that the Attorney General undertake, and the Attorney General agrees to undertake, the collection of delinquent debt owed to the Political Subdivision, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code ("O.R.C.") § 131.02. This Agreement sets forth the rights, duties and obligations of the Parties and the amounts to be charged, collected and allocated between the Political Subdivision and Attorney General. This Agreement will become effective in ten business days once fully executed ("Effective Date").

III. CERTIFICATION OF DEBT

3.1. The Parties agree that this Agreement shall apply to amounts owed to Political Subdivision that meet the criteria specified on the attached Exhibit "A" (hereinafter the "Debt"). The Parties may, from time to time, change the categories of debt to be certified to the Attorney General by amending Exhibit "A" pursuant to the discretion of the Section Chief of the Collections Enforcement Section of the Attorney General and CITY OF ASHLAND, OHIO of the Political Subdivision. Such changes to the categories of debt identified on Exhibit "A" shall not be construed as an amendment or termination of this Agreement.

3.2. Political Subdivision hereby warrants that all Debts certified to the Attorney General for collection pursuant to this Agreement are or will be legally due and owing to Political Subdivision at the time of certification.

3.3. Political Subdivision hereby warrants that it has complied or will comply with all conditions precedent to the legality of certifying the Debt for collection prior to certifying the Debt to Attorney General pursuant to this Agreement.

3.4. Political Subdivision hereby warrants that it has obtained the approval of any person or entity whose approval is required as a condition to entering into this Agreement. True and correct copies of any such approvals shall be attached hereto as Exhibit "B."

3.5. Political Subdivision shall identify and itemize the amounts owed in any bills or mailings issued to the debtors prior to certifying the Debt pursuant to this Agreement. Such itemization shall separately identify penalties, fees, costs and interest, if any, added to the principal balance of the amounts owed. For all Debt certified under this Agreement, Political Subdivision shall maintain account records documenting the principal balance of the amounts owed, as well as any penalties, fees, costs and interest, from the date such debt becomes due and owing to Political Subdivision until the debt is paid in full, resolved or written off as specified herein.

3.6. Political Subdivision shall make all account records related to the Debt fully available to specified Attorney General personnel in order for the Attorney General to actively identify and pursue collection activities. Political Subdivision shall retain account records related to the Debt so long as the Debt remains outstanding, or until the Debt is resolved or written off as specified herein.

3.7. Political Subdivision agrees and shall forward all payments received on certified Debt to the Attorney General. In the event that Political Subdivision accepts a debtor's payment on Debt certified to the Attorney General, Political Subdivision agrees to promptly notify the Attorney General of the details of the payment, including date, amount, remitter, check or instrument number and forward the payment to the Attorney General.

3.8. In the event that any debtor owing Debt certified to the Attorney General files bankruptcy or other insolvency proceeding, Political Subdivision shall immediately notify the Attorney General of such filing. The Attorney General shall cease all collection efforts with regard to such Debt. Political Subdivision remains exclusively and solely responsible for protecting its interest in bankruptcy & other insolvency proceedings. Upon notice that Debt certified to the Attorney General is subject to bankruptcy or other insolvency proceeding, the Attorney General shall close the affected accounts and such accounts shall no longer be considered to be certified to the Attorney General. Other insolvency proceeding may include but is not limited to receivership or foreclosure.

IV. ALLOCATION OF FEES AND COLLECTION COSTS

4.1 The client may choose for each account certified to the Attorney General to bear interest (hereinafter "AGI") at the annual rate established by the Tax Commissioner under O.R.C. § 5703.47. Upon recovery AGI is paid to Political Subdivision, not to Attorney General. AGI may be waived, either by Political Subdivision or the Attorney General. Political Subdivision also has discretion to request that AGI not be assessed as an additional obligation of debtors. If this request is indicated, the cost of AGI will not be added to the Debt. Political Subdivision may execute the Service Level Agreement attached hereto as Exhibit "C" to designate the preference of Political Subdivision as to AGI. If no preference is indicated, Attorney General may waive AGI at its discretion, and the addition of AGI to the Debt will increase the debtors' obligation. The AGI is in place of any separate accruing interest of the Political Subdivision on the Debt once certified to the Attorney General.

4.2 Pursuant to O.R.C. § 131.02, the Attorney General is authorized to deduct the Attorney General's collection cost from all amounts collected, calculated upon all certified amounts recovered, plus interest and fees accruing from the date of certification to Attorney General. Attorney General collection costs may be waived, either by the Attorney General or jointly by the Political Subdivision and the Attorney General. The Parties agree that the Attorney General will pass all Attorney General collection costs on to the debtor as an additional obligation of debtor. The Attorney General collection cost is 10% pursuant to O.R.C. § 109.08.

4.3 Upon agreement, the Attorney General may also hire third party vendors to collect claims for Political Subdivision and to pay such third party vendors for their services ("TPV Fees") from funds collected by them. Political Subdivision may execute the Service Level Agreement attached hereto as Exhibit "C" to designate the preference of Political Subdivision with respect to the assignment of Debt to TPVs. If no preference is indicated the Attorney General will assign Debt to TPVs in accordance with an established assignment strategy. TPV fees shall be paid at rates set by the Attorney General. The Parties agree that the Attorney General will pass all TPV Fees on to debtors as an additional obligation of the debtors.

4.4 Upon agreement the Attorney General may appoint special counsel to collect claims for Political Subdivision and to pay such special counsel for their services ("Special Counsel Fees") from funds collected by them. Political Subdivision may execute the Service Level Agreement attached hereto as Exhibit "C" to designate the preference of Political Subdivision with respect to the assignment of Debt to Special Counsel. If no preference is indicated the Attorney General will assign Debt to Special Counsel in accordance with an established assignment strategy. Special Counsel Fees shall be paid at rates set by the Attorney General. The Parties agree that the Attorney General will pass all Special Counsel Fees on to debtors as an additional obligation of the debtors.

4.5 Political Subdivision may execute a different Service Level Agreement for each category of debt certified pursuant to this Agreement, and each Service Level Agreement shall be attached as additional pages of Exhibit "C."

4.6 Political Subdivision may change or terminate the Service Level Agreement(s) attached hereto as Exhibit "C" upon appropriate written notice as specified therein, and any change or termination of the Service Level Agreement(s) shall not be construed as an amendment or termination of this Agreement.

V. DISBURSEMENT PROCESS/PAYMENT OF COLLECTION COSTS

5.1 On a weekly basis the Attorney General shall disburse to the Political Subdivision the full amounts collected on the Debt minus any applicable collection costs or fees as outlined herein. The Political Subdivision and Attorney General shall have the authority to settle or compromise any account in the Debt which is agreed upon by the Political Subdivision and Attorney General as payment in full based on the best interests of the Parties. At the time of the Attorney General's disbursement to the Political Subdivision, the Political Subdivision will receive the amount collected minus the Attorney General's collection costs and any applicable TPV Fees or Special Counsel Fees pursuant to this Agreement.

5.2 The Parties agree that court cases and judgment liens shall not be dismissed or deemed satisfied without the Political Subdivision's consent that all the fees have been paid by the debtor liable for costs under the court case and/or judgment lien.

5.3 Disbursements to the Political Subdivision of amounts due hereunder may be made via state check or by Automated Clearing House ("ACH") deposit, at the Attorney General's discretion. Political Subdivision acknowledges that the Attorney General prefers to remit all payments by ACH deposit, and Political Subdivision agrees to execute an ACH payment authorization in accordance with the form attached hereto as Exhibit "D" within thirty (30) days after the Effective Date of this Agreement.

VI. CERTIFICATION AND CANCELLATION OF DEBT

6.1. Political Subdivision will certify only Debt to the Attorney General which is past due and final, in accordance with O.R.C. § 131.02(A). O.R.C. § 131.02 provides that the Attorney General and Political Subdivision may determine an appropriate time beyond the regular 45-day requirement to certify delinquent debt. Such exceptions may be made as the Attorney General and the Political Subdivision mutually agree are appropriate.

6.2. The Parties acknowledge and agree that O.R.C. §131.02 empowers the Attorney General to, with the consent of the chief officer of an entity reporting a debt, cancel the debt or cause the same to be canceled. O.R.C. § 131.02(F)(2) provides a general statute of limitations of forty (40) years from the date of certification to collect claims. O.R.C. § 131.02(F)(1) allows the Attorney General to cancel uncollectible claims earlier, with the approval of the Political Subdivision. Political Subdivision may execute the Service Level Agreement attached hereto as Exhibit "C" to designate the preference of Political Subdivision. If no preference is indicated, the write off period will be fifteen (15) years after the date of certification. Exceptions revising the write off period for specified claims or categories of debt may be agreed to by the Attorney General and the Political Subdivision as amendments to the Service Level Agreement, and such amendments shall not be construed as an amendment or termination of this Agreement.

VII. CONFIDENTIALITY

7.1. Any confidential debtor information made available to Attorney General in the course of performance of this Agreement shall be used only for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Agreement pursuant to the Attorney General's statutory obligations. Additionally, the Attorney General shall not sell any debtor information to any third parties.

VIII. LIABILITY

8.1. Each Party shall be responsible for its own acts and omissions and those of its officers, employees and agents.

IX. CHOICE OF LAW

9.1. This Agreement is made and entered into in the State of Ohio and shall be governed and construed in accordance with the laws of Ohio. Any legal action or proceeding related to this Agreement shall be brought in Franklin County, Ohio, and the Parties irrevocably consent to jurisdiction and venue in Franklin County, Ohio.

X. COMPLIANCE WITH LAW

10.1. The Parties, in the execution of their respective duties and obligations under this Agreement, agree to comply with all applicable federal, Ohio and local laws, rules, regulations and ordinances.

XI. RELATIONSHIP OF THE PARTIES

11.1. It is fully understood and agreed that a Party's personnel shall not at any time, or for any purpose, be considered as agents, servants, or employees of the other Party.

11.2. Except as expressly provided herein, neither Party shall have the right to bind or obligate the other Party in any manner without the other Party's prior written consent.

XII. MODIFICATION

12.1. This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the Parties, and any changes or modifications to this Agreement shall be made and agreed to by the Parties in writing.

XIII. TERMINATION/EXPIRATION

13.1. Either party may terminate this Agreement for any reason by giving written notice, at least forty-five (45) days in advance of the date of termination, to the other Party via e-mail, facsimile transmission, mail, certified mail or personal delivery to the other Party's signatory to this Agreement.

13.2. If there is pending litigation in connection with any Debt, termination shall not be effective until the Attorney General terminates the legal representation in the litigation matter. The Attorney General shall be compensated for Debt collected and received prior to termination. The Parties agree to cooperate so as to effectuate a speedy and efficient transfer of the work to Political Subdivision.

XIV. SIGNATURES

14.1. The Parties may submit their signatures to the Agreement in counterparts, which taken together will constitute a valid enforceable Agreement. Facsimile or copied signatures shall be considered valid and enforceable.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed, as of the day and year last written below.

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED:

CITY OF ASHLAND, OHIO

_____, 2015
Date
LARRY D PAXTON, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL
MICHAEL DEWINE

By: _____, 2015
Date
Lisa J. Iannotta
Section Chief

**DELINQUENT DEBT COLLECTION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL
AND**

CITY OF ASHLAND, OHIO

EXHIBIT "A"

The Parties agree that the following categories of debt may be certified to the Attorney General. All debt must be final with a minimum principal amount of \$100.00.

Examples of Categories of Debt to be certified:

- (a) Statutory fees as assessed by a Political Subdivision;
- (b) Civil court costs; and
- (c) Criminal court costs so long as the defendant is not incarcerated on the date the debt is certified.
- (d) Debt must be declared final with no chance of appeal or no future changes to the amount of the debt sent to the Attorney General for collection purposes.
- (e) Debt from a school system must be as a result of a contractual agreement.

Examples of Categories of Debt NOT to be certified:

- (a) Debt that is against a juvenile.
- (b) Debt against a presently incarcerated individual.
- (c) Debt that is involved in a bankruptcy, rental or foreclosure action.
- (d) Debt from any type of utility.
- (e) Debt resulting from code enforcement violations.

**PLEASE NOTE: THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO
DECLINE ACCEPTANCE OF ACCOUNTS BASED ON QUANTITY, VALUE, OR DEBT TYPE**

**PLEASE LIST THE TYPE OF DEBTS YOU WILL BE CERTIFYING TO THE
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE:**

MEDICAL DEBT (AMBULANCE BILLS)

**DELINQUENT DEBT COLLECTION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL
AND
CITY OF ASHLAND, OHIO**

EXHIBIT "B"

The Delinquent Debt Collection Agreement Between the Ohio Attorney General and
CITY OF ASHLAND, OHIO , executed by LARRY D PAXTON, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
, on _____, 2015 is hereby ratified and approved.

POLITICAL SUBDIVISION AUTHORITY (I.E. COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, COUNCIL)

_____, _____, 2015
Date

_____, _____, 2015
Date

_____, _____, 2015
Date

POLITICAL SUBDIVISION LEGAL AUTHORITY (I.E. PROSECUTOR, LAW DIRECTOR)

_____, _____, 2015
Date

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have caused this Service Level Agreement to be executed, as of the day and year last written below.

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED:

CITY OF ASHLAND, OHIO

_____, 2015
LARRY D PAXTON, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE Date

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL
MICHAEL DEWINE

By: _____, 2015
Lisa J. Iannotta Date
Section Chief



MIKE DEWINE

★ OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL ★

Collection Enforcement
150 East Gay St., 21st floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215
LGC@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov
614 466-4510

Local Government Debt Collection Business Rules

- **Account Certifications**
 - Made by automated FTP (File Transfer Protocol) or Manual Excel template by the client.
 - The client will need to have internet access to certify accounts to the AGO (Attorney General's Office) and to access the ClientView and Compass software to monitor their payments and accounts.
 - All debt must be final with a minimum principal amount of \$100.00.
 - The AGO reserves the right to decline accounts based on volume, monetary amount or debt type.
- **Examples of Categories of Debt to be certified:**
 - Statutory fees as assessed by a Political Subdivision;
 - Civil court costs; and
 - Criminal court costs so long as the defendant is not incarcerated on the date the debt is certified.
 - Debt must be declared final with no chance of appeal or no future changes to the amount of the debt sent to the Attorney General for collection purposes.
 - Debt from a school system must be as a result of a contractual agreement.
- **Examples of Categories of Debt NOT to be certified:**
 - Debt that is against a juvenile.
 - Debt against a presently incarcerated individual.
 - Debt that is involved in a bankruptcy, rental or foreclosure action.
 - Debt from any type of utility.
 - Debt resulting from code enforcement violations.

- **Life of a Debt**

- Debt will be worked by the AGO in-house local debt collectors up to 150 days or longer if a payment plan has been setup with the debtor and debtor remains in compliance. The AGO will confirm debtor contact information, send out a series of automated collection letters and make a series of collection calls to the debtor. Pursuant to O.R.C. §131.02, the AGO will assess a 10% fee to each account (AG collection fee) and the cost will be passed to the debtor. The 10% AGO fee will be taken from each payment made on an account by the debtor.
- Upon mutual agreement, accounts can be assigned to an external vendor (Third Party Vendor) for additional collection efforts lasting up to 180 days subsequent to the AGO collection efforts. The 180 days may be extended if debtor is on a payment plan and in compliance. In addition to the AGO collection fee, an additional fee would be added to the account for this service and the cost will be passed to the debtor.
- Upon mutual agreement, external private attorneys (Special Counsel) can be assigned the debt for up to two years. In addition to the AGO collection fee, an additional fee would be added to the account for this service and the cost passed to the debtor.
- On any accounts where the debtor's driver's license is being held by a court or there is an active warrant, the AGO will only accept sure funds (money order, certified check etc.) for payment of the debt. The AGO will then notify the client of the payment in full by the debtor.
- If social security numbers of the debtor are provided, the debt may also be subject to a possible state income tax refund capture and/or lottery offset for up to the full amount owed, including interest, subject to O.R.C. §§ 5747.12 and 3770.073. If the debtor owes money to the Ohio Department of Taxation or any state entity, any Ohio tax refund capture or Ohio lottery capture will be paid to those debts first.
- The client may choose on their Memorandum of Understanding to only use the AGO to attempt to intercept their debtors' state income tax refund but not engage in active collection of their accounts. In this case, it will be necessary for the AGO to send out one letter to the debtor upon the certification of the account explaining that we are attempting to take any state income tax refund due them. If the debtor contacts the AGO to make payment in full, the AGO will take the payment and notify the client.
- Local debt will not be combined with any state debt owed for collection purposes.
- The AGO collection process is driven by the AGO account number assigned to that debt. AGO collection letters and collection phone calls are made relative to that specific account number. If a debtor owes debt to multiple local jurisdictions, payment will be accepted according to the account number he/she is responding to as the result an AGO letter or an AGO phone call.
- Clients may request, and the Attorney General may consider, on a case by case basis, alternative collection strategies (i.e. timeframes) on how the client's debt portfolio is collected.
- The AGO will not file liens or judgments or release any previously filed liens or judgments on any debt certified for collections.

- **Archive or Write off of Debts**
 - Client may choose to write off debt by their indication on their Service Level Agreement.
 - Accounts can also be closed and returned to client upon request.

- **Payment Processing and Accounting Issues:**
 - Collections payments to the client will be remitted weekly, via ACH.
 - Clients can view the payment reports that correlate with their weekly ACH payment on the AGO's Compass website.
 - Collections paid with certified funds (i.e. cashier's check, money order) will be paid to the client the following week. Collections paid with a personal check are held eight business days and paid the week following the release of the eight day hold.

- **Direct Payments:**
 - Please make sure that you are referring any debtor wanting to make a payment on an account for which we are collecting to us. The debtors can be instructed to call us at 888-871-8838 or pay by internet at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/business/pay. Their payment can also be mailed to: Ohio Attorney General P.O. Box 89471, Cleveland, Ohio 44101-6471. They will need to include their Attorney General Account number to ensure that the payment is being posted to their account.
 - If on the rare occasion you inadvertently accept a payment on an account we are collecting on, please send the payment the check or money order received from the debtor directly to our accounting section with the account number on it to:

Ohio Attorney General Collections Enforcement
 Accounting Section
 150 East Gay St., 20th Floor
 Columbus, Ohio 43215

- Referring any debtor to us to make a payment helps us keep our records clean and auditable. It will also prevent us from intercepting someone's state income tax refund erroneously, such as when a payment taken by your office has not been noted on our system. If your staff does take a payment from a debtor, kindly let us know immediately and forward the payment to us for processing. If we intercept their state tax refund and issue payment to you causing an overpayment on the account, we will contact you and request that you refund the amount back to the debtor.

- **Reversals**

- Occasionally, there may be payments made to you by our office that need to be reversed. This happens because, after the payment was issued to you, it came to our attention that the debtor's check had non-sufficient funds, there was a posting error or an alleged fraudulent payment. We do hold personal checks for eight days before posting them to an account to allow for this but, occasionally, we are not informed by the bank until after the eight days have passed and you have been sent the payment.
- When a payment made to you needs to be reversed, our system subtracts the amount of the payment to be reversed from the next payment to be made to you. Because our system is automated there is no way to let you know that one of the payments made to you needs to be reversed.
- However, you are able to identify the accounts that have a reversal by viewing your Client View payment report. For example, a payment for an internet personal check will be indicated with the code IPC. A payment for an internet personal check that was reversed will be indicated with the code EIPC. (See Report Section below)

- **Reporting**

- Compass software provides access to electronic reports, documents and scanned images relative to your accounts both in PDF or TXT format.
- Full debt inventory is available at the request of a unit supervisor or manager.
- Monthly archive reports and bi-annual write-off reports are provided upon request.
- All clients will have access to ClientView software to view their account data and notes placed by the collectors.

Please contact Jill Reardon at LGC@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov.
Direct: 614 466-4510.