

**THE GENERAL PROPERTY TAX ACT (EXCERPT)**  
**Act 206 of 1893**

**211.78i Identification of owners of property interest; title search; personal visit to determine occupancy; publication of notice; sources of identification; notice provisions; prohibited assertions if failure to redeem property; noncompliance; “authorized representative” defined; applicability of other requirements.**

Sec. 78i. (1) Not later than May 1 immediately succeeding the forfeiture of property to the county treasurer under section 78g, the foreclosing governmental unit shall initiate a search of records identified in subsection (6) to identify the persons with a property interest in the property entitled to notice under this section of the show cause hearing under section 78j and the foreclosure hearing under section 78k. The foreclosing governmental unit may enter into a contract with 1 or more authorized representatives to perform a title search or may request from 1 or more authorized representatives another title search product to identify the persons with a property interest in the property as required under this subsection or to perform other functions required for the collection of delinquent taxes under this act, including, but not limited to, the administration of sections 78 to 79a.

(2) After conducting the search of records under subsection (1), the foreclosing governmental unit or its authorized representative shall determine the address reasonably calculated to apprise each person with a property interest in a forfeited property of the show cause hearing under section 78j and the foreclosure hearing under section 78k and shall send notice of the show cause hearing under section 78j and the foreclosure hearing under section 78k to those persons, and to a person entitled to notice of the return of delinquent taxes under section 78a(4), by certified mail, return receipt requested, not less than 30 days before the show cause hearing. If after conducting the search of records under subsection (1) the foreclosing governmental unit is unable to determine an address reasonably calculated to inform a person with an interest in a forfeited property, or if the foreclosing governmental unit discovers a deficiency in notice under subsection (4), the following are reasonable steps by the foreclosing governmental unit or its authorized representative to ascertain the address of a person with an interest in property entitled to notice under this section or to ascertain an address necessary to correct the deficiency in notice under subsection (4):

(a) For an individual, a search of the records of the probate court for the county in which the property is located.

(b) For an individual, a search of the qualified voter file established under section 509o of the Michigan election law, 1954 PA 116, MCL 168.509o. A search of the qualified voter file is authorized by this subdivision.

(c) For a partnership, a search of partnership records filed with the county clerk.

(d) For a business entity other than a partnership, a search of business entity records filed with the department of licensing and regulatory affairs.

(3) The foreclosing governmental unit or its authorized representative or authorized agent shall make a personal visit to each property forfeited to the county treasurer under section 78g to ascertain whether or not the property is occupied. If the property appears to be occupied, the foreclosing governmental unit or its authorized representative shall do all of the following:

(a) Attempt to personally serve upon a person occupying the property notice of the show cause hearing under section 78j and the foreclosure hearing under section 78k.

(b) If a person occupying the property is personally served, verbally inform the occupant that the property will be foreclosed and the occupants will be required to vacate unless all forfeited unpaid delinquent taxes, interest, penalties, and fees are paid, of the time within which all forfeited unpaid delinquent taxes, interest, penalties, and fees must be paid, and of agencies or other resources that may be available to assist in avoiding loss of the property interest and any equity associated with the interest in the property.

(c) If the occupant appears to lack the ability to understand the information provided, notify the department of health and human services or provide the occupant with the names and telephone numbers of the agencies that may be able to assist the occupant, or both.

(d) If the foreclosing governmental unit or its authorized representative does not personally meet with the occupant, the foreclosing governmental unit or its authorized representative shall place in a conspicuous location on the property a notice that explains, in plain English, that the property will be foreclosed unless forfeited unpaid delinquent taxes, interest, penalties, and fees owed on the property are paid, the time within which forfeited unpaid delinquent taxes, interest, penalties, and fees must be paid, and the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of agencies or other resources that may be available to assist a person with an interest in the property with avoiding the loss of the property interest and any equity associated with the property interest. The notice must include the internet website address for the legal resource and referral center of the

state bar of Michigan and the toll-free telephone number for the state bar of Michigan's lawyer referral service. The notice also must include an explanation of the right of a person with an interest in the property at the time a judgment of foreclosure of the property is effective under section 78k to claim that person's interest in any remaining proceeds pursuant to section 78t after a sale or transfer of the property under section 78m. If this state is the foreclosing governmental unit within a county, the department of treasury or its authorized representative shall perform the personal visit to each property under this subsection on behalf of this state.

(4) If the foreclosing governmental unit or its authorized representative discovers any deficiency in the provision of notice, the foreclosing governmental unit shall take reasonable steps in good faith to correct that deficiency not later than 30 days before the show cause hearing under section 78j, if possible.

(5) If the foreclosing governmental unit or its authorized representative is unable to ascertain an address reasonably calculated to apprise a person with a property interest entitled to notice under this section, or is unable to notify a person with a property interest under subsection (2), the foreclosing governmental unit shall provide notice by publication as provided in this subsection and section 78s. The notice must be inserted for 2 successive weeks, once each week, in a notice publication circulated in the county in which the property is located. If a notice publication is not circulated in the county in which the property is located, the foreclosing governmental unit shall insert the notice in a notice publication circulated in an adjoining county. In addition to provision of notice in a notice publication, the foreclosing governmental unit may also post the notice under this subsection for not less than 14 days on a website, including, but not limited to, a website maintained by the foreclosing governmental unit.

(6) A person with a property interest is entitled to notice under this section of the show cause hearing under section 78j and the foreclosure hearing under section 78k if that person's interest was identifiable by reference to any of the following sources before the date that the county treasurer records the certificate required under section 78g(2):

(a) Land title records in the office of the county register of deeds.

(b) Tax records in the office of the county treasurer.

(c) Tax records in the office of the local assessor.

(d) Tax records in the office of the local treasurer.

(7) The notice required under subsections (2) and (3) must include all of the following:

(a) The date on which the property was forfeited to the county treasurer.

(b) A statement that the person notified may lose that person's interest in the property and any equity associated with that property interest as a result of the foreclosure proceeding under section 78k.

(c) A legal description or parcel number of the property and, if available, the street address of the property.

(d) The person to whom the notice is addressed.

(e) The total taxes, interest, penalties, and fees due on the property.

(f) The date and time of the show cause hearing under section 78j.

(g) The date and time of the hearing on the petition for foreclosure under section 78k, and a statement that unless the forfeited unpaid delinquent taxes, interest, penalties, and fees are paid on or before the March 31 immediately succeeding the entry of a judgment foreclosing the property under section 78k, or in a contested case within 21 days of the entry of a judgment foreclosing the property under section 78k, the title to the property will vest absolutely in the foreclosing governmental unit and that all existing interests in oil or gas in that property will be extinguished except the following:

(i) The interests of a lessee or an assignee of an interest of a lessee under an oil or gas lease in effect as to that property or any part of that property if the lease was recorded in the office of the register of deeds in the county in which the property is located before the date of filing the petition for foreclosure under section 78h.

(ii) Interests preserved as provided in section 1(3) of 1963 PA 42, MCL 554.291.

(h) An explanation of the person's rights of redemption and notice that the rights of redemption will expire on the March 31 immediately succeeding the entry of a judgment foreclosing the property under section 78k, or in a contested case 21 days after the entry of a judgment foreclosing the property under section 78k.

(i) An explanation of the right of a person with an interest in the property at the time a judgment of foreclosure of the property is effective under section 78k to claim that person's interest in any remaining proceeds pursuant to section 78t after a sale or transfer of the property under section 78m.

(j) The internet website address for the legal resource and referral center of the state bar of Michigan and the toll-free telephone number for the state bar of Michigan's lawyer referral service.

(8) The published notice required under subsection (5) must include all of the following:

(a) A legal description or parcel number of each property.

(b) The street address of each property, if available.

(c) The name of any person entitled to notice under this section who has not been notified under subsection (2) or (3).

- (d) The date and time of the show cause hearing under section 78j.
- (e) The date and time of the hearing on the petition for foreclosure under section 78k.
- (f) A statement that unless all forfeited unpaid delinquent taxes, interest, penalties, and fees are paid on or before the March 31 immediately succeeding the entry of a judgment foreclosing the property under section 78k, or in a contested case within 21 days of the entry of a judgment foreclosing the property under section 78k, the title to the property will vest absolutely in the foreclosing governmental unit and that all existing interests in oil or gas in that property will be extinguished except the following:
  - (i) The interests of a lessee or an assignee of an interest of a lessee under an oil or gas lease in effect as to that property or any part of that property if the lease was recorded in the office of the register of deeds in the county in which the property is located before the date of filing the petition for foreclosure under section 78h.
  - (ii) Interests preserved as provided in section 1(3) of 1963 PA 42, MCL 554.291.
- (g) A statement that a person with an interest in the property may lose that interest and any equity associated with that interest as a result of the foreclosure proceeding under section 78k and that all existing interests in oil or gas in that property will be extinguished except the following:
  - (i) The interests of a lessee or an assignee of an interest of a lessee under an oil or gas lease in effect as to that property or any part of that property if the lease was recorded in the office of the register of deeds in the county in which the property is located before the date of filing the petition for foreclosure under section 78h.
  - (ii) Interests preserved as provided in section 1(3) of 1963 PA 42, MCL 554.291.
- (h) An explanation of the right of a person with an interest in the property at the time a judgment of foreclosure of the property is effective under section 78k to claim that person's interest in any remaining proceeds pursuant to section 78t after a sale or transfer of the property under section 78m.
  - (i) The internet website address for the legal resource and referral center of the state bar of Michigan and the toll-free telephone number for the state bar of Michigan's lawyer referral service.
- (9) A person with a property interest properly served under this section with a notice of the show cause hearing under section 78j and the foreclosure hearing under section 78k that fails to redeem the property as provided under this act shall not assert any of the following:
  - (a) That notice was insufficient or inadequate on the grounds that some other person with a property interest was not also served.
  - (b) That the redemption period provided under this act was extended in any way on the grounds that some other person with a property interest was not also served.
  - (c) That the person did not receive the notice required by law of the show cause hearing under section 78j or the foreclosure hearing under section 78k.
- (10) The failure of the foreclosing governmental unit to comply with any provision of this section does not invalidate any proceeding under this act if the person with a property interest is notified of the show cause hearing under section 78j and the foreclosure hearing under section 78k consistent with the minimum due process required under the state constitution of 1963 and the Constitution of the United States.
- (11) As used in this section, "authorized representative" includes all of the following:
  - (a) A title insurance company or agent licensed to conduct business in this state.
  - (b) An attorney licensed to practice law in this state.
  - (c) A person accredited in land title search procedures by a nationally recognized organization in the field of land title searching.
  - (d) A person with demonstrated experience searching land title records, as determined by the foreclosing governmental unit.
- (12) The provisions of this section relating to notice of the show cause hearing under section 78j and the foreclosure hearing under section 78k are exclusive and exhaustive. Other requirements relating to notice or proof of service under other law, rule, or legal requirement are not applicable to notice and proof of service under this section.

**History:** Add. 1999, Act 123, Eff. Oct. 1, 1999;—Am. 2001, Act 101, Imd. Eff. July 30, 2001;—Am. 2003, Act 263, Imd. Eff. Jan. 5, 2004;—Am. 2006, Act 611, Imd. Eff. Jan. 3, 2007;—Am. 2015, Act 190, Eff. Feb. 14, 2016;—Am. 2020, Act 256, Eff. Jan. 1, 2021.

**Compiler's note:** Enacting sections 1 and 3 of Act 263 of 2003 provide:

"Enacting section 1. Section 78i(12) of the general property tax act, 1893 PA 206, MCL 211.78i, as added by this amendatory act and section 78k(5) of the general property tax act, 1893 PA 206, MCL 211.78k, as amended by this amendatory act are curative and are intended to express the original intent of the legislature concerning the application of 1999 PA 123, section 78i of the general property tax act, 1893 PA 206, MCL 211.78i, as amended by 2001 PA 101 and section 78k of the general property tax act, 1893 PA 206, MCL 211.78k, as amended by 2001 PA 94.

"Enacting section 3. This amendatory act is not intended to and shall not be construed to modify or alter the ruling of the Michigan supreme court in Smith v Cliffs on the Bay Condominium Association, docket no. 111587."

For transfer of certain powers and duties relating to collection of delinquent taxes and forfeiture, foreclosure, and disposition of tax-delinquent or tax-reverted property from department of natural resources to department of treasury by type II transfer, see E.R.O. No.

2004-1, compiled at MCL 211.281.

Enacting section 1 of Act 611 of 2006 provides:

"Enacting section 1. Sections 78i and 78k of the general property tax act, 1893 PA 206, MCL 211.78i and 211.78k, as amended by this amendatory act apply only to property foreclosed by a judgment of foreclosure entered pursuant to section 78k(5) of the general property tax act, 1893 PA 206, MCL 211.78k, after the effective date of this amendatory act."

Enacting section 5 of Act 611 of 2006 provides:

"Enacting section 5. This amendatory act is not intended to and shall not be construed to modify or alter the ruling of the Michigan supreme court in Smith v Cliffs on the Bay Condominium Association, docket no. 111587."

Enacting section 3 of Act 256 of 2020 provides:

"Enacting section 3. This amendatory act is curative and is intended to codify and give full effect to the right of a former holder of a legal interest in property to any remaining proceeds resulting from the foreclosure and sale of the property to satisfy delinquent real property taxes under the general property tax act, 1893 PA 206, MCL 211.1 to 211.155, as recognized by the Michigan supreme court in *Rafaeli, LLC v Oakland County*, docket no. 156849, consistent with the legislative findings and intent under section 78 of the general property tax act, 1893 PA 206, MCL 211.78."

**Popular name:** Act 206