



County of Santa Clara

Policy Name: Managing Unclaimed Money

Page 1 of 7

Policy Type: Administrative

Category: Fiscal and Budget

Policy Name: Managing Unclaimed Money

Policy Owner: Controller-Treasurer Department

Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that individuals and businesses who have valid claims to payments from the County can identify the claim and petition for payment. This policy also provides guidance to County Agencies and Departments on how to process such claims.

Policy Summary

County Agencies and Departments approve payments on a regular basis using warrants. On occasion these payments are not received, cashed, or deposited by the party to whom payment is due. These funds are considered unclaimed money. When warrants go unclaimed by the recipient for over six months, they expire, become void, and are referred to as "stale dated" warrants.

Stale dated County warrants to vendors are posted on the County's website to notify vendors and the public of these warrants. When other types of stale dated County warrants issued through SAP remain unclaimed, and when payments to County customers are returned, County Agencies and Departments make reasonable efforts to reach the rightful owners.



County of Santa Clara

Policy Name: Managing Unclaimed Money

Page 2 of 7

Stale dated County warrants may be reissued in accordance with the applicable conditions and time limitations imposed by this Policy, the Government Code, and County Ordinance Code.

Procedures

Returning and Recording Unclaimed Payments to County Customers

It is the responsibility of County Agencies and Departments to make reasonable efforts to locate the rightful owners for return deposits or overpayments and accurately record unclaimed money. Examples of reasonable efforts include contacting the rightful owner by mail or phone.

If a payment is made due to a refund, or overpayment is sent back to the County Agency or Department issuing the payment, and the rightful owner is identifiable, the County Agency or Department in question shall mail a letter to the rightful owner informing the owner of the unclaimed money and providing instructions for how to claim it.

The County Agency or Department holding the unclaimed money must place the unclaimed money in a designated fund or account in any of the following situations:

- the rightful owner is unable to be identified or located,
- mail sent to the rightful owner is returned due to an invalid address, or
- mail is not returned and no action is taken to claim the unclaimed money within 30 days.

If a designated fund or account is not available, the County Agency or Department shall notify the Controller-Treasurer Department General Accounting Unit [Bank Desk]. The Controller-Treasurer Department General



County of Santa Clara

Policy Name: Managing Unclaimed Money

Page 3 of 7

Accounting Unit [Bank Desk] will then deposit the unclaimed money in Fund 0228 – Controller’s Trust, GLA 2220810.

Stale Dated County Warrants Issued Through SAP

This section of the Policy only applies to warrants issued through SAP by the Controller-Treasurer Department Claims Unit. County Agencies and Departments who issue warrants through their standalone warrant issuance systems must ensure that any notifications and reissuances of stale dated County warrants are in compliance with the statutes applicable to their operations. Such County Agencies and Departments must develop written procedures to be approved by the Controller-Treasurer, or designee, that demonstrate compliance with the applicable laws and appropriate internal controls.

When warrants issued through SAP become stale dated, it is the responsibility of the Controller-Treasurer Department General Accounting Unit [Bank Desk] to accurately record the unclaimed money to the following funds:

- Fund 0228 – Controller-Treasurer Department [Controllers Trust]
- Fund 0203 – Department of Tax and Collections [Victim Restitution Trust]
- Fund 1485 – Department of Tax and Collections [Tax Collectors Trust]
- Fund 0078 – Employee Services Agency [Worker’s Compensation ISF]
- Fund 0309 – Employee Services Agency [Retiree Benefit Trust]

If warrants to vendors in particular become stale dated, it is the responsibility of the Controller-Treasurer Department General Account Unit [Bank Desk] to record the transfer of the unclaimed money to Fund 0228 after the close of each accounting period and to post the warrants monthly on the [County of Santa Clara website](#). Only stale dated County warrants to



County of Santa Clara

Policy Name: Managing Unclaimed Money

Page 4 of 7

vendors, both individuals and companies, are posted on the website. The [Stale Dated County Warrants/Checks](#) search application allows vendors and the public to search for unclaimed money, and the website provides instructions on how a rightful owner of a stale dated warrant can submit a claim. The public can send questions to uncashed.warrants@fin.sccgov.org or contact the Controller-Treasurer Department General Accounting Unit [Bank Desk].

For unclaimed money in Funds 0203, 1485, 0078, and 0309, County Agencies and Departments are responsible for making reasonable efforts to locate the rightful owners.

Reissuing Stale Dated Warrants

It is the responsibility of the Controller-Treasurer Department General Accounting Unit [Bank Desk] to ensure reissuance meets County criteria as set out in this policy and in accordance with Government Code Section 29802.

A warrant will be reissued if the warrant is less than six years old (from the date of the initial issuance); the claimant provides an [Affidavit to Obtain Re-Issuance of Stale Dated Warrant](#) and/or the original warrant, if available; and review of records indicates the warrant was not previously reissued.

Warrants more than six years old will not be reissued under any circumstances. Records relating to warrants are not retained after six years and therefore it is not possible to determine whether a warrant has been reissued.

1. Upon receipt of a request to reissue a stale dated warrant, the **Controller-Treasurer Department General Accounting Unit [Bank Desk]** must take the following actions:



County of Santa Clara

Policy Name: Managing Unclaimed Money

Page 5 of 7

- 1a) Verify in the County's accounting system that the warrant has been voided and noted as stale dated.
 - 1b) Verify that the claim is in accordance with Government Code Section 29802 reissuance criteria.
 - 1c) Notify the Agency or Department that issued the warrant and provide documents received for additional review.
2. Upon notification by the **Controller-Treasurer Department General Accounting Unit [Bank Desk]**, the County Agency or Department that issued the original warrant must take the following actions:
- 2a) Review the request and information submitted.
 - 2b) Validate the information reported and verify that the check has not been reissued in the County's accounting system.
 - 2c) Complete a Stale Dated Warrant Reissuance Request Form signed by an individual with the authority to process AP transactions.
 - 2d) Submit the Stale Dated Warrant Reissuance Request form to the Controller-Treasurer Department General Accounting Unit [Bank Desk].
3. Upon receipt of the Stale Dated Warrant Reissuance Request form, the Controller-Treasurer Department General Accounting Unit [Bank Desk] must take the following actions:
- 3a) Review the Stale Dated Warrant Reissuance Request form.
 - 3b) Process the warrant for reissuance in the County's accounting system.
 - 3c) Record reissuance of the warrant in the Controller-Treasurer Database.
 - 3d) File documents in accordance with document retention procedures.

Definitions



County of Santa Clara

Policy Name: Managing Unclaimed Money

Page 6 of 7

- 1) **"County's accounting system"** means the SAP system or other similar system used by the County as its primary accounting and finance system.
- 2) **"Rightful owner"** means the individual, corporation, or other entity that is the intended transferee of unclaimed money in possession of the County.
- 3) **"Stale dated County warrant"** means a warrant issued by the County that has not been deposited, cashed, or presented for payment within the time limit specified. County warrants usually expire and become void 180 days after their issue date.

Frequently Asked Questions

None.

Related Policies

- Accounts Payable Warrant Cancellation Policy – <https://saecommon.sccgov.org/countypolicy/Accounts-Payable-Warrant-Cancellation.pdf>

Related Forms and Information

- Stale Dated County Warrants – <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/scc/business/stalewarrants/Pages/home.pdf>
- Stale Dated County Warrants / Checks – <https://eservices.sccgov.org/warrantposting>
- Affidavit to Obtain Re-Issuance of Stale-Dated Warrant -



County of Santa Clara

Policy Name: Managing Unclaimed Money

Page 7 of 7

<https://www.sccgov.org/sites/scc/business/stalewarrants/Documents/Stale-Dated-Warrant-Form.pdf>

- Government Code, Section 29802 - http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=29802.&lawCode=GOV

History

| Date | Changes Made |
|------------|--------------------------------|
| 05/23/2019 | Policy Updated. (Kyle Larson) |
| 1/14/2019 | Links Updated. (David Bruno) |
| 8/24/2018 | Policy Uploaded. (Kyle Larson) |
| 8/23/2018 | Policy Adopted. |