

FIXED ASSETS MANAGEMENT OFFICE
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
FOR PARTNER AGENCIES WITH CO-UTILIZATION AGREEMENTS
FOR THE DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS PROPERTY ASSETS

1. **Can I drop off surplus assets at any time during the week?**

No. Deliveries from partner agencies may be made to the Thrift Store on any Tuesday from 8:00-12:00 and 1:00-3:30. Our staff will be available to help you then. This applies to all types of assets; however, the cutoff for delivering motor vehicles is the Tuesday before auction week (in other words, 11 days before the scheduled auction). Whenever you are making a delivery, please call ahead to 561-233-2255.

2. **How do our surplus assets get to the Thrift Store for disposal?**

Transportation—as well as loading and unloading—of surplus items is the responsibility of the partner agency. FAMO staff has forklifts and other equipment available and can help you unload your large items quickly, safely and efficiently.

3. **Can my agency bring anything that we are no longer using to the Thrift Store for disposal?**

No. Most assets owned by your agency are OK, but there are some types of items that are not suitable for disposal through the Store. If you have any doubt whether an item is suitable, contact 561-233-2256. These items will NOT be accepted:

- * Junk (that means broken items that aren't serviceable, and trash of any kind); *
- Inoperative motor vehicles;
- * Inoperative equipment containing hazardous chemicals, including CFCs, PCBs or terphenyls;
- * Equipment containing bio-hazardous waste materials; *
- Machinery leaking fluids of any sort;
- * Automotive tires and batteries;
- * Uninterruptible power supply units;
- * Inoperative or cannibalized computers;
- * Computers with fixed disk drives that have not been “scrubbed” to remove user files;
- * Inoperative computer terminals and similar cathode ray tubes;
- * Equipment used to irradiate by means of x-rays or other penetrating rays, such as building security equipment;
- * Equipment containing mercury switches, but not including operative motor vehicles;
- * Counterfeit branded items, such as watches and jewelry, commonly referred to as “knock-offs;”
- * Firearms;
- * Pornographic materials;
- * Pharmaceutical substances.

4. **How does the Thrift Store get information about my agency's surplus assets for listing on your auctions and for advertising on the Internet and in local newspapers?**

You give us written descriptions on forms we provide you. When you deliver surplus items to the Store for disposal, you will bring along these forms to give us the details

we need to list and publicize your assets. [See question 8 below.] It is important for you to remember that your agency is *solely* responsible for the accuracy and completeness of *all* information about your agency's assets. The Thrift Store assumes no responsibility for the content of information supplied by the partner agency, and does not verify the validity or accuracy of that information. That means that we will not be responsible for any damages, losses, expenses or other injuries incurred by anyone as a result of relying on the information you provide us.

5. **How does the Thrift Store set prices for our surplus assets?**

Pricing happens in two ways: (a) Thrift Store management sets prices based on extensive sales data and our knowledge of the local market; and (b) you may specify the minimum amount you are willing to sell your assets for (with a few limitations). The most common, low-value assets—desks, chairs, cabinets, tables, and about 75 other similar items—have uniform pricing, regardless of which agency owns the items. So, for example, two single pedestal desks sitting side-by-side at the Thrift Store will both be sold for the same price, regardless of where they came from. These common, low-value assets are listed in a report titled, “R-Number Assets” contained in your agency’s *New Partner Packet* and also available for download on the Thrift Store website (see also question 9 below). Thrift Store management frequently revises the prices on this list in response to changing market conditions. *Except* for items on the “R-Number” list, your agency has the option of specifying the minimum price it is willing to accept for an item by including that amount on the authorization form you bring when you deliver your surplus assets to the Store. [See question 8 below.] Setting a minimum price is optional; if you prefer to let Thrift Store management set the price, we will do so based upon extensive, recent auction sales data and our knowledge of the local market.

For motor vehicles (and other auction items), if you set a minimum acceptable price, that amount will become the “reserve price” at auction, and Store management will not award sale of such an item if the highest responsible bid is below that amount.

6. **Does it make good sense to put reserve prices on our auction vehicles?**

That depends on the specific item involved, but it is generally believed throughout the industry that auction lots with *no reserve* prices tend to get higher bids. The reason is that an auction lot with no reserve creates more excitement among bidders because they know that the item will sell to the high bidder, and that drives up the bid amounts.

Conversely, because bidders are not told what the reserve price is, bidders are often less interested because they assume that the reserve is set high. Anything that creates uncertainty or dampens enthusiasm, works to your disadvantage in an auction.

For these reasons, Thrift Store management generally recommends *against* setting reserve prices, and county-owned assets almost never have reserves when they go to auction.

7. **We might want to keep our surplus vehicles here on our own premises, but have the Thrift Store include them in its monthly auctions and then send us our money. Can we do that?**

Absolutely. That’s your choice. If you find it more convenient to keep some or all of your surplus vehicles at your own fleet center until the auction is over, you are

welcome to do so. In that case, there are four things that you must do (that Thrift Store staff otherwise does for you when you bring your vehicles to the Store): (a) you must make arrangements to allow interested bidders to inspect these vehicles at your premises, including holding at least one published viewing time during normal business hours on a day prior to the auction date; (b) you must process vehicle ownership transfer documents to the new owners; (c) you must make arrangements for winning bidders to take possession of the vehicles within 3 government business days after close of the auction; and (d) you must wait for notification from the Thrift Store verifying payment received before turning over possession of the vehicle to the buyer.

8. **What form of authorization is needed to drop off surplus items?**

Every item (or group of identical items, such as a group of 3-drawer file cabinets) being surplus by your agency requires a signed "Request to Transfer Surplus Asset" form (form no. FAMO 2-002). This form *must* accompany your deliveries and be processed by the warehouse attendant before your items can be dropped off. Without this form, your items *cannot* be accepted for disposal through the Thrift Store. Please don't even ask. The reason for this is that this form contains vital information which allows us to track your property in our computer system and keep it separate from all other agencies' items. Without this form, we take no responsibility for your items, and your agency cannot be paid for its merchandise! That also protects your agency, because it gives you an exact record of every asset you have delivered to the Thrift Store, and is useful for doing monthly reconciliations.

For Motor Vehicles—In addition to the form FAMO 2-002, two other documents are required. Every motor vehicle also requires (a) a completed form FAMO 2-010 "Vehicle Processing Checklist." Use this one-page form to describe the vehicle in detail. We use this information to market your vehicle to prospective bidders in a way that will help drive up bid amounts and bring your agency top dollar for its cars, trucks, vans, SUVs, ambulances and fire apparatus; and (b) a photocopy of the vehicle's title issued by the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, showing your agency as the registered owner. Bring these two forms along with each vehicle at the time the vehicle is delivered to the Thrift Store. Also, don't forget to bring the vehicle keys (two sets, if available). If your vehicles are not delivered to the Store, but only listed on an auction conducted by the Store, FAX the forms to us not less than 15 days before the intended auction date. The FAX number to use is: 561-233-2257.

9. **How do we get a supply of forms for transferring surplus to the Thrift Store?**

All of the required forms your agency needs can be downloaded from the Thrift Store Internet website: www.pbcgov.com/fin_mgt/store/index.htm. Scroll to the bottom of the page where you see the Partner Access option and enter the first four letters of your agency code in the data box. Click on the green colored Enter button to go to the partners' restricted page. Find the "Download Forms" menu choice at the top of the screen. Select the form you want and either print it directly from the website or save it to your computer for future use.

10. **For convenience, we'd rather not have to send someone to attend the auctions and sign-over vehicle ownership records to the new owner. Can the Thrift Store take care of that for us?**

Yes. We will process vehicle titles for transfer into the names of new owners on your

behalf, but only for vehicles delivered to the Thrift Store for sale, *not* for vehicles retained in your possession and only listed on an auction conducted by the Store. Before we can provide you this service, your agency must do two things for us: (a) you must supply a letter written on your agency's letterhead stationery, signed by the agency's chief administrator, designating the Palm Beach County Thrift Store to act on your behalf in that regard (this only has to be done the first time); and (b) you must hand-deliver the *original* copy of the title document for every vehicle you deliver to us, signed by an authorized signatory of your agency as the vehicle's seller.

11. **When do we get paid for the stuff we bring to the Thrift Store for disposal?**

Under our interlocal agreement, the Thrift Store will send you monthly reports of activity involving your surplus items, along with payment for all items sold during the preceding month. These reports and payments are normally sent out not later than the 10th day of each month.

12. **My agency's police department also needs to dispose of unclaimed evidence. Can that be done through the Thrift Store?**

Yes. In addition to normal assets owned by the partner, unclaimed evidence seized by law enforcement agencies can be sent to the Thrift Store for sale to the public. The process works just the same way for these items as for normal surplus assets owned by the agency. However, these items must be listed *separately* from assets of the agency when you file your form FAMO 2-002 (see question 8 above). Your agency's portion of the disposal proceeds is sent to you along with other sales revenues each month. **Please Note:** The portion of proceeds from unclaimed evidence that exceeds the cost of disposal is required by Florida Statutes to be held by you for a period of one year and then must be remitted to the state. Contact Angelo DiPierro at 561-355-4408 if you need additional information on how to comply with this state requirement.

13. **What if we bring our surplus items to the Thrift Store for disposal, and then decide to retract one or more of those items. Is that OK?**

Under some circumstances you may do that. You should decide carefully what items to keep and what items to dispose of through the Store. Once you deliver items for disposal, the Store begins to incur costs for handling those items, and the only way to recover those costs is to sell the items. So, until we have at least one chance to sell it, you are not free to retract an item pledged for disposal through the Store. Of course, after the Store has had at least one sale opportunity without selling your assets, you may retrieve any you wish to without paying a penalty.

14. **If my agency has a vehicle in a Thrift Store auction and potential buyers contact us directly to make offers, can we accept such offers?**

No. For the same reason given in question 13 above, this is not permitted. The interlocal agreement between your agency and the Thrift Store includes an "exclusivity" provision which prohibits (a) withdrawing a vehicle or other item; (b) negotiating directly with potential bidders; or (c) selling the vehicle through any other sales method during the auction listing period. Prospective buyers who contact your agency should be directed to the Thrift Store Internet website for information on how to bid on your vehicles (and other auction items).

15. **The interlocal agreement says that my agency will include a link from our Internet website to the Thrift Store's website. What's the reason for doing that?**

There are two reasons. First, it lets interested potential buyers easily find out about your items, and that will help create interest and higher sales prices for your assets. Second, it minimizes phone calls to your agency that take staff time to answer questions that probably have already been answered on the Store's auction site.

16. **Does my agency have to pay for using the Thrift Store to dispose of our surplus assets?**

Yes, but only if and when your items are sold. Whenever any of your agency's assets are sold, the Thrift Store will automatically deduct a small sales commission fee before it sends you the proceeds from that sale. The amount of the sales commission fee depends on the type of asset sold and, in some cases, on the amount it sells for. The current fee schedule is contained in your agency's interlocal agreement with the Thrift Store, and cannot change without your agency first agreeing to the change.

17. **What happens to our surplus assets if the Thrift Store can't sell them?**

Fortunately, this doesn't happen often, but if it does, we will notify you, and your agency is required to retrieve such items within one week of notification. If you do not retrieve the items, the Thrift Store will dispose of them as salvage, and keep any money it makes, or charge your agency any costs incurred for disposal of those items. The same is true for items the Store designates as unsuitable for disposal.

18. **How often do we have to renew our agreement with the Thrift Store?**

The interlocal agreement is open-ended, and continues until either you or we terminate it by sending each other a written 30-day notice. In the fourteen-year history of the program, that has happened only once. If the agreement were ever to be terminated, your agency would retain ownership of any items still located at the Thrift Store, and you would have one week to retrieve anything left over.

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