

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR PROPERTY & EVIDENCE

Property Room Standards

18. AUCTIONS

Most local codes authorize the selling of unclaimed property by auction. Agencies may choose to conduct an in-house public auction, or contract with a private auction company for the disposition of specific categories of unclaimed property. In-house auctions are not recommended due to the personnel expense and storage problems associated with accumulating sufficient items from one jurisdiction. Contract auctioneers are available to take all items subject to auction on a regular basis and sell them at a joint auction or sell them through the Internet. Either way, more people are subject to bid on items at a professional auction resulting in a higher return than an in-house auction. The money returned should not be a Property Room or Police Department issue since the proceeds are almost always required to go to the city's general fund.

Property Officers should thoroughly familiarize themselves with the specific state and local statutes regarding the sale of property. Policy should prohibit any public employees from bidding on auction items. Firearms should never be sold at auction due to potential problems associated with weapons being used in criminal activity. Records of items that are sold at auction need to be kept for a pre-determined retention period.