

July 27, 1998

Re: IO-98-100

You inquired whether county employees would be permitted to bid on property during the county's annual property tax sale auction. I am enclosing for your information a copy of Advisory Opinion 94-101, issued by the ethics commission in 1994. In that opinion, the commission concluded that a county employee could bid on property at the auction if the employee did not work in the Billing and Customer Service Division of the Budget and Finance Department. The reason for this conclusion is that a county employee cannot take advantage of any information acquired on the job, that is not equally and readily accessible to members of the public.

Therefore, unless you have obtained information about any properties as a result of your job duties or contacts in the county, you may bid on a property in the auction. Please review the enclosed opinion for more specific guidelines and call if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Betsy K. Dawson
Executive Director