



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CITY OF CHICAGO ANNOUNCES EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY FINES AND FEES
SUSPENSION AS CHICAGO MOVES TO PHASE THREE OF REOPENING
FRAMEWORK**

City provides opportunity for residents to prepare and come into compliance over one-month period

CHICAGO — Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and City Comptroller Reshma Soni today announced the City's phased approach for ticketing and enforcement to help residents who are continuing to experience financial hardship due to COVID-19. On June 3, the city officially moved into phase three of its 'Protecting Chicago' re-opening framework 'Cautiously Reopen.' On Monday, June 8, the City will resume several services and reopen many of its buildings. Throughout the month, as Chicago begins the process to gradually reopen, the Department of Finance (DOF) will dedicate time to send notices and educate residents about the upcoming dates when the city will resume full enforcement for certain violations that were temporarily suspended due to the COVID outbreak. Beginning July 1, the City will also use a staggered approach to phase in the collection of business taxes that have been deferred, as well as resume regular ticketing and collections.

"Since the beginning of this pandemic, the City has taken every possible step to help ease the financial impact on residents and businesses specifically during the state mandated 'Stay at Home' order," said Mayor Lightfoot. "While the City has moved into phase three, we remain committed to continuing to help residents in the wake of the economic aftermath of COVID-19. For this reason, we will be placing an additional emphasis on educating residents while simultaneously helping to bring people into compliance."

Today's announcement comes after the Lightfoot Administration temporarily suspended many of the City's enforcement activities including debt collection and payment plan defaults on utility bills, compliance and other violations in an effort to provide financial relief to residents experiencing increased financial pressure from the COVID-19 global pandemic.



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During this time, the City only continued ticketing enforcement for public safety and parking meter violations.

“While the City took several steps to help ease the financial burden placed on many residents during this time, we are aware that the economic impact lingers,” said Comptroller Soni. “As the City enters into this phase of its gradual re-opening, we will be continuing the suspension of fines and fees enforcement for one additional month to focus on educating and bringing residents into compliance prior to assessing penalties or defaulting any payment plans.”

The resumption of collection activities will be phased in over the next few months. In addition to posting tax payment due dates online, DOF will be sending notices to taxpayers, utility customers and motorists about the compliance due dates and information about the City’s payment plan options. The temporary suspension of booting will continue.

Key dates include the following:

Beginning June 8

- City Hall Payment Center re-opens.
- The payment center located at 400 W. Superior will continue to operate while the neighborhood payment centers will open in phases throughout June.
- Motorists with unpaid tickets who had not been assessed penalties prior to March 18, 2020 will receive notices informing them of due dates and timelines around penalties.
- Reminder notices will be sent for ticket and utility payment plans.
- Ticketing will continue for public safety violations and for unpaid parking meters.

Beginning July 1

- Late payment penalties will be assessed on past due utility balances.
- Past due payment plans will be defaulted.
- Collection and enforcement activities including booting will continue.
- Residential and municipal utility customers with payment due dates prior to June 30 will not be assessed additional penalties until July 1.
- Ticket enforcement activities will increase citywide including street sweeping violations.

Beginning July 15

- Certain deferred tax payments will become due.



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- Motorists will receive a grace period through July 15 to purchase residential parking permits, city stickers and renew license plates before enforcement begins on July 16.

While the City Hall payment center will reopen in phase three the City will require all residents making physical payments in person to abide by important guidance, including: physically distancing and wearing a face covering; limiting capacity to ≤ 10 persons; and staying at home if you feel ill or have come into contact with someone with COVID-19. Residents are strongly encouraged to utilize other methods to make payments including City kiosks and the online portal.

Chicago is one of the largest cities in the nation to tackle fines and fees reforms this comprehensively. Last year, the Chicago City Council approved the initial fines and fees reform package, the City's first step to ending the harmful enforcement practices that have historically impacted financially challenged communities at disproportionate levels. The proposed policies included input from dozens of advocacy groups and city departments, which were all members of the Fines, Fees & Access Collaborative, formed in December 2018 and led by City Clerk Anna M. Valencia.

Chicago has already provided critical relief to many residents by implementing new practices which has included eliminating City sticker ticket debt for those who can least afford it; reduction of excessive late fees on the City Sticker program; elimination of license suspensions for non-driving violations; launch of a series of new payment plans that expand the options for paying off debt; and new pathways to compliance to help residents who are eligible avoid any number of the devastating consequences of onerous city debt – including water shut offs, tow and impound, and more.

Those who may need assistance with outstanding debt are encouraged to visit New Start Chicago, a source found on the City of Chicago's website that provides information on payment plans, hardship qualifications and other FAQs related to fines and fees reforms. By clicking here, www.Chicago.gov/newstartchicago, residents can sign up for a flexible payment plans for tickets and utility bills with a lower down payment and up to 60 months to repay amounts due. Residents can learn more or make payments online at Chicago.gov/finance.

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