

ARTICLE VI. VEHICLE VIOLATION DEBT RELIEF

SECTION 1. Title. This article shall be known and may be cited as the "Vehicle Violation Debt Relief Ordinance of 2025."

SECTION 2. Definitions. As used in this ordinance:

"Administrator" means the City's Traffic Compliance Administrator.

"Base fine amount" means a fine amount assessed for a violation without including penalties for late payment, administrative or court costs, interest, or other fees associated with the underlying eligible vehicle violation.

"City" means the City of Chicago, Illinois.

"Code" means the Municipal Code of Chicago.

"Collection costs" means the expenses and time incurred by the City or its agents to collect any debt.

"Debtor" means any natural individual, firm, trust, partnership, association, joint venture, corporation, or other legal entity, with an unpaid balance to the City on at least one eligible vehicle violation.

"Debt Relief Period" means the period from April 1, 2025, up to and including July 31, 2025.

"Department" means the Department of Finance of the City.

"Eligible vehicle violation" means a parking, standing, compliance, automated speed enforcement system, or automated traffic law enforcement system violation for which a notice of final determination has been issued and a fine imposed on or before December 31, 2023, by the Department or the Department of Administrative Hearings. The term "eligible vehicle violation" does not include: (1) any violation of Section 9-64-190; or (2) any violation for which the City has commenced a case in a court or administrative proceedings for the collection of the debt.

"Eligible participant" means any debtor to the City: (1) with an unpaid base fine amount associated with an eligible vehicle violation, and (2) who does not own a vehicle that has been impounded by the City that cannot be released during the debt relief period due to an ongoing official investigation or that requires a court order for release.

"Impounded vehicle release fees" means the towing, storage, boot, vehicle immobilization device tampering fee pursuant to Section 9-100-120(h), and returned check fees associated with the release of an impounded vehicle to a debtor otherwise eligible to participate in the program.

"Ineligible fees" means: (1) impounded vehicle release fees in all situations except those associated with eligible vehicle violations in which the impounded vehicle has been disposed of in accordance with applicable law; and (2) base fine amounts or associated additional penalties resulting from a violation of Section 9-64-190.

"Relief-eligible debt" means: (1) additional penalties, fines, interest, and fees associated with an eligible vehicle violation; (2) attorney's fees or collection costs charged pursuant to Section 1-19-020 or Section 1-19-030 associated with an eligible vehicle violation; and (3) outstanding impounded vehicle release fees associated with an eligible vehicle violation in which the impounded vehicle has been disposed of in accordance with applicable law. The term "relief-eligible debt" does not include ineligible fees associated with an eligible vehicle violation.

SECTION 3. Administrative Rules. The Administrator shall establish a debt relief program pursuant to this ordinance. The Administrator may promulgate rules for the proper administration and enforcement of this article.

SECTION 4. Program Requirements:

(a) Only eligible participants shall be permitted to participate in the program under this article.

(b) Eligible participants paying fines for an eligible vehicle violation pursuant to a payment plan under Section 9-100-160 must pay the full base fine amount for any given eligible vehicle violation during the debt relief period, notwithstanding the length of the payment plan, to receive a waiver under subsection (c).

(c) Whenever an eligible participant voluntarily pays the base fine amount for any eligible violation or fee during the debt relief period the Department shall waive all relief-eligible debt for that violation. Ineligible fees shall not be waived.

SECTION 5. Debtor's responsibilities. Relief under this article shall be granted only if all of the applicable relief conditions set forth in this ordinance are satisfied by the debtor. In no event shall any relief granted entitle a debtor to a refund for any amounts paid prior to the debt relief period. It is the debtor's responsibility to identify all relief-eligible debt for which relief is sought.

SECTION 6. Ineligibility due to alleged fraud concerning debt to City. Relief under this program shall not be available to any person who is a party to any criminal investigation or to any civil or criminal litigation which is pending in any circuit court, appellate court or the Supreme Court of the State of Illinois, or the Department of Administrative Hearings, concerning fraudulent conduct in relation to any debt owed to the City.