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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF DEBT COLLECTION, TICKETING AND TOWING PRACTICES TO PROVIDE RELIEF IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

City adopts hold-harmless policies on compliance citations; Residents who owe debt will not face ticket doubling and defaults on payment plans during this health crisis

CHICAGO—Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today announced that the City of Chicago will be temporarily suspending debt collection practices and non-safety related citations and impounds, as well as penalties for late payment. This penalty relief package directs a temporary suspension of late fees and defaults on payment plans, including city tickets, utility bills, parking and red-light citations, booting and other non-public safety related violations. Additionally, there will be no new interest accumulated on current compliance plans.

These measures represent the first steps of the administration's efforts to help reduce the financial impact of COVID-19 on city residents and take effect immediately today through April 30, 2020.

“This is a common sense way that we can help mitigate the burdens and pressures many are feeling. We know that these practices disproportionately impact the residents that are most in need during this crisis,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “We realize that many of our residents are strapped for cash right now as the effort to contain the spread of the coronavirus has created difficult economic circumstances for those who are unable to work. We don’t want to further impact people who can’t afford to pay these penalties today and want to provide some breathing room to help them prioritize how to address their financial obligations.”

Today’s hold harmless announcement also includes the temporary suspension of payment plan defaults and non-safety impounds and an extended deadline for city debt checks on transportation network provider and taxi drivers. Other financial relief efforts include:

- **Ticket Issuance**
 - Enforcement will be prioritized for safety-related violations.



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- Enforcement on compliance-related violations will be suspended until April 30, 2020
- **Parking, Red Light, Speed Camera Violation Collections**
 - Delay assessment of penalty (ticket doubling) until after April 30, 2020
 - Delay driver's license suspension until after April 30, 2020
 - No Booting until after April 30, 2020
 - Delay referral of tickets to collection firms until after April 30, 2020
 - No defaults of payment plans for until after April 30, 2020
- **Utility Bills**
 - Extend due dates until after April 30, 2020 delaying assessment of penalties
 - Delay referrals to collection firms until after April 30, 2020
 - No defaults of payment plans until after April 30, 2020
- **Administrative Hearing Collections**
 - Extend due dates until after April 30, 2020 (this will delay assessment of interest)
 - Delay referrals to collection firms until after April 30, 2020
 - No defaults of payment plans until after April 30, 2020
- **Other Collection Efforts**
 - Extend deadline for TNP and taxi drivers to pay debt to April 30
 - No debt holds on new licenses or permits
 - Law firms and collection agencies will cease collection efforts.

In recent days, several other City government operations have moved into reduced hours or full closure, including: City Hall, Administrative Hearings, Navy Pier and Chicago Public Schools. However, Mayor Lightfoot's administration remains committed to ensuring all vital services and supports will remain in place for residents during this time. Given the rapidly evolving nature of this situation, the City is working diligently to provide timely and transparent updates on changes that pertain to all Chicagoans.

"During this unprecedented crisis, we must challenge old assumptions and empower each and every Chicagoan to take steps necessary to protect themselves, their family, and their community," said Brent Adams, Senior Vice President of



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Policy & Communication at Woodstock Institute. “We applaud Mayor Lightfoot’s bold and decisive leadership, including her decision to address the financial challenges that are impacting low- and moderate-income households.”

Mayor Lightfoot has made addressing the city’s reliance on regressive fines and fees systems a key priority for her administration. Since taking office, the Mayor has worked to tackle the burden of debt that affects thousands of residents a year by enacting long-term initiatives to help residents get out of debt and into economic stability. As the City works to plan for and respond to the impact of COVID-19 on all communities, the Mayor will soon announce additional economic relief measures to relieve the burden the outbreak has placed on businesses, as well as individuals, to help stabilize the health of our local economy.

“We applaud Mayor Lightfoot for pausing unnecessary vehicle ticketing and collections. Especially during a global pandemic that requires social distancing, families should be able to drive and avoid crowded transit, regardless of an expired city sticker or a few outstanding tickets,” said Eric Halvorson, Policy and Communications Associate with the Chicago Jobs Council. “There’s no need to reduce vehicle access through the boot or the impound lot right now. Given the deep financial crisis that many Chicagoans will be facing over the coming months, families should prioritize their health, safety and economic stability over low-level fines and fees.

For more information and updates on COVID-19, tune into CDPH’s “The Doctor Is In” Livestream M-F at 11am, for mobile updates, text COVID19 to 78015 or email: coronavirus@chicago.gov.

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