



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **President Preckwinkle Unveils Economic Relief Package for Cook County Residents and Businesses**

CHICAGO – In an effort to help businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle today announced an expansive series of measures waiving various County fines, fees and deferring tax collections.

“With businesses facing so many challenges and difficulties created by the coronavirus, waiving these fines and fees is the right thing to do,” Preckwinkle said. “It is our hope these measures provide a bit of much-needed relief. Waiving these fines and fees and deferring the County’s tax collection will assist our businesses in terms of cash flow to the tune of \$35M during these difficult times.”

“With so many businesses facing financial adversity caused by the coronavirus, these measures will be helpful to their finances in these challenging circumstances,” said Cook County Chief Financial Officer Ammar Rizki. “The economic impact of COVID-19 will be significant and we must do whatever possible to assist the businesses that serve as the backbone of our local economy.”

Under the relief package, due dates for Home Rule Taxes like the Alcoholic Beverage Tax, Amusement Tax, Tobacco Tax and Gasoline and Hotel Accommodations Tax will be pushed back as will numerous fines and fees under the jurisdictions of the Departments of Transportation and Highways, Environment and Sustainability, Revenue, Building and Zoning and Public Health. The relief measures have the potential to free up \$35 million for Cook County businesses. A full list of the business-friendly efforts is [available here](#).

“This has assuredly been a difficult couple of weeks, but we will rise to this challenge and we will do it as one Cook County,” Preckwinkle said. “From the heroic first responders to residents making protective masks in their own homes to donate to hospitals, it is truly inspiring to see Cook County working together as one to confront this challenge. Each day we are seeing firsthand the grit and grace that makes Cook County so special.”

Preckwinkle is also reminding residents of a new emergency text alert system to keep the public informed with accurate information regarding COVID-19. “AlertCook,” the new Cook County public health and safety messaging service, offers subscribers a direct line of communication to receive updates from Cook County Government related to public health alerts and emergency management. Simply text ‘AlertCook’ to 888-777 to opt-in and receive the latest COVID-19 alerts and information.

“On behalf of our more than 1,000 members and the entire business community, we want to thank Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle for her efforts in providing much-needed relief to our business community during these unprecedented times,” said Jack Lavin, president and CEO, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce. “Employers from industries ranging from restaurants and hotels to retail have been forced to make difficult decisions, which include layoffs and even shutting their doors. By allowing employers to defer tax payments to Cook County, they will have access to additional cash flow needed to overcome the current loss in business and keep people employed.”

For all updates on Cook County’s response to COVID-19, visit <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/service/information-covid-19>.

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