

## **SECOND INSTALLMENT TAX BILLS ARE DUE AUGUST 3 BUT MAY BE PAID WITHOUT PENALTY AS LATE AS OCTOBER 1**

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In late June, the Cook County Treasurer's office mailed second installment property tax bills for tax year 2019. According to Oak Park Township Assessor Ali ElSaffar, the bills indicate that the taxes are due on August 3, but taxpayers can pay them as late as October 1 without having to pay any interest or late fees.

“Ordinarily, property owners who do not pay their taxes on time have to pay interest of 1.5% per month after the due date,” Assessor ElSaffar said. “Since the coronavirus pandemic has caused financial hardship for many taxpayers in Cook County, however, the Cook County Board of Commissioners voted to allow county taxpayers to pay as late as October 1 without having to pay interest.”

The amount due on second installment tax bills equals the total tax due for tax year 2019 less the payment made for the first installment, which was due in March. The first installment bill was an estimate based on last year's bill, and did not reflect the impact of 2019 exemptions or appeals. Exemptions and appeal for tax year 2019 are reflected on second installment bills.

**Can I do anything to reduce my current tax bill?** If you are eligible for a homeowner, senior citizen or other exemption but did not receive one, the Township Assessor's office can assist you in obtaining a revised bill for a smaller amount. If you have received all exemptions for which you are eligible, however, you likely will not be able to do anything about your current bill.

**Can I do anything to reduce future tax bills?** Earlier this year, the Cook County Assessor's office sent out reassessment notices to all Oak Park property owners, which will impact property taxes paid next year. Taxpayers had the right to appeal the values in the reassessment notices, and many did.

The results from the appeals from the county assessor's office have not yet been issued, but when they are, taxpayers will have another opportunity to file an appeal with the Cook County Board of Review. When appeal dates are announced, residents may call Oak Park Township for help in preparing an appeal.

**Details about Paying Taxes.** If money for property taxes is paid into an escrow account with a taxpayer's mortgage company, the financial institution should receive the tax bill electronically, even if the taxpayer also receives a copy of the bill. Assessor ElSaffar advises taxpayers with property tax escrows held by their mortgage companies not to pay property taxes on their own. If they do, an overpayment of property taxes may result.

Property owners who do not have mortgage companies paying their taxes can make tax payments at in-person at Chase Bank, by mail, or online at the Cook County

Treasurer's web site, [www.cookcountytreasurer.com](http://www.cookcountytreasurer.com). Chase branches most convenient to Oak Park residents are located at 800 Madison Street and 1048 Lake Street in Oak Park, and at 630 N. Harlem Avenue in River Forest.

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