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For Immediate Release

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NOTE: THIS IS NOT A LEGAL NOTICE

Norwalk Issues Property Tax Bills and Payment Deadline is April 1, 2021

Norwalk Tax Collector's office shares important information about recently mailed tax bills

(Norwalk, Conn.) - The Norwalk Tax Collector's office released the following information about tax bills, including information on how COVID-19 has affected payment deadlines.

General Information: Most Norwalk taxpayers have until Thursday, April 1, 2021 to pay their second installment property tax bills for real estate, motor vehicle, and business personal property taxes, and sewer use charges, without interest penalty. These bills are due January 1, 2021 and reflect the second installment of charges due on the Grand List of October 1, 2019.

Bills were mailed to Norwalk taxpayers beginning on December 21. In response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the City has extended the grace period for payment of the January 2021 installment, as was done with the July 2020 installment. The State of Connecticut issued the directive allowing the extension on December 16; however, Norwalk tax bills were printed as of December 8, as noted on each bill. As a result, the bills taxpayers receive in the mail do not mention the April 1 extended pay-by date, and indicate payment is due by February 1.

There are two exceptions. First, if real estate taxes are escrowed and paid on the taxpayer's behalf by a bank or mortgage company, the bank or mortgage company is obliged to pay by Monday, February 1, 2021. However, a taxpayer does still have until April 1 to pay any other taxes owed, such as on motor vehicles or personal property. The second exception involves landlords, who must pass along to their tenants similar forbearance, and the failure to do so would be cause for the extended grace period to be revoked. Taxpayers can visit norwalkct.org/taxcollector for more details.

Norwalk City Hall is open by appointment-only, however no appointment is needed to visit the tax payment station inside City Hall. Taxpayers must wear a mask or face covering that covers their nose and mouth, and are required to maintain physical distancing while waiting in line. **Hours are Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Cash is not accepted.** Taxpayers may pay by check, money order, credit card, debit card, or ATM card.

Taxpayers may also pay taxes in person at one of 11 Norwalk bank branch locations of the following banks: Bankwell; M & T Bank; Fairfield County Bank; Patriot National Bank; Webster Bank; and Norwalk Bank and Trust. There is no charge for the service, and the taxpayer does not need to be a customer of the bank to use this service, but they must bring their current tax bill. The banks accept payments through February 1 only. This service is offered subject to the bank branches' own COVID-19 restrictions and directives. **Note that TD Bank branches no longer accept Norwalk property tax payments.**

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Information on the various options for making tax payments is available on the tax collector's home page on the City website at norwalkct.org/taxcollector. Taxpayers may pay in person; by mail; online; or by telephone. Taxpayers may call (203) 318-9523 to pay by telephone using a credit, debit or ATM card, or an electronic check ("E-Check" or ACH payment). Credit, debit, and ATM cards may also be used to pay on line, or in-person at City Hall. The charge for an E-Check is \$0.95. The E-Check is an economical, secure option that eliminates the anxiety and delay of mailing payments. Visit www.invoicecloud.com/cityofnorwalkct to pay online.

Taxpayers who wish to pay by mail may use the response envelope mailed with their tax bill. Payments postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service on or before April 1, 2021 will be considered timely, regardless of when they are received by the Tax Collector's office.

Electronic Bill Pay: Warning about electronic bill payment / telephone bill pay services: Please be careful when using your own banks' bill payment services. These services may not mail your payment when you expect them to. **You assume the risk of your payment arriving late, if you choose to use these services.** These payments come to us without a postmark, and because of this, **payments must be RECEIVED BY OUR OFFICE before the last day to pay** (on or before April 1) in order to be considered timely. Normally, the postmark controls, but if there is no postmark, timeliness depends solely upon our receipt of the payment. **Read the instructions and warnings** provided by your own bank before using any 'pay by phone' or electronic bill payment service. Many service providers advise NOT to use the service for tax or other time sensitive payments. If you use electronic banking services, you are responsible for entering your payment information accurately and completely. Your payment may not be processed if you fail to provide accurate account numbers and other necessary information. If your payment cannot be processed due to your own error or omission, you will be charged a \$20 return transaction fee, as if you had a check returned unpaid.

Motor Vehicle Clearance Information: The Department of Motor Vehicles encourages taxpayers to go online to process transactions. You can verify your tax status and other compliance issues with DMV online, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Access the DMV at ct.gov/dmv/online. Please note that if you pay today by credit card through the City's service portal (Invoice Cloud), either by phone or online, **YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE IMMEDIATE CLEARANCE FOR DMV.**

If you pay through Invoice Cloud today, the City will update your account with your payment information on the following business day. You will then be cleared with DMV the morning of the next business day following that. This means you will not be cleared to register with DMV until **TWO BUSINESS DAYS AFTER** you make payment through the Invoice Cloud service.

Payments made in-person today at the Tax Collector's payment station at City Hall are cleared with DMV overnight. You will be cleared to register with DMV on the following business day. This is the recommended option if time is of the essence to receive vehicle clearance with DMV. If a tax clearance for DMV is needed, please **DO NOT USE** the E-Check option for method of payment. If you choose to use this method, the Tax Collector's Office may not be able to clear you for registration for as long as 30 days, unless you are able to show that the check has cleared your account.

The best way to avoid problems with compliance at the DMV is to pay your motor vehicle taxes on time, before they are late.

Interest on Late Payments: Payments received April 2, 2021 and later will be subject to interest at the rate of 6%, through April 30, 2021. This represents 1.5 % per month for four months (January through April, inclusive), as interest reverts back to the January 1 due date. This rate will remain the same throughout the month of April. Taxpayers who are unsure about what they may owe may look up their taxes at <http://my.norwalkct.org/eTaxbill/>.

Failure to have received a tax bill does NOT exempt a taxpayer from interest charges. Interest is charged on all late payments, with absolutely no exception, in accordance with state law. Please visit norwalkct.org for more information about city services and government, as well as timely and reliable information about COVID-19.