

From the Chief Financial Officer

****IMPORTANT NOTICE-PLEASE READ****

Regional Income Tax Agency (RITA) Individual Income Tax Returns

Dear Residents,

At the end of July RITA mailed out approximately 198 non-filer letters to residential taxpayers that neglected to file a municipal income tax return for our Village. This notice will state what tax years the residents failed to file and provide instructions for filing or optional check boxes for reasons they didn't file (examples: I didn't live in Cuyahoga Hts., I was under 18, I filed a joint return with my spouse).

The Village worked with RITA to waive late fees and penalties from late filers if they are compliant and paid in full as of 12/31/19. The third quarter (September) billings will reflect the waived fees. If anyone receives a bill this quarter the fees will still be showing, however if they call to pay the tax balance the person on the phone will waive the fees due and only accept payments for the actual tax balance due to the village.



Contact Information for the Finance Department

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Questions about your individual **Income Tax** returns? Contact Regional Income Tax Agency (R.I.T.A) 1-800-860-7482

Questions about your **Property Tax**? Contact Cuyahoga County Fiscal Office 216-443-7010

Garfield Heights Municipal Court

The Garfield Heights Municipal Court is extending its Fresh Start program another three months to help people clear their outstanding court cases and get back their driver's licenses. This is for people who have not appeared in court and warrants were issued for their arrest and their licenses were suspended.

Garfield Heights Municipal Court Judge Deborah Nicastro said many people have already taken advantage of the Fresh Start program that began in February. "More than 200 people have cleared up warrants. They've set up a payment plan and got their driver's licenses back," she added.

The process begins with the person paying \$200 to the Clerk of Courts. The person gets an immediate release for their driver's license and a court date is scheduled to set up a payment plan for any balance due. "If the offender has multiple cases, the release is issued for all cases with the payment of \$200 being applied to the oldest case first," Judge Nicastro said.

If the person sticks to the payment plan, they will be considered in compliance and their driver's license will remain valid. There are no additional court proceedings. "Fresh Start has been working well, but we know this program can help many more people and now is the time to do it," Judge Nicastro added.

Because of its success, the program is being expanded to all cases where the person did not appear for sentencing. The person can pay the \$200 which will be held as a bond and the person will be given a sentencing date. But they will receive an immediate release of their driver's licenses.

The extended Fresh Start program runs until October 31st. It pertains to both outstanding criminal and traffic cases in the eight communities served by The Garfield Heights Municipal Court: Garfield Heights, Maple Heights, Brecksville, Cuyahoga Heights, Independence, Newburgh Heights, Valley View and Walton Hills.