

Contra Costa County Tax Collector's Office

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impact on Property Taxes

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

(Updated 4/8/2020)

We understand this is a very stressful time, especially for those suffering direct effects from the coronavirus, and we are committed to helping in any way we can. The following is a list of frequently asked questions we hope will put you at ease concerning the April 10th deadline for the 2nd installment of your 2019/20 Secured property taxes and any other property deadlines affected by the health orders. If you have additional questions, please email us at taxinfo@tax.cccounty.us. We will reply as soon as possible. As a reminder, you can use our website to look up your tax bill, print a copy, see tax payment history and find additional information on property taxes and the various services our office provides to the public.

1. Are property taxes still due April 10?

Answer: Yes. The deadline for the second installment of Secured property taxes is this Friday, April 10, 2020.

Please keep in mind the second installment of Secured property taxes is annually due on February 1st with a grace period ending April 10th. This deadline should not be confused with the Federal and State income tax filing deadlines.

2. Can you extend the April 10, 2020 deadline?

Answer: No. The Tax Collector's Office does not have the authority under State law to extend or postpone the deadline of April 10, 2020 for the second installment of Secured property taxes.

3. The Tax Collector's Office is no longer open to the public, what are my payment options?

Answer: You can pay online, by telephone or by mail. There is no cost for e-Check payments online or by phone. However, for credit/debit card transactions, our card payment processor charges a service fee. Do NOT send cash payment by mail or drop it off at our office. We cannot accept cash payments by mail or dropped off at our office.

4. Can the Tax Collector's Office waive the associated service fees for Credit/Debit card payments?

Answer: No, we cannot waive the service fee for credit/debit card transactions. The fee is charged by our card payment processor to facilitate the transaction. We receive no proceeds from the fee.

5. What if I am unable to make a full payment by April 10, 2020, due to the impact of COVID-19?

Answer: Unfortunately, our office is not able to accept partial payments. A late-payment penalty will be assessed. You may submit a penalty cancellation form at the time you make your full payment. After April 10, the form specifically related to COVID-19 will be available on line, or we can mail you a copy. It will not require penalty included in payment.

6. How late can I request the penalty cancellation for the April 10 installment?

Answer: June 30, 2020, is the latest you can request penalty cancellation waiver due to the impact of COVID-19. Full payment of the April 10 installment amount (without penalty) will be required at the time of request.

7. What type of documentation is required to request the penalty cancellation?

Answer: Any documentation showing a circumstance occurred to you during the Orders of the County Health Officer and California Governor, which was beyond your control, notwithstanding the exercise of ordinary care, and caused you to pay your taxes late.

For example:

- Note from physician or medical staff
- Hospital release form indicating date of admission and release
- Employer notification letter of employment release due to COVID-19
- Employer notification letter of business closing due to COVID-19
- Employer notification letter of reduced hours or the shutting down of operations due to COVID-19
- Other documentation that substantially shows ability to pay was directly impacted by COVID-19

8. Will my property tax amount be reduced due to an economic impact of COVID-19?

Answer: No. Property assessments are established on the lien date of January 1 of each year. The property tax amount currently due for the 2019-2020 Annual Secured Property Taxes has a lien date of January 1, 2019, and therefore, no reduction will be made to your current bill.

Should you have questions related to decline-in-value or business personal property valuations, please contact the Assessor's Office at 925-313-7400 or visit their website. (A Quick Link is available at the bottom of our webpage.)

9. I mailed in my property tax payment. However, your website is not showing my taxes as paid. What should I do?

Answer: Processing times for mailed payments may be delayed due to the current public health concerns. We will process all mailed payments as soon as possible. We appreciate your patience in the meantime.

10. If using the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) or courier services (FedEx, UPS, etc.) to deliver my property tax payment, and County Buildings are closed, how will my payment be received?

Answer: As of this date, we are receiving mail from the USPS and courier services. If circumstances change, we have the ability to cancel penalties for payments that would have been received timely. Reminder, we honor USPS postmarks.

11. I am expecting a property tax refund. Will this refund be delayed by COVID-19?

Answer: State Law requires the Tax Collector to issue refunds within 60 days of the date of initial payment. However, due to the current state of emergency, we may experience unusual delays meeting this timeframe.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE:

Unlike the Federal or State governments which receive income tax revenue from monthly payroll deductions, the County collects the property taxes only twice a year. This revenue is essential for keeping the County, our cities and schools, and other local government agencies running and providing vital services that the public relies on, especially in extraordinary times like these. As the County government continues to help lead the local response to the COVID-19 pandemic, greater demand will be placed on financial resources to cover associated costs. Your support in paying the property taxes on time will make a significant contribution toward our success in battling the spread of the COVID-19 and saving lives!

For the latest information about COVID-19, please visit <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org>.