

Memorandum

To: Clients and Other Interested Taxpayers
From: O'Keefe Lyons & Hynes, LLC
Date: **April 8, 2020**
Re: **Context for Assessor Kaegi's proposal to send assessment notices to all properties in Cook County reflecting the impact of Coronavirus on market value.**

Recently Assessor Kaegi announced his intention to send 2020 assessment notices (affecting taxes payable in 2021) to all properties in Cook County reflecting the impact of Coronavirus on market value. We thought that some context may be helpful in understanding the current state of the 2020 reassessment (for taxes payable in 2021).

Please note that the situation is evolving. Although the Assessor has been prominent in the press this week, he has yet to post anything specific on his official website. Incomplete, inaccurate and inconsistent press reports have raised as many questions as they have answered. We at O'Keefe Lyons & Hynes, LLC, are attempting to piece together available information and apply to it our knowledge of the law and practice of property taxation. We intend to continue to update (and, if need be, correct) information in a timely manner.

Cook County contains 38 townships. They are separated in to "triads" for purposes of triennial reassessment. There are 8 townships in Chicago; 13 townships in the North suburban triad, and 17 townships in the South suburban triad.



Every year, a different triad undergoes triennial reassessment and every property in the triad is sent an assessment notice. In addition, the Assessor reassesses a few, isolated properties in the other triads, e.g., properties experiencing new construction or demolition and PINs newly created via division or consolidation. He proceeds township-by-township through all 38 townships, mailing notices of proposed assessment and accepting appeals over the course of several months.

In the early going of the 2020 reassessment, the Assessor mailed notices to 4 of the 17 South suburban townships (River Forest, Riverside, Oak Park and Palos). He also opened a total of 5 townships in Chicago (Rogers Park) and the North Suburbs (Evanston, Norwood Park, New Trier and Barrington) for appeals. Before the shelter at home order, all 9 of these townships had various deadlines for appeals.

On March 16, the Assessor paused all activity. He stopped mailing notices to the remaining Southern townships and he suspended all appeal deadlines.

On April 3, the Assessor announced that he would start over on the 2020 Triennial Reassessment of the South suburbs; he will mail new notices to the 4 townships which had previously received notices and set new dates for appeals. Subsequently, he will mail notices to all properties in the remaining 13 Southern townships and set dates for appeals.

With respect to the 5 Chicago and North suburban townships, most assessments were established in 2018 and 2019, respectively. The Assessor did not mail 2020 assessment notices except in rare cases of new construction, etc. He set appeal deadlines for those townships and he has apparently replaced the prior appeal deadlines with a new deadline

of May 1. (So far, his website does not contain new deadlines.) Subsequently, he will resume mailing notices to isolated properties in the remaining townships and setting dates for appeals.

After appeals are completed for the Chicago and the North suburban townships, as we understand it, the Assessor will send notices to all properties in those townships (whether or not they filed an appeal) indicating “broad uniform reductions.”

For the time being, we recommend waiting to learn the Assessor’s opinion of the 2020 market value and, in the meanwhile, gathering data for appeal. Once we know the Assessor’s opinion of market value for 2020 and gather several months’ worth of actual data regarding the impact of Coronavirus, we will be poised to appeal the 2020 assessments to the Board of Review.

We will continue to keep you posted regarding new developments.