

From the offices of



Erin Cartwright Weinstein
Clerk of the Circuit Court



Michael G. Nerheim
Lake County State's Attorney

Press Release

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Lake County Amnesty Week Results

(Lake County, IL.) Lake County Circuit Court Clerk Erin Cartwright Weinstein and Lake County State's Attorney Michael Nerheim, once again, offered Lake County residents a break from climbing collection and interest court fees through their annual Amnesty Week that ran from Sept. 28 through Oct. 2.

During Amnesty Week, people with difficulty paying traffic and criminal court case fines and fees received an opportunity to pay the fines without having to cover collection and interest fees that had accumulated over multiple years.

"Court fines and fees are very expensive and failing to pay these fines causes additional hardship for people when they lose their driver's license or find themselves unable to find employment," Cartwright Weinstein said. "This is one way we can step up and help people recover from a difficult time in their life."

Circuit Clerk Cartwright Weinstein and State's Attorney Nerheim have worked together along with the County's collection agency, Harris and Harris to provide the annual Amnesty Week since 2017.

"We are proud to team with the Lake County Circuit Clerk's Office and Harris and Harris to offer this service to Lake County residents," Nerheim said. "This shows the people of Lake County desire to make a change in their lives. Now that people have closed out their traffic and criminal cases, they can move on from the court system."

Statistics show there was an increase of approximately 92% in the number of payments made during the 2020 Amnesty Week. This made the total payments collected during this week \$313,359.41. The total number of cases closed in 2020 rose to 648, a 71% increase. People also made payments on 515 cases.

Throughout amnesty week, Lake County waived \$261,373.91 in interest, while Harris and Harris waived a total of \$313,887.38 in interest and collection fees. The waived fees resulted in a total of \$575,261.29 returned to the pockets of the Lake County residents.

"It is incredible that during such a difficult economic time that we were able to benefit both the Lake County residents and Lake County government," Cartwright Weinstein added. "This is a stream of revenue for both sides."

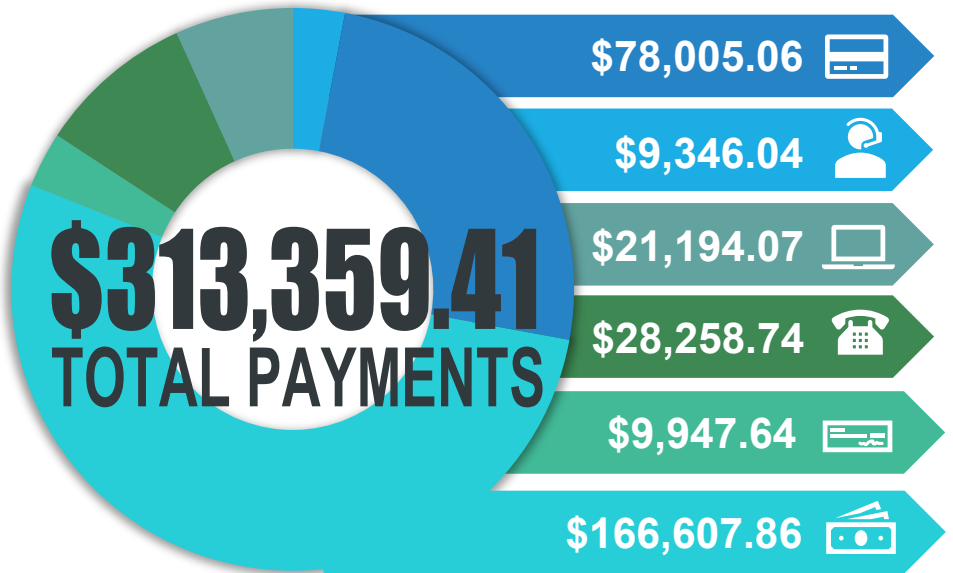
Cartwright Weinstein and Nerheim said they look forward to continuing this practice in years to come. Both offices will post the next Amnesty Week date on their websites and Facebook pages in the spring of 2021.

2020 Lake County AMNESTY WEEK RESULTS

Interest & Collection Fees WAIVED

Lake County Amnesty Week was a joint initiative with Lake County State's Attorney Michael G. Nerheim, which allowed for the removal of collection fees and interest from criminal and traffic cases. Harris and Harris, Lake County's collection agency, agreed to waive collection fees during the initiative, giving individuals the opportunity to pay off their fines and court costs without penalty of the additional fees. The campaign ran from September 28, 2020 through October 2, 2020. With the addition of the online payment option, direct calls, and mailings, this has been our most successful Amnesty Week to date.

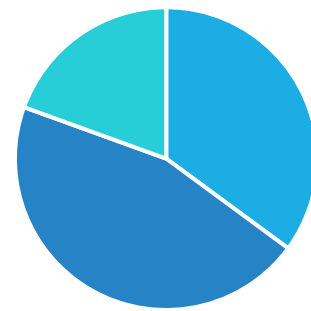
Credit Card > Call Center > Online > Phone > Check > Cash



Number of Cases Paid



WAIVED FEES



H&H Interest
\$112,015.76

Collections
\$201,871.62

County Interest
\$261,373.91

92%

Increase in Payments

71%

Increase in Closed Cases

Changes in 2020:

- Online Payment Options
- Direct Mailings
- Direct Calls

AMNESTY WEEK RESULTS BY YEAR

