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Villanueva Announces Annual Summer Book Club



To emphasize the importance of learning throughout the summer, State Senator Celina Villanueva is hosting a Summer Book Club to encourage students to read and continue their studies

during the summer vacation. "This summer book club is about more than just turning pages — it's about building a love for learning, celebrating our cultures, and giving our kids the tools to dream big," said

Villanueva (D-Chicago). "I want every young person in our community to see themselves in the stories they read and to know their voices matter." The Summer Book Club requires students to read

eight books of their choice during the summer break, record the names of the books on a form, and return the form to Villanueva's office by Aug. 1. Every child

who completes the Summer Book Club will receive a mystery prize from Senator Villanueva. Summer Book Club forms are available for pick up at the district

office, 2501 S. Central Park Ave., or to download at SenatorVillanueva.com. People with questions can reach out to Villanueva's office at 847-672-6201.

Villanueva anuncia el Club de Lectura Anual de Verano

Para enfatizar la importancia del aprendizaje durante el verano, la senadora estatal Celina Villanueva organiza un Club de Lectura de Verano para animar a los estudiantes a leer y continuar sus estudios durante las vacaciones de verano. "Este club de lectura de verano va más allá de simplemente pasar páginas; se trata de fomentar el amor por el aprendizaje, celebrar nuestras culturas y brindarles a nuestros hijos las herramientas para soñar en grande", dijo Villanueva (demócrata por Chicago). "Quiero que cada joven de nuestra comunidad se vea reflejado en las historias que lee y sepa que su voz importa". El Club de Lectura de Verano requiere



que los estudiantes lean ocho libros de su elección durante las vacaciones de verano, anoten los nombres de los libros en un formulario y lo devuelvan a la oficina de Villanueva antes del 1 de agosto. Cada niño que complete el Club de Lectura de Verano recibirá un premio sorpresa de la senadora Villanueva.

Los formularios del Club de Lectura de Verano se pueden recoger en la oficina del distrito, ubicada en 2501 S. Central Park Ave., o descargar en SenatorVillanueva.com. Las personas con preguntas pueden comunicarse con la oficina de Villanueva al 847-672-6201.



Maria Pappas Column

How Technology Changed the Cook County Treasurer's Office



By: Maria Pappas, Cook County Treasurer

When I became Cook County Treasurer in 1998, I walked into an office stuck in the past. Boxes containing \$30,000,000 of uncashed checks lined the floor, collecting dust rather than earning interest. Just four working computers and six typewriters served a staff of hundreds. It was a wake-up call. But I knew I was where I was meant to be. You see, I've always believed in shaking things up—so that's what I set out to do. My first interest was the "lack of interest" those boxes of checks were earning for the county. I immediately implemented a lockbox system to quickly deposit checks. That nearly tripled interest earnings in my first year. Next, we replaced paper-only processes with

a computerized network to handle collections, refunds, deposits, distributions, and more. Automating made deposits instantaneous so interest could accrue in real-time. Those innovations helped boost the bottom line even further allowing me to phase out 5 satellite offices and ultimately reduce the payroll from 250 to about 60. We didn't stop there. We set up our website cookcountytreasurer.com which now serves as a 24/7 portal to office services. Last year alone, the site was visited more than 6.5 million times and since opening it's been visited more than 100 million times. It's where taxpayers can search for unclaimed refunds and check for missing exemptions in over 200 languages, helping ensure equity and inclusion in every neighbor-

hood and town. In 2002, Cook became one of the first counties in the country to offer online property tax payments. We created a system for direct bank transfers that was secure and easy to use. Today, more than 850,000 taxpayers pay online each year. If you pay from your bank account, it's free. In the 2010's we began to allow payments on smart phones and other mobile devices. Since 2017, there have been more than 12 million website visits from mobile users. Also, in 2017 we began offering taxpayers the option to download their bills. More than 7 million tax bills have been electronically downloaded since that functionality was introduced. In 2018 we began offering automatic refunds for overpayments. Since then, we've issued

175,000 refunds totaling more than \$150 million. And we're holding more of your money. Currently, \$122 million in overpayments and more than 33 million in exemption refunds are available from the Treasurer's Office. Log on today to see if you're owed money. I've always believed good government works for the people. That's why, for more than 25 years, I've made it my mission to simplify the tax system, embrace innovation, and give taxpayers user-friendly tools. We collect over \$18 billion in property taxes each year to fund schools, emergency services, and more than 2000 local government units. Those taxes, paid by the owners of nearly 1.8 million Cook County properties, are the fuel that keeps the second largest county in America running. But how we manage that money can—and must—keep evolving. The future of government is digital, transparent, and accessible. As long as I serve as your Treasurer, I aim to keep leading my office in that direction.



New Illinois laws in Effect on July 1, 2025

Several new laws take effect in Illinois on July 1, 2025. Illinois' fiscal year 2026 budget was signed by Governor JB Pritzker mid-June. The \$55 billion spending plan set to take effect July 1 is the largest in state history.

Chicago Minimum Wage Chicago workers making minimum wage are set to get a raise on July 1st. The city's minimum wage will be \$16.60 and the minimum wage for subsidized youth employment programs will be \$16.50.

Gas Tax Hike

Illinois drivers should also expect a jump in gas prices. The gas tax is going up to 48.3 cents per gallon on Tuesday. The new hike gives Illinois the second-highest gas tax rate in the country.

Other Laws Signed by Gov. Pritzker



On Monday, Pritzker took action on multiple bills. The following will be effective July 1, 2025:

SB0028: Amends the School Code. In a provision regarding an optional alternative evaluative dismissal process for teacher evaluations, removes the definition of and references to "student growth components."

SB0852: Eliminates failure-to-appear driver license suspensions for minor traffic offenses that only carry a fine, but allows a failure-to-appear license suspension for traffic offenses punishable by imprisonment or when the incident involved a fatality.

Nuevas Leyes de Illinois Entran en Vigor el 1 de Julio de 2025

Varias leyes nuevas entran en vigor en Illinois el 1 de julio de 2025. El presupuesto de Illinois para el año fiscal 2026 fue firmado por el gobernador J.B. Pritzker a mediados de junio. El plan de gastos de \$55 mil millones, que entrará en vigor el 1 de julio, es el más grande en la historia del estado.

Salario mínimo en Chicago

Los trabajadores de Chicago que ganan el salario mínimo recibirán un aumento el 1 de julio. El salario mínimo de la ciudad será de \$16.60 y el salario mínimo para los programas subsidiados de empleo juvenil será de \$16.50.

Aumento del impuesto a la gasolina

Los conductores de Illinois también deben esperar un aumento en los precios de la gasolina. El impuesto a la gasolina subirá a 48.3 centavos por

galón el martes. El nuevo aumento le da a Illinois la segunda tasa impositiva más alta del país.

Otras leyes firmadas por el gobernador Pritzker

El lunes, Pritzker tomó medidas sobre varios proyectos de ley. Lo siguiente entrará en vigor el 1 de julio de 2025:

SB0028: Modifica el Código Escolar. En una disposición relativa a un proceso opcional de despido evaluativo alternativo para las evaluaciones docentes, se elimina la definición y las referencias a los "componentes de crecimiento estudiantil".

SB0852: Elimina las suspensiones de la licencia de conducir por incomparecencia por infracciones de tránsito menores que solo conllevan una multa, pero permite la suspensión de la licencia por incomparecencia por infracciones de tránsito con pena de prisión o cuando el incidente haya implicado una muerte.

Chicago's NASCAR Chicago Street Race in Grant Park



As residents and visitors make plans to celebrate the fourth of July, the City of Chicago and NASCAR officials finalize preparations for the 2025 NASCAR Chicago Street Race, which takes place Saturday, July 5 and Sunday, July 6 in Grant Park. As Chicago hosts the NASCAR Cup Series

and NASCAR Xfinity Series Street Races for the third year, the Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC) is advising residents, spectators, and motorists to be aware of the street closures, traffic restrictions and additional crowds in the area and to plan accordingly.

Remaining Street Closures

•Thursday, July 3 – Beginning at 12:01 a.m. Full closure of SB DuSable Lake Shore Dr. between Randolph St. and McFetridge Rd. Full closure of Columbus Dr from Monroe St to Jackson Dr. Full closure of Monroe St from Michigan Ave to

Columbus Dr.

•Thursday, July 3 – Beginning at 10 p.m. Full closure of NB DuSable Lake Shore Dr. between Randolph St. and McFetridge Rd. Full Closure of NB and SB Michigan Ave. from Roosevelt Rd. to Jackson Dr. and.

Race Weekend Street Closures – Saturday, July 5 and Sunday, July 6

•SB DuSable Lake Shore Dr. from Randolph St. to McFetridge Dr.
•NB DuSable Lake Shore Dr. from McFetridge Dr. to

Randolph St.

•NB Michigan Ave. from Roosevelt Rd. to Monroe St.

•SB Michigan Ave. from south of Monroe St. to 8th St.

•Monroe St. from Michigan Ave. to DuSable Lake Shore Dr.

•Columbus Dr. from Roosevelt Rd. to Monroe St.

•Roosevelt Rd. from DuSable Lake Shore Dr. to Michigan Ave.

•Jackson Dr. from Michigan Ave. to DuSable Lake Shore Dr.

•Balbo Dr. from Michigan Ave. to DuSable Lake Shore Dr.

•Ida B. Wells Dr. from Michigan Ave. to Columbus Dr.

•Congress Plaza Dr. from Harrison St. to Van Buren St.

•NB Indiana Ave. from Roosevelt Rd. to 13th St.

•Post Place: Entrance and exit of Lower Wacker Dr.

•Garvey Ct.: Entrance and exit of Lower Wacker Dr. For more information on street closures, visit www.chicago.gov.



Cámbiate a la energía eléctrica por el bien del planeta

El sueño de un futuro con un aire más limpio está al alcance de todos. Cambiar a vehículos y equipos eléctricos puede ayudarnos a lograrlo. Y ahora hay más razones para cambiarse: ComEd ofrece reembolsos en cargadores de vehículos eléctricos e instalación.

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Más información

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CDPH Responds to Extreme Heat in Chicago



CDPH reviews the impact of high temperatures on different populations and neighborhoods and analyzes heat-related emergency room visits occurring in the summer months. This report highlights that some population groups and specific zip codes are more highly impacted by heat and humidity than others. This information is valuable for all Chicagoans to prepare for upcoming extreme heat events in

Chicago. CDPH has continued tracking similar data throughout the recent heat advisory alert this past weekend. Early signs indicate that emergency visits were higher among people 65 years and older and residents of the north and northwest sides of the city. Once data collection is complete, additional tips will be shared to help further inform heat preparedness and response efforts this summer. CDPH encourages

residents to learn about the signs of heat-related illness and public health guidance regarding heat preparedness to stay safe during future heat waves. Collaboration continues with Northwestern University Buffett Institute to limit the harmful effects of extreme weather events in Chicago, which includes creating a heat vulnerability index with academic and community partners to identify Chicago communities most at risk from extreme heat.

More FAFSA Supports for Students Secured Due to Cervantes Legislation

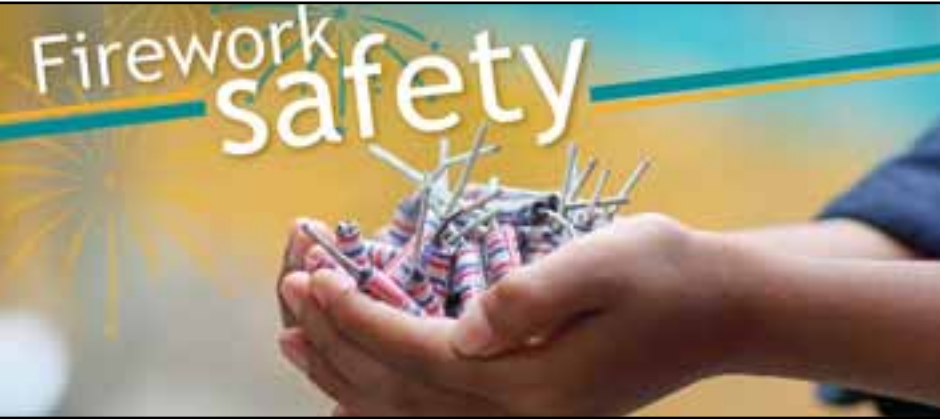


Due to two new laws led in the state legislature by State Senator Javier Cervantes, high school students may soon have access to more supports from their high schools when applying for college and filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, more commonly known as the FAFSA. House Bill 3096 requires high schools to designate a member of their staff to

serve as a point of contact for students on matters concerning the application. This creates clarity on who young people can turn to if they have questions or need assistance with the process. Additionally, House Bill 3097 requires that schools provide time during the school day for students to fill out or ask questions about their financial aid applications. Each school may determine how

they will provide this time, whether it is included in personal finance classes, offered in one-on-one sessions, or focused workshops, but any method would give students more time to work on these important applications and help set them up for future success. House Bills 3096 and 3097 were signed into law on Monday, June 30. They are effective immediately.

Fourth of July Fireworks Safety Tips from the Experts Who Treat Facial Trauma



Independence Day is just around the corner, and for many that means barbecues, family gatherings, and fireworks. While fireworks are festive and fun, they also pose serious safety risks. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, an average of 250 people end up in the emergency room each day in the month surrounding July 4th due to fireworks-related injuries,

many of which are entirely preventable. More than 75 percent of these injuries affect the head, neck, or upper extremities. If you're planning to enjoy fireworks this week, follow these U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's safety tips:
•Leave it to the pros: Attend professional fireworks shows instead of lighting your own.
•Keep children at a safe

distance from all fireworks, including sparklers (which burn at nearly 2,000°F).
•Never re-light or handle duds. Wait 20 minutes, then soak them in water before disposing.
•Always have water nearby, such as a bucket or hose, in case of fire or malfunction.
•Light one firework at a time and back away quickly.

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Chicago Board of Education Approves Resolution Launching Healthy Green Schools Pilot Program

During its June meeting, the Chicago Board of Education (Board) unanimously approved a resolution to launch a Healthy Green Schools Pilot Program that aims to invest in clean energy and building electrification projects across 12 neighborhood schools by fiscal year 2026. The resolution prioritizes student health, fiscal responsibility, and equity—placing Chicago Public Schools (CPS) on a path to becoming a national leader in sustainable, healthy school infrastructure. Aligned with its 2024–2029 Together We Rise Strategic Plan, the District is advancing 21st century learning environments by pursuing consistent public and private capital funding to support facility upgrades, green schools, and renewable energy solutions. Through the pilot, CPS aims to implement clean energy systems such as rooftop solar panels, heat pumps, and geothermal technology at selected schools. These projects are expected to yield long-term cost savings by leveraging available state and federal incentives—including renewable energy credits and direct pay tax credits. What the Resolution Aims to Accomplish



- Launch at least 12 clean energy and electrification

projects in environmental justice communities by fiscal year 2026, focusing on areas most affected by pollution.

- Create a Green Schools Revolving Fund to reinvest energy savings into school health upgrades, such as filtered water fountains, mold and asbestos removal, and better air quality.

- Build career and technical education into all pilot projects, giving CPS students hands-on experience in green construction and clean energy fields.
- Expand collaboration with labor partners to ensure projects use local workers and offer workforce training for CPS students.

El CDPH Responde al Calor Extremo en Chicago



El CDPH revisa el impacto de las altas temperaturas en diferentes poblaciones y vecindarios, y analiza las visitas a urgencias relacionadas con el calor que ocurren durante los meses de verano. Este informe destaca que algunos grupos de población y códigos postales específicos se ven más afectados por el calor y la humedad que otros. Esta información es valiosa para que todos los habitantes de Chicago se preparen para los próximos eventos de calor extremo en la ciudad. El CDPH ha seguido rastreando datos similares durante la reciente alerta de calor del fin de semana pasado. Las primeras señales indican que las visitas a urgencias fueron más frecuentes entre las personas de 65 años o más y los residentes de las zonas norte y noroeste de la ciudad. Una vez que se

complete la recopilación de datos, se compartirán consejos adicionales para ayudar a informar mejor sobre los esfuerzos de preparación y respuesta ante el calor este verano. El CDPH anima a los residentes a informarse sobre los signos de las enfermedades relacionadas con el calor y las directrices de salud pública sobre la preparación para el calor para mantenerse a salvo durante futuras olas de calor. Continúa la colaboración con el Instituto Buffett de la Universidad Northwestern para limitar los efectos nocivos de los fenómenos meteorológicos extremos en Chicago, lo que incluye la creación de un índice de vulnerabilidad al calor con colaboradores académicos y comunitarios para identificar las comunidades de Chicago con mayor riesgo de calor extremo.



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