



STEFAN I. MYCHAJLIW  
ERIE COUNTY COMPTROLLER

January 13, 2021

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Street  
[REDACTED], NY [REDACTED]

Dear Ms. [REDACTED],

First and foremost, thank you for choosing to operate your business in Erie County. This past year has been extremely difficult. On behalf of Erie County government, I apologize on behalf of the Erie County Department of Health for its unfortunate decision to further punish struggling businesses.

Forced COVID closures and restrictions have devastated several industries. Many businesses are closing permanently or barely hanging on. I have publicly advocated for the safe reopening of all businesses. Government should create an environment where you can thrive, not punish you with COVID rules that politicians themselves do not follow. We can protect the elderly and immune compromised without crippling your business and the economy. The two goals are not mutually exclusive.

Back in the spring I used my authority to waive penalties on late payments for hotels that owe Hotel Occupancy Tax. This is just one measure I took to help struggling businesses. Once again, I exercised my authority under the Erie County Charter to help businesses owners hit with punitive COVID-19 fines from the Erie County Department of Health. For your information I have included the specific section of the Erie County Charter that clearly grants me this authority. If you are fined, do not mail in a payment to the Erie County Health Department. Instead, contact my office immediately.

My office is committed to helping – not hurting – businesses. At a time when many of you struggle to pay employees or personal bills, my office will do everything we can to help. Again, if you have been fined by the Erie County Department of Health for a COVID-19 violation, contact my office immediately at 716-858-8400 or preferably by email [comptroller@erie.gov](mailto:comptroller@erie.gov).

Do not send the payment to the Erie County Health Department. Do not pay the COVID related fine. Do not send payment to any address other than: Office of Erie County Comptroller. 95 Franklin, 11th Floor, Buffalo NY, 14202. My office took stringent measures with our banking partner to prohibit their office from making deposits. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stefan", is written over a blue ink stamp of the signature.

Stefan I. Mychajliw, Jr.  
Erie County Comptroller