From: <u>County Attorney Office</u>

To: <u>Pamela Hare</u>; <u>Virginia Bloodworth</u>

Subject: FW: Formal plea for dismissal or reduction of fines

Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 11:46:08 AM

From: Brittany Schick <schick.brittany1@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, July 21, 2025 11:24 AM

To: County Attorney Office <cao@hernandocounty.us> **Subject:** Formal plea for dismissal or reduction of fines

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Dear Board of Hernando County,

My name is Brittany Schick. I am a single mother of twins and a long-time resident of this community. I am writing to respectfully ask for your understanding and assistance regarding fines I received related to a dog named Eve, who was involved in two incidents outside of my control during a very difficult time in my life.

At the time of these events, I was battling Guillain Barre Syndrome, a rare and serious condition that caused me to lose most of my mobility and left me in a wheelchair. I was in and out of the hospital struggling with pain, my mental health and exhaustion. This illness left me unable to work or manage basic daily tasks, let alone handle legal or animal issues clearly.

The dog, Eve, belonged to my mother who left her at my home. I did the best I could given the circumstances, but I was overwhelmed. The dog got out twice. Once by digging under the fence and a second time when one of my children accidentally let her out when they opened the front door. After the first incident, I had someone bury chicken wire under the fence to prevent any future escapes but the second incident was not something I could foresee. Shortly after Eve's second incident, while I was being helped into my vehicle due to my limited mobility, an animal services officer told me I would face a steep fine or I could surrender the dog which I did so promptly. I gave the dog away right then as I was in no position to pay a fine. I was not aware that the fines were required to be paid after surrendering the dog. I was in a state of medical crisis and I had no way of managing paperwork or understanding the legal implications at that time. I have only recently begun working again with hours ranging from 12-29 per week, and still struggle to pay for basic needs. I'd also like to add that I had moved so I did not receive any of the notifications via mail that were intended for me.

I am asking for your compassion. Please consider dropping the fines, or if at the very least reducing them and allowing a reasonable payment spread. I was doing my best to keep things together while going through one of the hardest times of my life. I am happy to provide proof of income if needed.

Sincerely,
Brittany Schick
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