

## HARRIS COUNTY JUSTICE COURTS UNIFORM TRAFFIC NOTICE

This notice is provided by the Justice Courts of Harris County, Texas, to give you further information on options for handling your citation; this is not a substitute for legal advice. Citations for traffic offenses and other Class C misdemeanors are criminal cases in the State of Texas; therefore, you have the right to a trial by jury, to be represented by an attorney of your choice, or to represent yourself. You also have the right to request documents and evidence in your case from the State by following the discovery procedures set out in Article 39.14 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.

If you are convicted of an offense as a result of this citation, the sentence will include a fine and court costs. If you are unable to pay that amount, bring this to the court's attention immediately. The judge can provide you with alternatives to full payment if you are determined to have insufficient resources or income to pay all or part of the fine or costs. For more information, consult an attorney, contact the court, or visit the Justice Courts' website at: [www.jp.hctx.net](http://www.jp.hctx.net).

### OPTIONS IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO APPEAR IN COURT:

#### Pay the Fine on the Justice Courts' Website

Most traffic charges can be paid online by credit or debit card using the Courts' website. *Online payments should be made before the close of business on the appearance date shown on your citation. You may also pay up to 5 days before your scheduled trial date.* For further information, to check eligibility for online payment, or to pay online, go to: [www.jp.hctx.net](http://www.jp.hctx.net).

#### Pay the Fine by Mail or in Person at the Court

*Before the appearance date shown on your citation, mail or bring to the court a signed plea and waiver of jury trial (on the back side of this notice) and payment for the amount of the fine and court costs. For your convenience, the amount due (fine and costs) for more common traffic offenses is shown on the Fine Schedule on the back side of this notice. Payment of the acceptable amount constitutes a finding of guilt in open court, as though you had entered a plea of no contest.*

If paid by mail, fines must be paid by cashier's check or money order payable to the Justice of the Peace. No personal checks are accepted. Please do not mail cash. Please include a copy of your citation and a *signed plea and waiver of jury trial* (on the back side of this notice) with your payment. To request that a receipt for a payment of a fine be mailed to you, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If paid at the court, fines may be paid in cash, by cashier's check or money order payable to the Justice of the Peace, or by credit card.

#### Plead Not Guilty, Request a Trial

If you are pleading not guilty, you may mail or bring to the court your plea of not guilty, and indicate whether you are waiving your right to a jury trial. If you waive your right to a jury trial, your case will be scheduled for a trial before a judge. The court will notify you of your trial date.

#### Request a Driving Safety Course or Motorcycle Operator Training and Safety Program

You may be able to require that your traffic case be dismissed by successfully completing a driving safety course or a motorcycle operator training course. You will lose that right if, on or before your appearance date, you do not provide the court with notice of your request to take the course.

To apply for the course and pay the court costs online, go to: [www.jp.hctx.net](http://www.jp.hctx.net). **Note: do not take the course until you receive an Order from the Court.**

Instructions: With few exceptions, you have the right to complete a driving safety or motorcycle operator training course, as appropriate, if you are charged with an offense involving the operation of a motor vehicle or a motorcycle. You do not have the right to complete a course if you hold a commercial driver's license, or if you held a commercial driver's license when the offense was committed; if you are charged with *passing a school bus, violating a duty to stop and give information*, or if you are charged with a traffic offense committed in a construction and maintenance work zone while workers were present, or if you are charged with speeding 95 miles per hour or more or speeding 25 miles per hour or more over the posted speed limit. You must have a valid **Texas** driver's license or permit, or be a member, or the spouse or dependent child of a member, of the United States military forces serving on active duty. You must provide proof of financial responsibility (vehicle liability insurance). You may not take the course if you are taking the course at the time of this request, or if you have completed a course within the 12 months preceding the date of the offense.

In order to take an approved course, you must elect and request to do so. You may complete the form on the back side of this notice and return it to the court with a copy of your proof of liability insurance or other financial responsibility, and the payment of all courts costs and fees. This request must be received by the court prior to the appearance date shown on your citation.

If you intend to use the mail, you must use certified mail, return receipt requested, postmarked on or before the appearance date on your citation.

**You must pay court costs and fees of \$144.00.**

**Driving Record:** You may order your driving record (Type 3A) through the State Internet portal, at <https://texas.gov/> or by sending an Application for Copy of Driver Record, Form DR-1, to Driver Records Bureau, Texas Department of Public Safety, PO Box 149008, Austin, TX 78714-9008.

#### Specialized Driving Safety Course Dismissal

If you have not completed an approved specialized driving safety course for instruction in the proper use of child passenger safety seat systems and the wearing of seat belts within the 12 months preceding the date of the offense, you may be able to require that your ticket for transporting a child unsecured in a child passenger safety seat system or child unsecured by a safety belt be dismissed by successfully completing such a course. You may request this course in the same way you would request a driving safety course.

#### COURT APPEARANCE REQUIRED:

##### Plead Guilty or No Contest, with Explanation

If you are pleading guilty or no contest, but have any evidence or documents to present in connection with the offense, you must do so in court on your appearance date.

##### Offense for Failure to Maintain Financial Responsibility (No Insurance)

If you received a citation for failure to maintain financial responsibility, you are entitled to have the citation dismissed if you produce in court a vehicle liability insurance policy or other proof of financial responsibility as required by law that was valid at the time of the offense.

**WARNING:** A second or subsequent conviction of an offense under the Texas Motor Vehicle Safety Responsibility Act will result in the suspension of your driver's license and motor vehicle registration unless you file and maintain evidence of financial responsibility with the Department of Public Safety for two years from the date of conviction. The department may waive the requirement to file evidence of financial responsibility if you file satisfactory evidence with the department showing that at the time this citation was issued, the vehicle was covered by a motor vehicle liability insurance policy or that you were otherwise exempt from the requirements to provide evidence of financial responsibility.

##### Offenses relating to Registration, License Plates, Driver's Licenses, and Vehicle Equipment

If before the appearance date shown on your citation, you provide proof that you have remedied the defect, the court may dismiss violations for *improper display of registration insignia; displaying a registration insignia or license plate that is assigned for a period other than in effect; operating a vehicle without two valid license plates; displaying a license plate that is obscured, impaired, or has a device that interferes with the plate's readability; violating a driver's license restriction or endorsement; failure to display a driver's license; or operating a vehicle with defective or without required equipment in an unsafe condition.* If the case is dismissed, you must pay a fine of \$10.00.

##### Offenses relating to Expired Registration, Driver's License, and Disabled Parking Placard

Charges of *expired registration; failure to report change of address or name on a driver's license; or expired driver's license* may be dismissed by the court if you remedy the defect not later than the 20th working day after the date of the offense or before your first court appearance, whichever is later. You must pay an administrative fee of \$10.00 when the charge is dismissed. Charges of *parking with an expired disabled parking placard* will be dismissed by the court if the placard has not been expired for more than 60 days. The court may dismiss the charge if the placard was expired more than 60 days. The defect must be remedied within 20 working days or before your first court appearance, whichever is later, and you must pay a fine of \$10.00 when the charge is dismissed.

#### CHILDREN AND MINORS

##### In-Court Appearance with Parent Required

If you are younger than 17 years of age, the law requires that you appear in court with one or both of your parents or a guardian having legal custody. *You cannot pay the fine online, by mail, or in person at the court before your appearance date. You cannot apply online to take the Driving Safety Course or Motorcycle Operator Training and Safety Program.*

##### Obligation to Provide Current Address

A child and parent are obligated to provide the court with the current address and residence of the child. On or before the 7th day after the date the child or parent changes residence, the court must be notified in writing of the current address. This obligation continues even after the child reaches the age of 17, and only ends on discharge and satisfaction of the judgment or final disposition of the case.

##### Denial of Driver's License

A child who fails to appear or fails to pay a fine assessed may be subject to revocation or denial of issuance of a driver's license.

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OFFENSES INVOLVING FAMILY VIOLENCE:

If you are convicted of a misdemeanor offense involving violence where you are or were a spouse, intimate partner, parent, or guardian of the victim or are or were involved in another, similar relationship with the victim, it may be unlawful for you to possess or purchase a firearm, including a handgun or long gun, or ammunition, pursuant to federal law under 18 U.S.C. Section 922(g)(9) or Section 46.04(b), Texas Penal Code. If you have any questions whether these laws make it illegal for you to possess or purchase a firearm, you should consult an attorney.

**In-Court Appearance Required**

If you are charged with an offense involving family violence, the law requires that you appear in court. You cannot pay the fine online, by mail, or in person at the court before your appearance date.

FAILURE TO APPEAR:

If you fail to take care of the citation prior to the appearance date on the citation (either by paying online, mailing in payment or a plea, or appearing at the window to enter a plea), and fail to appear in court on the appearance date, the court is required to issue a warrant for your arrest. If you are arrested, you may be required to post bail to secure your release from custody and will also be responsible for additional court costs. You may also be charged with an additional offense for violating your promise to appear, a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed \$200.00 and court costs, or for failure to appear, a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed \$500.00 and court costs.

**WARNING:** If you fail to appear in court as required for the prosecution of the offense or if you fail to pay or satisfy a judgment ordering the payment of a fine and costs in the manner ordered by the court, you may be denied renewal of your driver's license. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO PAY AN ADDITIONAL \$10.00 FEE PRIOR TO THE RENEWAL OF YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSE.

Additionally, if you fail to appear in court as required or if you fail to pay or satisfy a judgment ordering the payment of a fine and costs, your case may be referred to collections on or after the 61st day from the missed appearance date or missed payment date. An additional 30% of the amount owed will be added as a collection fee if the case is referred.

Generally, payment of the fine and costs is due within 30 days of the date judgment is entered ordering the payment of a fine and costs. If you fail to pay as required, a \$15.00 fee will be added for paying any part of a fine or cost on or after the 31st day after the date on which a judgment is entered assessing the fine.

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FINE SCHEDULE

| Offense  | Amount Due (Fine + Cost)                     |
|--|--|
| <b>Speeding</b><br>The fine increases by \$5.00 for each additional mile per hour over the speed limit, total fine and cost not to exceed \$325.00 | \$169 for up to 10 mph over the speed limit. |
| <b>Failure to Maintain Financial Responsibility</b>  | \$334.00                                     |
| <b>No Driver's License</b>   | \$179.00                                     |
| <b>Driving While License Invalid</b>   | \$519.00                                     |
| <b>Expired Registration</b>  | \$99.00                                      |
| <b>No Seat Belt - Driver</b>   | \$164.00                                     |
| <b>Failure to Stop at a Designated Point / Stop Sign</b>   | \$244.00                                     |
| <b>Disregard Traffic Control Device</b>  | \$219.00                                     |
| <b>Speeding in a School Zone</b>   | \$244.00                                     |
| <b>Ran Red Light</b>   | \$244.00                                     |
| <b>Failure to Control Speed</b>  | \$229.00                                     |
| <b>Failure to Signal Lane Change, Turn, Parked Position</b>  | \$199.00                                     |

If the violation occurred in a construction zone with workers present, you will need to contact the court for the amount due. Fines and court costs are subject to change. To verify the amounts listed above are still correct, and for all other offenses, contact the court for the amount due or visit the court's web site at:

[www.jp.hctx.net](http://www.jp.hctx.net).

REPLY FORM

**Please enclose a copy of the citation, or provide the following information:**

Defendant: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Citation No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date Issued: \_\_\_\_\_

Offense 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
Offense 2: \_\_\_\_\_

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**FOR PAYMENT OF FINE**

I am satisfied with the information I have received in this case and I am not making a request for discovery. *Discovery* is the process by which the defendant may request evidence related to the case from the State under Article 39.14 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.

I enter a plea of  guilty  no contest, and waive a jury trial, and enclose the scheduled amount due.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Defendant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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**TO PLEAD NOT GUILTY AND REQUEST TRIAL**

I enter a plea of **not guilty** and  
 waive my right to a jury trial, requesting a trial by the court.  
 insist on a jury trial.

I understand that the court will notify me by mail of my trial setting.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Defendant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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**TO REQUEST DRIVING SAFETY COURSE, MOTORCYCLE OPERATOR TRAINING COURSE, OR INSTRUCTION ON USE OF CHILD SAFETY SEAT SYSTEM DISMISSAL**

I am satisfied with the information I have received in this case and I am not making a request for discovery. *Discovery* is the process by which the defendant may request evidence related to the case from the State under Article 39.14 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.

I plead **no contest** to the traffic offense and **waive a trial by jury**.

I elect to take the  Driving Safety Course  Motorcycle Operator Training Course  Use of Child Safety Seat System Instruction

I have a valid Texas driver's license (not a commercial driver's license), or I am a member of the United States military forces on active duty, or I am the spouse or dependent child of the member, and I am not now taking the course in another state, and have not completed such a course in the 12 months preceding the date of the offense.

I am not charged with speeding 95 miles per hour or more, with speeding 25 miles per hour of more over the posted speed limit, with passing a school bus, with failure to stop and give information, or an offense alleged to have been committed in a construction or maintenance work zone with workers present.

I am not now taking the course, and have not completed an approved course within the 12 months preceding the date of the offense.

I have attached proof of financial responsibility as required by the Texas Motor Vehicle Safety Responsibility Act.

I have enclosed fees and costs in the amount of \$144.00.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Defendant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_