

HARRIS COUNTY JUSTICE COURTS UNIFORM TRAFFIC NOTICE

This notice is provided by the Justice of the Peace Courts of Harris County, Texas, to help you to decide how to handle your traffic citation. You have the right to have a trial by a jury and to be represented by an attorney of your choice, or to represent yourself. Traffic offenses, generally, are punishable by a fine of not more than \$200.00.

WARNING: A conviction of an offense under a traffic law of this state or a political subdivision of this state may result in the assessment on your driver's license of a surcharge under the Driver Responsibility Program.

IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO APPEAR IN COURT:

Pay The Fine on the Justice of the Peace Courts' Web Site

Most traffic fines can be paid online by using the Courts' web site. *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, or to pay online, go to: <http://www.jp.hctx.net>

Pay The Fine

Before the appearance date shown on your citation, mail or bring to the court a waiver of jury trial and payment for the amount of the fine shown on the Acceptable Fine Schedule for the offense with which you are charged. Payment of the fine amount constitutes a finding of guilt in open court, as though you had entered a plea of no contest.

If not paid online, fines must be paid in cash, or 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 the citation and a waiver of jury trial with your payment. Fines may be paid by credit card at the court.

To request that a receipt for a payment of a fine be mailed to you, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Not Guilty, Request For 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. The court will notify you of the trial date.

Children And Minors: Appearance with Parent

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 by mail or in person or on the court's web site before your appearance date. You cannot apply online to take the Driving Safety Course or Motorcycle Operator Training and Safety Program.

Driving Safety Course Or Motorcycle Operator Training And Safety Program (Do not take the course until you receive an Order)

You may be able to require that your ticket 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: <http://www.jp.hctx.net>

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, or if you are charged with "passing a school bus," or "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 if you were 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 have proof of financial responsibility (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 below and return it to the Court with a copy of your proof of liability insurance or other financial responsibility, and the payment of all 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 answer date on your citation. You may also apply to take the course online at <http://www.jp.hctx.net>. You must pay court costs and fees of \$115.00.

Driving Record: You may order your driving record through the state Internet portal, at <http://www.state.tx.us/> or by sending an Application for Copy of Driver Record, Form DR-1, to Driver Records Bureau, Texas Department of Public Safety, Box 149246, Austin, TX 78714-9246.

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:

Guilty, 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.

No Insurance

If you received a citation for "no liability insurance" or other financial responsibility, you are entitled to have the citation dismissed if you produce in court an automobile 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 you remedy the defect and for registration or license violations, show that the proper license plates are attached to the vehicle, the court has the discretion to dismiss the violations for "driving without two license plates," "driving without a registration insignia," "driving with a license plate or registration assigned for a registration period other than the registration period in effect," "driving with a license plate that distorts visibility or detectability, or obscures the letters, numbers, name of the state, or color of the license plate," and "failing to carry and show a driver's license," "failing to notify the Department of Public Safety of a change of name or address," "operating a motor vehicle in violation of a restriction or endorsement," or "operating a vehicle that is unsafe, or defectively equipped, or that has prohibited equipment." You must pay an administrative fee of \$10.00.

Expired Registration, Inspection Certificate, Driver's License and Disabled Parking Placard

Charges of "driving with an expired motor vehicle registration" or "driving with an 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 may be required to pay an administrative fee not to exceed \$10 when the charge is dismissed.

Charges of "driving with an expired inspection certificate" or "parking with expired disabled parking placard or specialty plates" will be dismissed by the court if the item has not been expired for more than 60 days. The court may dismiss the charge if the items were 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 an administrative fee not to exceed \$10 when the charge is dismissed.

Failure To Appear

If you fail to pay or to take care of the ticket prior to the appearance date on the citation 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 will 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.

HARRIS COUNTY JUSTICE COURTS UNIFORM TRAFFIC NOTICE

Children And Minors: 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 after the child reaches the age of 17. The obligation ends on discharge and satisfaction of the judgment or final disposition of the case.

Children and Minors: 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.

Discovery: You may request documents and evidence in your case from the State by following the discovery procedures set out in Art. 39.14, Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. ("Discovery" is the process by which the defendant may request evidence related to the case from the State.)

WARNING: Failure to Appear or Pay Fine. 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 \$30 FEE PRIOR TO THE RENEWAL OF YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSE.**

Also, if you fail to pay the fine as required, a \$25 fee will be added for paying any part of a fine on or after the 31st day after the date on which a judgment is entered assessing the fine. An additional 30% of the fine owed will be added as a collection fee if the fine is more than 60 days past due.

WARNING: Offenses Involving 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.

WARNING: Surcharge under Driver Responsibility Program. A conviction of an offense under a traffic law of this state or a political subdivision of this state may result in the assessment on your driver's license of a surcharge under the Driver Responsibility Program. Points and the amounts of additional charges can be found in Chapter 706 of the Texas Transportation Code.

FINE SCHEDULE

Offense	Amount Due (Fine + Cost)
Speeding The fine increases by \$5.00 for each additional mile per hour over the speed limit, total fine and cost not to exceed \$295.00.	\$140 for up to 10 mph over the speed limit.
Failure to Maintain Financial Responsibility	\$325.00
No Driver's License	\$170.00
Driving While License Invalid	\$510.00
No Seat Belt – Driver	\$135.00
Failure to Stop at a Designated Point / Stop Sign	\$170.00
Speeding in a School Zone The fine increases by \$5.00 for each additional mile per hour over the speed limit, total fine and cost not to exceed \$295.00.	\$165 for up to 10 mph over the speed limit.
Ran Red Light	\$170.00
Failure to Control Speed	\$200.00
Failure to Signal Lane Change, Turn, Parked Position	\$170.00

If the violation occurred in a construction zone with workers present, you will need to contact the court for the amount due.

Disclaimer: Fines and court costs are subject to change. To verify that the amounts listed above are still correct, please contact the court or visit the court's web site at: <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: _____

Employer: _____

Address: _____

Driver's License No. _____

Citation No. _____ Date Issued: _____

Offense 1: _____

Offense 2: _____

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 Art. 39.14, Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.)

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

Date _____

Defendant's Signature _____

TO MAKE A PLEA OF 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 _____

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 Art. 39.14, 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, 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 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 25 mph or more over the posted speed limit.
- I am not charged with speeding 95 mph or more.
- I have not completed an approved course within the 12 months preceding the date of the offense, or,
- I have not completed an approved specialized driving safety course for instruction in the proper use of child passenger safety seat systems within the 12 months preceding the date of the offense.
- I have attached proof of financial responsibility as required by Section 1A, Texas Motor Vehicle Safety Responsibility Act.
- I have enclosed fees and costs in the amount of \$115.00.

Date _____

Defendant's Signature _____