

Missed Traffic Court and Now Your License is Suspended?

*A new law makes it easier to get your driver's license back!
To get your driver's license back after missing traffic court,
follow these two steps:*

Step 1: Contact the Court

- The court must end your suspension after you either schedule a new court date *or* appear in court.

Step 2: Reinstate Your license with DDS

- To reinstate, you must pay a \$90-\$100 fee.
- Can't afford your reinstatement fee?
 - ❖ If you go to court, ask the judge to waive this fee.
 - ❖ If the court hasn't waived the fee, complete a DDS fee waiver form (called a "Pauper's Affidavit"). You may qualify for your reinstatement fees to be waived.

For more
information on
how to get your
license back after
missing traffic
court, scan here:



www.GJP.org/DL-suspensions

What to do if you just missed traffic court:

- Call the court clerk **as soon as possible**: If you contact the Court before your license is suspended, the Court may be able to stop your license from being suspended. You can find your court clerk's contact information on your ticket, online, or on your suspension detail report.
- Tell the clerk: "I missed my traffic court date. Please set a new hearing date."
 - If you would like to resolve your case, you can also ask how you can resolve your ticket without appearing in court. If you cannot afford to pay your ticket, tell the court clerk or the judge that you cannot pay and ask if there are any options for you.
 - However, please note you still have the right to take your citation to trial if you would like to fight your ticket.

What to do if your license has already been suspended for missing court:

- **Reach out to** the Court as soon as possible. Contact the court clerk to **reschedule a hearing date** for your citation. You may be instructed to appear in court for a **walk-in hearing** without needing to schedule a new hearing date. You can find the court's contact information online, on your citation, or on your DDS suspension detail report.
- After you call and reschedule a court date or appear in court for a hearing, the court **must** release the hold on your license if this is the first time you've rescheduled or appeared. This release is mandatory for most citations.*
- If you cannot afford a license reinstatement fee (\$90-100), ask the Court to waive it and explain why you can't pay and/or why you missed court. The Court has the power to decide whether to waive this fee.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Getting an automatic release after you reengage the court is **limited to one time per case**. If you miss a court date in your case again, you will not be guaranteed license reinstatement. However, you may still ask the judge to reinstate your license at any point.
- Courts *cannot* make you pay an FTA fee prior to rescheduling you a court date or seeing you for a walk-in hearing. If you reach out to the clerk and the clerk says you must pay an FTA fee to get a new court date, please contact GJP.

*Offenses under O.C.G.A. § 40-5-54, serious traffic offenses listed in O.C.G.A. § 40-6-390 through § 40-6-397, and offenses where a license can be suspended for a first offense are not guaranteed automatic license reinstatement.

What to do after the court reinstates your license:

- You will need to go to the Department of Driver Services (DDS) to get your license back.
- Even if your DDS reinstatement fee isn't waived, you can complete a DDS "pauper's affidavit" form to see if you qualify for DDS to waive your reinstatement fees.
- Confirm that your license is now "Valid" by visiting <https://dds.drives.ga.gov/> or by calling **(404) 657-9300**. **Please be aware you may have other unresolved suspensions**. To learn what you need to do to resolve any other outstanding suspensions, create an online DDS account, visit a DDS center, or call DDS at **(678) 413-8400**.

Questions or difficulties regarding the steps above? Contact Emily Spears, Attorney and Equal Justice Works Fellow: espears@GJP.org (404) 827-0027 ext. 202.