



## **County of Ventura**

### **TRAFFIC TICKETS / INFRACTIONS AMNESTY PROGRAM**

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#### **Reduce Traffic Court Debt & Reinstate Suspended Driver's Licenses**

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#### **What is the amnesty program?**

It is a one-time amnesty program for people who have court debt from unpaid fines on old tickets and for people who had their driver's license suspended due to a missed payment or missed court date. The program will allow people to both reduce their overall amount owed to the court or collections agency, and get their driver's license back immediately.

#### **How long does the program last?**

People can opt into this program between: October 1, 2015 – March 31, 2017.

#### **Do I qualify for a debt reduction?**

If you have unpaid court debt because of a ticket with a due date on or before January 1, 2013 and you are not making any payments on that debt, you will qualify for a reduction and be able to get your driver's license back. Any persons eligible to have a driver's license, including undocumented individuals who are eligible for an AB 60 license, can participate in the traffic amnesty program if they meet the eligibility requirements.

#### **What if I am making payments on a payment plan?**

If you are currently making payments as of October 1, 2013, you will not qualify for a debt reduction. However, you qualify for a license reinstatement if you got a suspension because of a previous missed payment or a missed court date.

#### **What if my ticket's due date was after January 1, 2013?**

You will not qualify for a debt reduction, but you qualify for a license reinstatement if you got a suspension because of a missed payment or a missed court date.

<sup>1</sup> The following content is based on the text of the amnesty law (California Vehicle Code section 42008.8) and preliminary information provided to legal services advocates. It is subject to change as guidelines and local practices are implemented.

#### **Ticket Type/Status Benefit from Program**

People who received tickets with a due date on or before January 1, 2013 and are not making payments on the fines.

- Reduction of overall debt
- Reinstatement of driver's license

People who are currently making payments on their ticket OR the due date on their ticket was after January 1, 2013.

- Reinstatement of driver's license only

#### **Is anyone excluded from amnesty?**

Yes. People who owe victim restitution on any case in the county or who have an outstanding warrant in the county will not be eligible for the program.

#### **What if my ticket was not related to driving?**

You might qualify! Amnesty is available for both traffic and non-traffic infractions—as long as it was handled by the traffic court. In some counties, non-traffic infractions can include quality

of life citations like sleeping on the sidewalk, jaywalking, loitering, or fare evasion. Some misdemeanors may also qualify depending on your county.

**Are any tickets excluded from the program?**

Yes. Parking tickets, reckless driving, DUIs, and other serious offenses will not be included in the program.

**How much will I have to pay?**

Eligible individuals will have their debt reduced by either 50% or 80% depending on their income. Individuals who are low income (receiving public benefits or 125% or below of the Federal Poverty Level) will have their tickets reduced by 80%. All other eligible people will have a 50% reduction.

Qualifying forms of public assistance include Food Stamps, SSI, SSP, Medi-Cal, County Relief/General Assistance, IHSS, CalWORKS or Tribal TANF, or CAPI.

**Even with the reduction, I can't afford to pay that much up front. Is there a payment plan?**

Yes. Your monthly payment amounts will depend on your ability to pay. The court is required to look at your ability to pay when setting up a payment plan. People who are low income will not have to pay anything until they have enough income to start making payments.

**Is there a fee to participate in the amnesty program?**

Courts are permitted to collect a maximum of \$50 for participating in the program. This fee can be added to the overall amount you pay and does not have to be paid up front. The DMV will charge a \$55 fee for reinstating your driver's license, as it does for any license reinstatement.

**How do I participate in the program?**

Beginning October 1, 2015, visit the traffic court where your ticket was handled and tell them you want to participate in the amnesty program.

You can visit: <http://www.courts.ca.gov/trafficamnesty.htm> online for further information.