
Anchorage Traffic Court

Boney Courthouse
303 K Street
Anchorage, AK 99501
264-0713

Answers to some common
questions

Important notice:

This is an informational pamphlet about the Anchorage traffic court. It is not meant to advise you about Alaska law. You should talk to a lawyer about your individual situation. The Alaska Lawyer Referral Service at 272-0352 or 1-800-770-9999 can help you find a lawyer.

How quickly do I have to do something about my traffic ticket?

Within 5 working days of the date you received the ticket **unless** a specific date is listed on the bottom front of your ticket. If a specific date is listed, you must appear on that day and time.

Can all my traffic tickets be handled at the Anchorage traffic court?

No. Only Anchorage State Trooper tickets and those Anchorage Police Department tickets that require a court appearance are handled by the Anchorage Traffic Court.

What are my choices?

If you appear in court, you may plead guilty, not guilty, or nolo contendere (no contest) to the charges on your ticket. If you are charged with an offense which does not require a court appearance (see below), you can plead no contest and handle the entire case by mail if you choose.

Do I have to go to court?

That depends on the charge against you.

If the police officer **did not** list a bail (or fine) amount on your ticket and if he/she checked the “Mandatory Court Appearance” box on the front of your ticket, **you must go to court.** You must go to court within 5 working days of the date you received the ticket **unless** a specific date is listed on the bottom front of your ticket. If a specific date is listed, you must appear in court on the date and time indicated.

If, however,

1. the police officer listed a bail or fine amount on the front of your ticket, **and**
2. you do not want to contest your ticket, **and**
3. you do not want to go to court, **and**
4. you simply want to pay your fine, you should check the **“no contest”** box on the back of your ticket. Then you should pay the “bail” or “fine” amount and the surcharge amount that the officer wrote on the front of the ticket. If a state trooper issued the ticket, you can mail this amount by check or money order to the Traffic Division, 303 K Street, Anchorage, AK, 99501. If an Anchorage police officer issued the ticket, you can mail the check or money order to the Anchorage Police Department, 4501 Elmore Road, Anchorage, AK 99507.

What if I am charged with a vehicle equipment violation?

If the “correctable” box on the front of your ticket is checked, you have three choices. You can:

1. Show the police or trooper proof that you corrected the defect. The officer will then dismiss the citation and notify the court.
2. Appear in court for arraignment, or
3. Mail in your plea (along with the “total due” if you are pleading “no contest”).

If a state trooper issued the ticket, you must show a trooper that you have fixed the equipment problem by the deadline written on the ticket.

If an Anchorage police officer issued the ticket, take your repaired vehicle to the address listed on the citation for inspection. Anchorage Traffic Court does not handle equipment violation tickets issued by Anchorage police officers.

What if I want to fight the ticket?

You must check the “not guilty” box on the back of the ticket. Then send a copy of the ticket (signed by you) to either the Traffic Division (for Trooper tickets) or the Anchorage Police Department (for APD tickets) within 5 working days of the date you received the ticket.

If I am under the age of 18, do I have to bring a parent or legal guardian to court?

Yes.

Can I request a jury trial in traffic court?

No. A judge or magistrate will decide your case in traffic court. You do not have the right to have a jury trial for minor traffic cases. [AS 28.90.010(d)]

What happens if I lose my case at trial?

If you are found guilty, you must pay the fine and the surcharge the judge or magistrate orders.

If you are convicted (found guilty), the number of points for your offense will be entered on your driving record. If you want to know how many points you have or information on license suspensions, contact the Division of Motor Vehicles in person or in writing at 1300 W. Benson Blvd., Ste. 100, Anchorage, Alaska 99503.

What is the surcharge?

The surcharge is an additional penalty set by statute. The surcharge money is used for training peace officers.

What if I want to appeal the judge’s decision?

You must file a written Notice of Appeal at the Appeals Counter in the Nesbett Courthouse (825 West 4th Avenue) within 30 days from the date the judge or magistrate made the decision in your case. You can get a copy of the following booklet about this at the Customer Service counter in the Nesbett Courthouse: **Appellant Instructions – District Court to Superior Court Appeals** (AP-200).

What if I do not respond?

If you fail to respond within the time limit written on the front of your ticket a default judgment will be entered against you for the maximum penalty permitted by law **plus** \$50 in court and collection costs **plus** any surcharge required by statute. **Efforts to collect this judgment will include attachment of your Permanent Fund Dividend.** In addition, if your offense involves a moving motor vehicle, points will be assessed against your driver’s license.

For more information about this publication, please call the
Alaska Court System Administrative Office at
(907) 264-8240
820 West Fourth Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501