



# First Judicial District of Pennsylvania PHILADELPHIA TRAFFIC COURT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[HTTP://courts.phila.gov](http://courts.phila.gov)

## NEWS RELEASE

---

**CONTACT PERSON:**

**Dominic J. Rossi, Esquire**

Deputy Court Administrator, Legal Services

First Judicial District of Pennsylvania

(215) 686-3745

**Traffic Court Launches Crackdown on Scofflaws -  
Initiative aimed at making streets safer**

*Arrest of Defendants, and service of "72 Hour Arrest Notice";  
Immobilization and Impoundment of Motor Vehicles  
Credit Bureau Reporting*

Philadelphia, PA, December 6, 2004 -- Philadelphia Traffic Court President Judge Francis E. Kelly today announced a major initiative to crackdown on defendants and scofflaws who have failed to respond to traffic citations or owe Traffic fines and costs. As part of the effort, aimed at protecting the public's safety, Traffic Court is implementing a three-prong initiative: immobilization and impoundment of motor vehicles; the arrest of, or service of "72 Hour Arrest Notices" on, non-compliant defendants; and reporting defendants who are delinquent in the payment of court fines and costs to Credit Bureaus.

"The Court will no longer stand by as scofflaws and non-compliant defendants flaunt the laws of the City of Philadelphia and this Commonwealth," said Traffic Court Deputy Court Administrator Robert DeEmilio, who joined President Judge Kelly in today's announcement "We're placing people on notice today: If you have failed to respond to

traffic citations or have been found guilty of committing moving violations and owe fines and costs to the Traffic Court, you will face the consequences of your actions. Traffic Court will do its part to help protect the public."

Philadelphia Traffic Court will continue to work with the Philadelphia Parking Authority to immobilize and seize vehicles operated by those whose driving privileges have been suspended or revoked and have not responded to the court, regardless of whether these vehicles are owned by them. During this crackdown, Traffic Court and the Parking Authority personnel will extend their enforcement hours to ensure that vehicles eligible to be impounded will be seized at any time during the day and night, regardless of where they are located, including residential areas.

"The Court will increase its crackdown on drivers who should not be operating motor vehicles in the streets of the City of Philadelphia and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - even if that means towing or immobilizing their vehicles in the middle of the night," said DeEmilio. "It would be irresponsible for the Court to allow these drivers to continue to drive and jeopardize the safety of other Philadelphia residents."

The Traffic Court is empowered to issue **arrest warrants** for violators who have failed to respond to traffic citations ("moving violations") by pleading GUILTY or NOT GUILTY, or who been found guilty of committing traffic offenses and have failed to pay court-ordered fines and costs.

"At this very moment," Judge Kelly said, "Philadelphia Traffic Court is serving '72 Hour Arrest Notices'. Individuals who fail to respond within that time period will face arrest by the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania's Warrant Unit, either at their residence or their place of work. Upon arrest, violators will be brought before a Traffic Court Judge and may be incarcerated." Deputy Court Administrator DeEmilio added, "We mean business. We are very serious about using every tool available to enforce the law. People need to understand that they can and will be arrested."

"As part of this effort, and to ensure compliance with orders of the Traffic Court, we will be providing Credit Bureaus with adverse financial information about those defendants who have failed to pay their fines and costs. Individuals who have failed to pay fines and costs will find their credit scores may be impacted. And that could limit their ability to obtain loans or mortgages," said Kelly.