



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

(215)686-3745

Philadelphia Traffic Court to Launch Major Initiative to Clear Backlog of Unpaid Fines

Court Will Enforce Arrest Warrants; Individuals Have Reprieve Until End of July

Philadelphia, PA, June 26, 2003: Philadelphia Traffic Court President Judge Francis E. Kelly today announced a major initiative designed to allow Defendants who have failed to respond to traffic citations or owe Traffic fines and costs, and who are thus subject to being **arrested** by law enforcement officers, an opportunity to respond to their citations or to make arrangements to pay outstanding fines and costs to the Traffic Court and avoid arrest.

The **Traffic Court** is empowered to issue **arrest warrants** for the arrest of violators who have failed to respond to traffic citations (“moving violations”) by not pleading **GUILTY**

or **NOT GUILTY** after a traffic citation is issued to them, or who been found guilty of committing traffic offenses and have failed to pay court-ordered fines and costs.

“More than 49,085 drivers, and trucking companies, have either failed to respond to traffic citations or have been found guilty of committing moving violations and owe fines and costs to the Traffic Court,” reported President Judge Kelly. These violators account for \$96,951,066.39 in fines and costs.

“During the month of **July**,” announced President Judge Kelly, “violators who have failed to acknowledge their citations or owe fines and costs to the Philadelphia Traffic Court will be asked to come to the Traffic Court, located at 800 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia, PA, Mondays through Fridays, between 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM, and on Wednesdays until 6:00 PM. Payment arrangements will be made at that time, or the Court will schedule a hearing for a later date.”

President Judge Kelly emphasized that violators with outstanding Traffic Court arrest warrants will **NOT** be arrested when they appear at the Traffic Court during the month of July. “However,” he said, “those violators who do not take advantage of this opportunity to address their outstanding citations, and satisfy their obligation and pay the outstanding fines and costs will be subject to arrest beginning on Monday, August 4, 2003.”

On August 4, 2003, arrest warrants will be issued for those violators who owe Traffic Court fines and costs and have not paid or made arrangements to pay the outstanding fines and costs, as well as for those violators who have ignored their traffic citations. As President Judge Kelly stated, “those who choose to not pay or present themselves will find that the Court is serious about using every tool available to execute these arrest warrants.”

Beginning this week, the Traffic Court is mailing notices to 49,085 drivers who have ignored their citations or owe fines and costs informing them about this opportunity to avoid being arrested on outstanding arrest warrants. President Judge Kelly suggested that every violator who owes Traffic Court fines and costs ought to appear at the Traffic Court during the month of July regardless of whether they receive a notice. “Beginning on August 4,” he cautioned, “we will issue an arrest warrant, and, if you have ignored your traffic citations or owe Traffic Court fines and costs, you **will** be arrested.”