

STATE OF NEW YORK

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2019-2020 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

May 6, 2019

Introduced by M. of A. HUNTER, SAYEGH, DARLING, D'URSO, CRUZ, TAYLOR, GOTTFRIED, SIMON, EPSTEIN, NIOU, JEAN-PIERRE, BLAKE, BARRON, JAFFEE, SEAWRIGHT, GLICK, FRONTUS, WEPRIN, BRONSON, MAGNARELLI, ZEBROWSKI, STECK, FAHY, PERRY, MOSLEY, O'DONNELL, EICHENSTEIN, DICKENS, RODRIGUEZ, WILLIAMS, ARROYO, COLTON, WALCZYK, HYNDMAN -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. COOK, DE LA ROSA, LENTOL -- read once and referred to the Committee on Transportation -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee -- reference changed to the Committee on Codes -- recommitted to the Committee on Codes in accordance with Assembly Rule 3, sec. 2 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the vehicle and traffic law, in relation to the suspension of a license to drive a motor vehicle or motorcycle

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Subdivision 3 of section 226 of the vehicle and traffic
2 law, as amended by chapter 607 of the laws of 1993, paragraph (a) as
3 amended by section 6 of part J of chapter 62 of the laws of 2003 and
4 paragraph (b) as amended by section 2 of part K of chapter 59 of the
5 laws of 2010, is amended to read as follows:
6 3. Failure to answer or appear; entry of order. (a) If the person
7 charged with the violation shall fail to answer the summons as provided
8 herein involving a violation of section three hundred eighty-five of
9 this chapter, the commissioner may suspend such person's license or
10 driving privilege or, if the charge involves a violation of section
11 three hundred eighty-five [~~section four hundred one or section five~~
12 ~~hundred eleven-a~~] of this chapter by a registrant who was not the opera-
13 tor of the vehicle, the registration of such vehicle or the privilege of
14 operation of any motor vehicle owned by such registrant may be
15 suspended, until such person shall answer as provided in subdivision two

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 of this section. If a person shall fail to appear at a hearing involving
2 a violation of section three hundred eighty-five of this chapter, when
3 such is provided for pursuant to this section, such person's license, or
4 registration or privilege of operating or of operation, as appropriate,
5 may be suspended pending appearance at a subsequent hearing, or the
6 disposition of the charges involved. Any suspension permitted by this
7 subdivision, if already in effect, may be terminated or if not yet in
8 effect, may be withdrawn or withheld, prior to the disposition of the
9 charges involved if such person shall appear and post security in the
10 amount of forty dollars to guarantee his or her appearance at any
11 required hearing. The security posted pursuant to this subdivision shall
12 be returned upon appearance at the scheduled hearing or an adjourned
13 hearing which results in a final disposition of the charge, and other-
14 wise shall be forfeited. If a suspension has been imposed pursuant to
15 this subdivision and the case is subsequently transferred pursuant to
16 subdivision two of section two hundred twenty-five of this article, such
17 suspension shall remain in effect until the person answers the charges
18 in the court to which the case was transferred. Any suspension issued
19 pursuant to this paragraph shall be subject to the provisions of para-
20 graph (j-1) of subdivision two of section five hundred three of this
21 chapter.

22 (b) Failure to answer or appear in accordance with the requirements of
23 this section and any regulations promulgated hereunder shall be deemed
24 an admission to the violation as charged, and an appropriate order may
25 be entered in the department's records, and a fine consistent with the
26 provisions of this chapter and regulations of the commissioner may be
27 imposed by the commissioner or person designated by the commissioner.
28 Prior to entry of an order and imposition of a fine, the commissioner
29 shall notify such person by mail at the address of such person on file
30 with the department or at the current address provided by the United
31 States postal service in accordance with section two hundred fourteen of
32 this [~~chapter~~] title: (i) of the violation charged; (ii) of the impend-
33 ing entry of such order and fine; (iii) that such order and fine may be
34 filed as a judgment with the county clerk of the county in which the
35 operator or registrant is located; and (iv) that entry of such order and
36 imposition of such fine may be avoided by entering a plea or making an
37 appearance within thirty days of the sending of such notice. In no case
38 shall such an order and fine be entered and imposed more than two years
39 after the date of the alleged violation. Upon application in such manner
40 and form as the commissioner shall prescribe an order and fine shall be
41 vacated upon the ground of excusable default.

42 § 2. Section 226 of the vehicle and traffic law is amended by adding a
43 new subdivision 1-a to read as follows:

44 1-a. Return date notifications. The commissioner shall notify any
45 person who receives a summons and complaint for any traffic violation
46 specified in subdivision one of section two hundred twenty-five of this
47 article of the time and place of the return date for such summons, no
48 later than one week prior to such return date. The commissioner shall:
49 (a) send such notification by first class mail at the address of such
50 person on file with the department or at the current address provided by
51 the United States postal service in accordance with section two hundred
52 fourteen of this title; and (b) provide an additional notification by
53 text message, electronic mail, or telephone call whenever the commis-
54 sioner has the telephone number or electronic mail address of such
55 person.

1 § 3. Section 1802 of the vehicle and traffic law is amended to read as
2 follows:

3 § 1802. Receipts for fines or bail; installment payment plans. 1.
4 Receipts for fines or bail. Upon receipt of the payment of any fine or
5 penalty collected under a sentence or judgment of conviction of a
6 violation of any of the provisions of this chapter or any local law,
7 ordinance, order, rule or regulation made by local authorities in
8 relation to traffic or the deposit of bail of a person charged with a
9 violation of any such provision, local law, ordinance, order, rule or
10 regulation, the officer or employee receiving such payment or deposit
11 shall issue a receipt therefor when the payment or deposit is made in
12 cash. Whenever any such payment or deposit is made by check, money order
13 or in other property, the officer or employee shall issue a receipt
14 therefor upon request; provided, however, no such receipt shall be
15 issued where a fine or penalty is paid by mail unless the name and
16 address of the payee is known to such officer or employee or enclosed
17 with the payment.

18 2. Installment payment plans. (a) Whenever fines and/or surcharges are
19 imposed upon a natural person upon a conviction of a violation of any of
20 the provisions of this chapter or any local law, ordinance, order, rule
21 or regulation made by local authorities in relation to traffic, or when-
22 ever an order is entered pursuant to subdivision three of section two
23 hundred twenty-seven of this chapter, the court or hearing officer shall
24 offer such person the opportunity to enter into an installment payment
25 plan at no charge for the payment of such fines and/or surcharges and
26 any related fees. Any such installment payment plan shall be comprised
27 of all fines, fees and mandatory surcharges and shall consist of monthly
28 payments that do not exceed two percent of such person's monthly net
29 income or ten dollars per month, whichever is greater. For the purposes
30 of this subdivision, the term "net income" shall mean such person's
31 total income from all sources and assets, minus deductions required by
32 law including but not limited to administrative or court-ordered
33 garnishments and support payments. A court or hearing officer may
34 require the submission of a financial disclosure report, on a form
35 prescribed by the commissioner, from all persons who opt to enter into
36 installment payment plans. A court or hearing officer also may accept
37 payments higher than the set amount, but may not undertake additional
38 collection activity so long as the person meets his or her obligations
39 under the installment payment plan. A court or hearing officer may
40 require persons entering installment payment plans to appear period-
41 ically before such court or hearing officer, but no more frequently than
42 annually, to assess their financial circumstances, and may set a new
43 payment amount if such person's financial circumstances have changed. A
44 person who enters into an installment payment plan and experiences a
45 reduction in income may petition the court or hearing officer at any
46 time to seek a reduction in the monthly payment.

47 (b) The court or hearing officer shall have the discretion in the
48 interests of justice to reduce or waive the amount of any fine, fee or
49 mandatory surcharge assessed for a violation of any of the provisions of
50 this chapter or any local law, ordinance, order, rule or regulation made
51 by local authorities in relation to traffic.

52 (c) A person assessed a fine, fee and/or mandatory surcharge following
53 a conviction for a violation of any of the provisions of this chapter or
54 any local law, ordinance, order, rule or regulation made by local
55 authorities in relation to traffic, or the entering of an order pursuant
56 to subdivision three of section two hundred twenty-seven of this chap-

1 ter, shall be notified of their right to an installment payment plan (a)
2 at the time the summons is issued; (b) at the time of sentencing; and
3 (c) in any communication concerning imposition or collection of a fine,
4 fee or mandatory surcharge. Information about the availability of
5 installment payment plans shall be prominently posted, in a clear and
6 conspicuous manner: at each court and administrative tribunal and its
7 website, if any, and on the commissioner's website.

8 § 4. Paragraph a of subdivision 4 of section 227 of the vehicle and
9 traffic law, as amended by section 7 of part J of chapter 62 of the laws
10 of 2003, is amended to read as follows:

11 a. An order entered upon the failure to answer or appear or after the
12 receipt of an answer admitting the charge or where a determination is
13 made that the charge has been established shall be civil in nature, but
14 shall be treated as a conviction for the purposes of this chapter. The
15 commissioner or his designee may include in such order an imposition of
16 any penalty authorized by any provision of this chapter for a conviction
17 of such violation, except that no penalty therefore shall include impri-
18 sonment, nor, if monetary, exceed the amount of the fine which could
19 have been imposed had the charge been heard by a court. ~~[The]~~ If the
20 charge involves a violation of section three hundred eighty-five of this
21 chapter, the driver's license or privileges may be suspended pending the
22 payment of any penalty so imposed, or, if the charge involves a
23 violation of section three hundred eighty-five ~~[or section four hundred~~
24 ~~one]~~ of this chapter by a registrant who was not the operator of the
25 vehicle, the registration of such vehicle or privilege of operation of
26 any motor vehicle owned by such registrant may be suspended pending the
27 payment of any penalty so imposed. Any suspension issued pursuant to
28 this paragraph shall be subject to the provisions of paragraph (j-1) of
29 subdivision two of section five hundred three of this chapter.

30 § 5. Subdivision 4-a of section 510 of the vehicle and traffic law, as
31 added by section 10 of part J of chapter 62 of the laws of 2003 and
32 paragraph (c) as amended by chapter 157 of the laws of 2017, is amended
33 to read as follows:

34 4-a. Suspension for failure to answer an appearance ticket or to pay a
35 fine. (a) Upon receipt of a court notification of the failure of a
36 person to appear within sixty days of the return date or new subsequent
37 adjourned date, pursuant to an appearance ticket charging said person
38 with a violation of any ~~[of the provisions of this chapter (except one~~
39 ~~for parking, stopping, or standing), of any]~~ violation of the tax law or
40 of the transportation law regulating traffic ~~[or of any lawful ordinance~~
41 ~~or regulation made by a local or public authority, relating to traffic~~
42 ~~(except one for parking, stopping, or standing) or the failure to pay a~~
43 ~~fine imposed by a court]~~ the commissioner or his or her agent may
44 suspend the driver's license or privileges of such person pending
45 receipt of notice from the court that such person has appeared in
46 response to such appearance ticket or has paid such fine. Such suspen-
47 sion shall take effect no less than thirty days from the day upon which
48 notice thereof is sent by the commissioner to the person whose driver's
49 license or privileges are to be suspended. Any suspension issued pursu-
50 ant to this paragraph shall be subject to the provisions of paragraph
51 (j-1) of subdivision two of section five hundred three of this chapter.

52 (b) The provisions of paragraph (a) of this subdivision shall not
53 apply to a registrant who was not operating a vehicle, but who was
54 issued a summons or an appearance ticket for a violation of section
55 three hundred eighty-five, section four hundred one or section five
56 hundred eleven-a of this chapter. Upon the receipt of a court notifica-

1 tion of the failure of such person to appear within sixty days of the
 2 return date or a new subsequent adjourned date, pursuant to an appear-
 3 ance ticket charging said person with such violation, or the failure of
 4 such person to pay a fine imposed by a court, the commissioner or his or
 5 her agent may suspend the registration of the vehicle or vehicles
 6 involved in such violation or privilege of operation of any motor vehi-
 7 cle owned by the registrant pending receipt of notice from the court
 8 that such person has appeared in response to such appearance ticket or
 9 has paid such fine. Such suspension shall take effect no less than
 10 thirty days from the day upon which notice thereof is sent by the
 11 commissioner to the person whose registration or privilege is to be
 12 suspended. Any suspension issued pursuant to this paragraph shall be
 13 subject to the provisions of paragraph (j-1) of subdivision two of
 14 section five hundred three of this chapter.

15 (c) Upon receipt of notification from a traffic and parking violations
 16 agency or a traffic violations agency of the failure of a person to
 17 appear within sixty days of the return date or new subsequent adjourned
 18 date, pursuant to an appearance ticket charging said person with a
 19 violation of:

20 (i) ~~[any of the provisions of this chapter except one for parking,~~
 21 ~~stopping or standing and except those violations described in paragraphs~~
 22 ~~(a), (b), (d), (e) and (f) of subdivision two and in paragraphs (a),~~
 23 ~~(b), (d), (e), (f) and (g) of subdivision two-a and in paragraphs (a),~~
 24 ~~(b), (d), (e), (f) and (g) of subdivision two-b of section three hundred~~
 25 ~~seventy one of the general municipal law,~~

26 ~~(ii)]~~ section five hundred two or subdivision (a) of section eighteen
 27 hundred fifteen of the tax law; or

28 [~~(iii)]~~ (ii) section fourteen-f (except paragraph (b) of subdivision
 29 four of section fourteen-f), two hundred eleven or two hundred twelve of
 30 the transportation law~~, or~~

31 ~~(iv) any lawful ordinance or regulation made by a local or public~~
 32 ~~authority relating to traffic (except one for parking, stopping or~~
 33 ~~standing) or the failure to pay a fine imposed for such a violation by a~~
 34 ~~traffic and parking violations agency or a traffic violations agency],~~
 35 the commissioner or his or her agent may suspend the driver's license or
 36 privileges of such person pending receipt of notice from the agency that
 37 such person has appeared in response to such appearance ticket or has
 38 paid such fine. Such suspension shall take effect no less than thirty
 39 days from the day upon which notice thereof is sent by the commissioner
 40 to the person whose driver's license or privileges are to be suspended.
 41 Any suspension issued pursuant to this paragraph shall be subject to the
 42 provisions of paragraph (j-1) of subdivision two of section five hundred
 43 three of this chapter.

44 § 6. Subdivision 3 of section 514 of the vehicle and traffic law, as
 45 amended by section 11 of part J of chapter 62 of the laws of 2003 and
 46 paragraph (b) as amended by chapter 157 of the laws of 2017, is amended
 47 to read as follows:

48 3. (a) Upon the failure of a person to appear or answer, within sixty
 49 days of the return date or any subsequent adjourned date, or the failure
 50 to pay a fine imposed by a court, pursuant to a summons charging him or
 51 her with a violation of any of the provisions of this chapter (except
 52 one for parking, stopping or standing), section five hundred two or five
 53 hundred twelve of the tax law, section fourteen-f, two hundred eleven or
 54 two hundred twelve of the transportation law or of any law, ordinance,
 55 rule or regulation made by a local authority, relating to traffic
 56 (except for parking, stopping or standing), the trial court or the clerk

1 thereof shall within ten days certify that fact to the commissioner, in
2 the manner and form prescribed by the commissioner, who shall record the
3 same in his or her office. Thereafter and upon the appearance of any
4 such person in response to such summons or the receipt of the fine by
5 the court, the trial court or the clerk thereof shall forthwith certify
6 that fact to the commissioner, in the manner and form prescribed by the
7 commissioner[~~, provided, however, no such certification shall be made
8 unless the court has collected the termination of suspension fee
9 required to be paid pursuant to paragraph (j-1) of subdivision two of
10 section five hundred three of this chapter~~].

11 (b) Upon the failure of a person to appear or answer, within sixty
12 days of the return date or any subsequent adjourned date, or the failure
13 to pay a fine imposed by a traffic and parking violations agency or a
14 traffic violations agency pursuant to a summons charging him or her with
15 a violation of:

16 (1) any of the provisions of this chapter except one for parking,
17 stopping or standing and except those violations described in paragraphs
18 (a), (b), (d), (e) and (f) of subdivision two and in paragraphs (a),
19 (b), (d), (e), (f) and (g) of subdivision two-a and in paragraphs (a),
20 (b), (d), (e), (f) and (g) of subdivision two-b of section three hundred
21 seventy-one of the general municipal law;

22 (2) section five hundred two or subdivision (a) of section eighteen
23 hundred fifteen of the tax law;

24 (3) section fourteen-f (except paragraph (b) of subdivision four of
25 section fourteen-f), two hundred eleven or two hundred twelve of the
26 transportation law; or

27 (4) any lawful ordinance or regulation made by a local or public
28 authority relating to traffic (except one for parking, stopping or
29 standing);

30 the clerk thereof shall within ten days certify that fact to the commis-
31 sioner, in the manner and form prescribed by the commissioner, who shall
32 record the same in his or her office. Thereafter and upon the appearance
33 of any such person in response to such summons or the receipt of the
34 fine by the agency, the traffic and parking violations agency, the traf-
35 fic violations agency or the clerk thereof shall forthwith certify that
36 fact to the commissioner, in the manner and form prescribed by the
37 commissioner[~~, provided, however, no such certification shall be made
38 unless the traffic and parking violations agency or the traffic
39 violations agency has collected the termination of suspension fee
40 required to be paid pursuant to paragraph (j-1) of subdivision two of
41 section five hundred three of this chapter~~].

42 § 7. Termination of suspension for failure to appear, answer or pay a
43 fine. a. Within three months of the effective date of this section, the
44 commissioner of motor vehicles shall terminate all suspensions of
45 licenses, privileges to operate a motor vehicle and registrations based
46 upon a failure to appear, answer, or pay a fine, penalty or mandatory
47 surcharge pursuant to subdivision 3 of section 226, subdivision 4 of
48 section 227, or subdivision 4-a of section 510 of the vehicle and traf-
49 fic law, in effect prior to the effective date of this section. The
50 commissioner of motor vehicles shall waive all fees and fines associated
51 with the termination of such suspension, including but not limited to
52 those described in subparagraph (i) of paragraph (j-1) of subdivision 2
53 of section 503, subdivision 3 of section 514 and paragraph a of subdivi-
54 sion 4 of section 227 of the vehicle and traffic law, as in existence
55 prior to the effective date of this section. Provided, however, that the
56 provisions of this section shall not apply to suspensions imposed pursu-

1 ant to such sections involving violations of section 385 of the vehicle
2 and traffic law, or any violation of the tax law or of the transporta-
3 tion law regulating traffic.

4 b. Upon termination of suspensions pursuant to this section, the
5 commissioner of motor vehicles shall give the person whose license
6 and/or registration suspension is terminated pursuant to this section a
7 written notification by first class mail to the address of such person
8 on file with the department of motor vehicles or at the current address
9 provided by the United States postal service. Such notice shall inform
10 such person of the termination of the suspension of their license and/or
11 registration, the date of such termination, that continued failure to
12 answer the violation for which the suspension for failure to answer was
13 originally imposed may subject such person to the entry of a guilty plea
14 on their behalf and the rendering of a default judgment of a fine as
15 well as additional enforcement actions including garnishment of wages
16 and personal property, restraining of bank accounts, and the placing of
17 liens on real property, and that unpaid fines can be entered as a civil
18 judgment for enforcement. Such notice also shall provide instructions on
19 how such person can avoid the imposition of such additional plea,
20 default, and enforcement actions.

21 § 8. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall
22 have become a law provided, however, sections two and seven of this act
23 shall take effect the first of April next succeeding the date upon which
24 it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amend-
25 ment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implemen-
26 tation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and
27 completed on or before such effective date.