

# Driving Opportunities: IMPROVED COMPLIANCE



Ending driver's license suspension for unpaid traffic tickets and missed court dates in North Carolina is a common-sense reform that cannot wait.

## The Opportunity

Nearly 1 million North Carolinians have a suspended driver's license, not because they are unsafe drivers, but because they cannot afford to pay traffic fines and fees or missed a court date. Many people lose their licenses for years for these non-safety issues, even though other states have adopted proven alternatives that show these suspensions are not necessary. Ending unnecessary license suspensions can improve the state's appearance and collection rates.

## Why It Matters

### Driver's Licenses Can Lead to Better Compliance Rates

- ▶ Studies show that there is little to no evidence that license suspensions improve debt collection or court appearance.
- ▶ Driver's license suspension can only coerce debt repayment if the individual has sufficient resources available. If the individual is simply too poor to pay, driver's license suspension is an ineffective way to collect money.
- ▶ Data shows that ending license suspensions often improves collection and appearance rates.
- ▶ Ability-to-pay assessments, payment plans, payment reminders, and community service in lieu of costs - not driver's license suspensions - lead to increased collection rates.
- ▶ Court reminder systems, alternative court schedules, virtual court, transportation assistance program - not driver's license suspensions - lead to better appearance rates.

## The Evidence-Based Reforms

North Carolina must act to improve opportunity and improve rates of payment and court appearance.

- ▣ End driver's license suspensions for unpaid traffic debt and missed court dates; and
- ▣ Replace with evidence-based practices such as court reminders, ability-to-pay assessments, and reasonable payment plans.

---

For more information, contact **Laura Webb**, [laura@ncjustice.org](mailto:laura@ncjustice.org)