

Driving Opportunities: MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT



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. In a rural state such as North Carolina, a driver's license is key for mobility and opportunity. Ending unnecessary license suspensions will improve access to meaningful employment.

Why It Matters

Driver's License Open Pathways to Meaningful Employment

- ▶ Most jobs require a valid driver's license or reliable transportation as a condition of employment.
- ▶ More than 80% of North Carolina residents drive to work. Many work in a different county from where they live. Individuals without a valid driver's license are more likely to be unemployed or underemployed.
- ▶ Having the ability to drive legally enables people to reliably reach job sites, interviews, and training opportunities.
- ▶ Public transportation options are limited across much of the state, particularly in rural areas. Public transit users are often restricted to jobs located near bus routes or within walking distance – significantly narrowing employment options.

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.

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