

Driving Opportunities: SAFE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING



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 could improve a person's ability to get and keep safe and affordable housing.

Why It Matters

Driver's Licenses Expand Housing Choice

- ▶ Reliable transportation is a key factor in choosing where to live.
- ▶ With a license, families can choose housing based on affordability and safety - not just proximity to public transit or within walking distance to essential services.
- ▶ Rural residents, where there is limited public transit, gain access to broader or more affordable housing options.

Driver's Licenses Prevent Eviction

- ▶ Having a valid driver's license helps people maintain steady work and reliable income, which supports timely rent payments and stable housing.
- ▶ A survey of Wake County, NC residents with suspended driver's licenses found that 28.5% experienced eviction as a direct result of the suspension.

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)