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Driver Improvement

The Driver Improvement program is an opportunity to prevent your traffic ticket from appearing as a conviction on your driving record. When you participate in the Driver Improvement program, you are granted court supervision without going to court (**unless you are not yet 18, in which case you must appear in court with a parent or guardian to obtain court supervision**).

Court Supervision is an unsupervised “probation” that results in your ticket showing as supervision instead of a conviction on your driving record. Your period of supervision last six months from the date the Circuit Court Judge signs your supervision paperwork. It is your responsibility to pay the traffic fine and Driver Improvement Program fee and remain without additional traffic violations during this period.

Court Supervision requires you to attend a one-time, four-hour class on defensive driving developed by the National Corrective Training Institute and offered by Illinois Valley Community College (IVCC). You must complete this class within 90 days of the date the supervision was entered.

If you live in Putnam County, you must take the class at the Bureau County Farm Bureau, 535 Elm Place (Route 34), in Princeton, IL. If you find you cannot attend the class you registered for at the Bureau County Farm Bureau, contact the Traffic Department at the Putnam County Circuit Clerk’s Office at (815) 925-7016, Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., to reschedule your class. There is a \$10.00 charge to reschedule a class. If you prefer to attend another Driver Improvement Program outside of Putnam County, please check with the Putnam County Circuit Clerk’s Office and instructions will be given on what proof of completion is needed from the other facility..

The Driver Improvement Program will notify the Court when you have completed the class. If you complete the program within 90 days of the date supervision was granted and do not receive any additional tickets during your supervision period, your ticket will show as supervision and not as a conviction on your driving record.

*If you receive a ticket **NOT** in Putnam County, and would like to go through the Putnam County Driver Improvement Program at the Bureau County Farm Bureau in Princeton, IL, **you must call or come** to the Putnam County Circuit Clerk's Office at (815) 925-7016 to register and pay for the class. The cost is \$50.00. Further instructions will be given to show proof of completion of the class.*

In summary, when you receive a traffic ticket, you have three choices:

1. PLEAD GUILTY and pay the fine, by mail, credit card or in person, without going to court. A conviction will be reported to the Secretary of State.
2. PLEAD NOT GUILTY and request a Trial (requiring at least one court appearance).
3. PLEAD GUILTY, BUT WITH SUPERVISION AND ATTEND THE DRIVER IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM. Pay the traffic fine and driver improvement program fee, attend a one-time class on defensive driving and receive no additional tickets during your supervision period. (NO court appearance is required if 18 or over).

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

1. You may participate in the Driver Improvement Program to receive court supervision for only ONE ticket a year. The year is determined from ticket date to ticket date.
2. Anyone who has already received court supervision (either by order of a judge or by attending a Traffic School Program) for another traffic ticket that was issued within 12 months of this ticket is not eligible.
3. If your ticket is marked "MUST APPEAR IN COURT", you MUST FIRST appear in court, in person, on the date shown.

YOU ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR COURT SUPERVISION:

1. If you are a holder of a Commercial Drivers License (CDL).
2. If you are charged with an offense while operating a commercial motor vehicle. If the "URBAN DISTRICT" box on your ticket is checked or if "URBAN DISTRICT" is written on your ticket.
3. If your ticket is for one of the following violations:
 - Speeding – School Zone 625 ILCS 5/11-605(a)
 - Passing a Stopped School Bus 625 ILCS 5/11-141(a)
 - Speeding – Construction Zone 625 ILCS 5/11-605(b)
 - Illegal Transportation of Alcohol 625 ILCS 5/11-502(a) or (b)

If you apply for the program and are found to be ineligible, a conviction will be reported to the Secretary of State. Both your fine and the school fee are not refundable.

*The **Circuit Clerk Record Search** is intended to be a summary of information for the public. It does not take the place of legal information held in the actual Court file. The Putnam County Circuit Clerk accepts no liability for discrepancies between the electronic version and the official printed document.