

How to Resolve a Ticket

The Roman Forest Municipal Court is a small office consisting of one court administrator/clerk who may process most transactions at the court counter. Please note, city personnel outside of the court office do not have the authority to accept documents or payments. Alternatively, payments may be sent by mail or made online and documents may be mailed or sent by fax or email (if applicable). We appreciate your understanding.

The Municipal Court has jurisdiction over Class C misdemeanor criminal offenses filed, through the City's Police Department, Animal Control, and Code Enforcement, that are committed within the territorial limits of the City of Roman Forest. These include traffic and parking offenses, city ordinance violations, and other criminal offenses such as public intoxication, theft, possession of drug paraphernalia, and disorderly conduct.

What do I do?

When a person is cited with a ticket, the signature on the ticket implies your appearance before the court to make resolution of the charges on or before a specific date. The appearance date is located near the bottom of the ticket, above your signature. You will need to appear at the court clerk's office on or before the appearance date. You may contact the court by phone with inquiries, but be advised that a call does not constitute an appearance.

Many violations can be addressed at the clerk counter with a timely appearance. The clerk has a set of standing orders that allows certain dispositions to take place outside the presence of the Prosecutor and/or Judge.

The first step to resolution is to appear at the court on or before the appearance date shown on your ticket and file a plea to the charge.

Make a Plea

After being issued a ticket, you must enter a plea to the court on or before the appearance date located at the bottom of your ticket. Only the person who received the ticket can enter a plea to the charge. There are three plea options to choose from:

1. **No contest (Nolo Contendere)** – A plea of No contest means that you do not contest the violation filed against you and you are waiving your right to a trial by judge or jury.
2. **Guilty** – By entering a plea of Guilty you admit that the act is prohibited by law, that you committed the act charged, and that you are waiving your right to trial by judge or jury.
3. **Not Guilty** – A plea of Not Guilty means that you are informing the court that you deny guilt to the violation in which you were accused.

Some options for disposition after a plea of GUILTY or NOLO CONTENDERE (no contest), include: pay in full, 30 day extension to pay in full or a payment plan.

Pleading guilty or no contest does not always end up as a conviction on your driving or criminal record. On or before your appearance date, you may request a Driving Safety Class to dismiss the ticket or ask for Deferred Disposition to keep the charge off your record. Both options require documentation and payment of applicable fines/court costs/reimbursement fees at the time of the request and terms of completion (restrictions apply).

Compliance dismissals for non-moving violations can be arranged at the Court Clerk's window with acceptable proof of compliance and payment of an administrative reimbursement fee.

Additionally, the court has a dedicated website for online payments for customer convenience. Be aware that paying your ticket online will result in the court making a report of conviction. Please visit www.payromanforest.com or call 1-800-444-1187 (Española). Restrictions and processing fees apply.

If ordered to pay a fine and costs, and you cannot pay in full, notify the court immediately. If you are determined by the court to have insufficient resources or income to pay, the court is required to provide you other alternatives to discharge the amount due.

A defendant entering a plea of "Not Guilty" will be scheduled a pre-trial court date.

Appeal the Judgment

If you are found guilty and are not satisfied with the judgment of the court, you have the right to appeal the court's decision. Since the Roman Forest Municipal Court is a court of non-record, an appeal will be sent to the Montgomery County Court as a "trial de novo," which means the case is tried over again at the county level as if the trial in municipal court never occurred.

To appeal your case you must give notice of appeal and post an appeal bond to the municipal court within 10 calendar days of the judgment. The amount of the appeal bond is twice the amount of the fine and court costs. Once the municipal court receives the appeal, the case will be sent to the county court for processing and you will receive notice of a court date from the county court.

What happens if I do not make a plea or ignore my ticket?

If you fail to appear or plea to charges on the ticket, a warrant may be issued for your arrest, the court charging you with Failure to Appear, and you may be denied renewal of your Driver's License.