

TRAFFIC TICKETS

Properly accounting for traffic tickets is important to ensure (1) collection of traffic fees or appropriate action for non-payment is taken; (2) compliance with Louisiana laws; and (3) misappropriation of assets or fraud does not occur. Through our advisory services that we are providing to municipalities/police departments, we are finding the following common deficiencies in accounting for traffic tickets:

- There are no written procedures for maintaining, issuing, and accounting for traffic tickets. Written procedures are necessary as a clear understanding of what should be done, how, who, and when it should be done, and that the procedures followed meet management's expectations.
- The supply of ticket books is not safeguarded. Ticket books should be stored in a locked cabinet with access limited to authorized personnel.
- There is no record of the ticket books issued to police officers and no accounting for the numerical sequence of tickets issued. Accounting for the numerical sequence of the traffic tickets/citations is the key controlling factor. Without accounting for the numerical sequence of tickets, there is no way to determine whether citations were issued or tickets were lost or voided. A record of ticket books issued to police officers should include the date of issue, ticket numbers, and the police officer's signature of receipt.
- Ticket books are issued to police officers before the previously issued book is accounted for and all issued citations are received from the police officer. Ticket books should be issued only when police officers return previously issued tickets as issued citations.
- There is no accounting of the final disposition (received payment, reduced fine, dismissed, bench warrant issued, etc.) of citations issued. There should be an accounting of the final disposition of citations monthly.
- Traffic violations are not reported to the Louisiana Department of Public Safety (DPS) as required by law. Louisiana Revised Statute (R.S.) 32:393C(1)(b) requires that all (paid and unpaid) traffic violations, except parking violations, be reported to DPS not later than 30 days after the date of such person's conviction and sentencing or the final disposition of the case. Failure to report these violations to DPS results in inaccuracies in offenders' driving records.
- Traffic citations should not be reduced or dismissed "outside" of traffic court. R.S. 32:398.2.B requires that all traffic citations be disposed of only by trial or acceptance of a plea in open court.

To summarize:

1. Prepare written procedures for maintaining, issuing, and accounting for traffic tickets/citations.
2. Safeguard the supply of ticket books and limit access to authorized personnel.

3. Maintain a record of ticket books issued to police officers ([Traffic Ticket Log](#)) and account for the numerical sequence of tickets issued.
4. Issue ticket books to police officers only when the previously issued book is accounted for and all issued citations are received from the police officer.
5. Account for the final disposition of citations monthly ([Citations Issued Log](#))
6. Report all traffic violations (except for parking) to DPS within 30 days after the date of the person's conviction and sentencing or the final disposition of the case.
7. Traffic citations should not be reduced or dismissed "outside" of traffic court.

Revised: 3/3/06