WEST virginia legislature

2021 regular session

Introduced

Senate Bill 674

By Senators Weld, Woelfel, and Lindsay

[Introduced March 19, 2021; referred
to the Committee on the Judiciary]

A BILL to amend and reenact §8-10-2a and §8-10-2b of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended; to amend and reenact §50-3-2a of said code; and to amend and reenact §62-4-17 of said code, all relating generally to court-ordered costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, and penalties; clarifying that unpaid restitution need not preclude a person from obtaining a valid driver’s license; establishing procedures to obtain a lien against a person who owes restitution; and providing procedures for removing a lien.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

CHAPTER 8. MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS.

ARTICLE 10. POWERS AND DUTIES OF CERTAIN OFFICERS.

§8-10-2a. Payment of fines by electronic payments, credit cards, cash, money orders, or certified checks.

A municipal court may accept electronic payments, credit cards, cash, money order, or certified checks for all costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties electronically, by mail, or in person. Any charges made by the credit company shall be paid by the person responsible for paying the cost, fine, fee, restitution, or penalty.

§8-10-2b. Payment plan; failure to pay will result in late fee and judgment lien; suspension of licenses for failure to pay fines and costs or failure to appear in court.

(a) Upon request and subject to the following requirements, the municipal court clerk or, upon a judgment rendered on appeal, the clerk shall establish a payment plan for a person owing costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed by the court for a motor vehicle violation as defined in §17B-3-3a of this code, a criminal offense as defined in §17B-3-3c of this code, or other applicable municipal ordinances, so long as the person signs and files with the clerk an affidavit stating that he or she is financially unable to pay the costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed:

(1) A $25 administrative processing fee shall be paid at the time the payment form is filed or, in the alternative, the fee may be paid in no more than five equal monthly payments;

(2) Unless incarcerated, a person must enroll in a payment plan no later than 90 calendar days after the date the court enters the order assessing the costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties; and

(3) If the person is incarcerated, he or she may enroll in a payment plan within 90 calendar days after release.

(b) The West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals shall develop a uniform payment plan form and financial affidavit for requests for the establishment of a payment plan pursuant to subsection (a) of this section. The forms shall be made available for distribution to the offices of municipal clerks, and municipal clerks shall use the payment plan form and affidavit form developed by the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals when establishing payment plans.

(c)(1) The payment plan shall specify: (A) The number of payments to be made; (B) the dates on which such payments are due; (C) the amount due for each payment; (D) all acceptable payment methods; and (E) the circumstances under which the person may receive a late fee, have a judgment lien recorded against him or her, or have the debt sent to collections for nonpayment;

(2) The monthly payment under the payment plan shall be calculated based upon all costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties owed within the court, and shall be two percent of the person’s annual net income divided by 12, or $10, whichever is greater;

(3) The court may review the reasonableness of the payment plan, and may on its own motion or by petition, waive, modify, or convert the outstanding costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties to community service if the court determines that the individual has had a change in circumstances and is unable to comply with the terms of the payment plan.

(d) (1) The clerk may assess a $10 late fee each month if a person fails to comply with the terms of a payment plan and if any payment due is not received within 30 days after the due date, and the person:

(A) Is not incarcerated;

(B) Has not brought the account current;

(C) Has not made alternative payment arrangements with the court; or

(D) Has not entered into a revised payment plan with the clerk before the due date.

(2) If after 90 days, a payment has not been received, the clerk may do one or both of the following: (A) Record a judgment lien as described in subsection (f) of this section; or (B) consign the delinquent costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties to a debt collection agency contained on the State Tax Commissioner’s list of eligible debt collection agencies established and maintained pursuant to §14-1-18c of this code, an internal collection division, or both: *Provided,* That the entire amount of all delinquent payments collected shall be remitted to the court and may not be reduced by any collection costs or fees: *Provided, however,* That the collection fee may not exceed 25 percent of the delinquent payment amount. The clerk may send notices, electronically or by U.S. mail, to remind the person of an upcoming or missed payment.

(e)(1) If after 90 days of a judgment a person fails to enroll in a payment plan and fails to pay their costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties, the clerk may assess a $10 late fee and shall notify the person of the following:

(A) That he or she is 90 days past due in the payment of costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed pursuant to a judgment of the court;

(B) That he or she has failed to enroll in a payment plan;

(C) Whether a $10 late fee has been assessed; and

(D) That he or she may be the subject of a judgment lien or have his or her debt sent to a collection agency if the overdue payment of costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties is not resolved within 30 days of the date of the notice issued pursuant to this subsection.

(2) If after 30 days from the issuance of a notice pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, a payment has not been received, the clerk may do one or both of the following:

(A) Record a judgment lien as described in subsection (f) of this section; or

(B) Consign the delinquent costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties to a debt collection agency contained on the State Tax Commissioner’s list of eligible debt collection agencies established and maintained pursuant to §14-1-18c of this code, an internal collection division, or both: *Provided,* That the entire amount of all delinquent payments collected shall be remitted to the court and may not be reduced by any collection costs or fees: *Provided, however,* That the collection fee may not exceed 25 percent of the delinquent payment amount.

(f) To record a judgment lien, the clerk shall notify the prosecuting attorney of the county of nonpayment and shall provide the prosecuting attorney with an abstract of judgment. The prosecuting attorney shall file the abstract of judgment in the office of the clerk of the county commission in the county where the defendant was convicted and in any county in which the defendant resides or owns property. The clerk of the county commission shall record and index these abstracts of judgment without charge or fee to the prosecuting attorney and when recorded, the amount stated to be owed in the abstract constitutes a lien against all property of the defendant: *Provided,* That when all the costs, fines, fees, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties for which an abstract of judgment has been recorded are paid in full, the clerk of the municipal court shall notify the prosecuting attorney of the county of payment and provide the prosecuting attorney with a release of judgment, prepared in accordance with the provisions of §38-12-1 of this code, for filing and recordation pursuant to the provisions of this subdivision. Upon receipt from the clerk, the prosecuting attorney shall file the release of judgment in the office of the clerk of the county commission in each county where an abstract of the judgment was recorded. The clerk of the county commission shall record and index the release of judgment without charge or fee to the prosecuting attorney.

(g) A person whose driver’s license was suspended prior to July 1, 2020, solely for the nonpayment of costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties, if otherwise eligible, shall have his or her license reinstated:

(1) Upon payment in full of all outstanding costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties and a $25 reinstatement fee paid to the Division of Motor Vehicles; or

(2) Upon establishing a payment plan pursuant to subsection (a) of this section and the payment of a $25 administrative fee. The clerk shall notify the Division of Motor Vehicles that a payment plan is in effect, and upon receipt of the notification, the division shall waive the reinstatement fee.

(h) If a person charged with a motor vehicle violation as defined in §17B-3-3a of this code or criminal offense fails to appear or otherwise respond in court, the municipal court clerk shall notify the Division of Motor Vehicles of the failure to appear: *Provided*, That notwithstanding any other provision of this code to the contrary, for residents of this state, the municipal court clerk shall wait at least 90 days from the date of the person’s failure to appear or otherwise respond before notifying the Division of Motor Vehicles thereof. Upon notice, the Division of Motor Vehicles shall suspend the person’s driver’s license or privilege to operate a motor vehicle in this state until such time that the person appears as required.

CHAPTER 50. MAGISTRATE COURTS.

ARTICLE 3. COSTS, FINES, AND RECORDS.

§50-3-2a. Payment by electronic payments, credit card payments, cash, money orders, or certified checks; payment plan; failure to pay fines results in a late fee and judgment lien.

(a) A magistrate court may accept electronic payments, credit cards, cash, money order, or certified check for payment of all costs, fines, fees, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties in accordance with rules promulgated by the Supreme Court of Appeals. Any charges made by the credit company shall be paid by the person responsible for paying the cost, fine, forfeiture, restitution, or penalty.

(b) Upon request and subject to the following requirements, the magistrate clerk shall establish a payment plan for a person owing costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed by the court, so long as the person signs and files with the clerk, an affidavit stating that he or she is financially unable to pay the costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed:

(1) A $25 administrative processing fee shall be paid at the time the payment form is filed or, in the alternative, the fee may be paid in no more than five equal monthly payments;

(2) Unless incarcerated, a person must enroll in a payment plan no later than 180 calendar days after the date the court enters the order assessing the costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties; and

(3) If the person is incarcerated, he or she may enroll in a payment plan within 180 calendar days after release.

(c) The West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals shall develop a uniform payment plan form and financial affidavit for requests for the establishment of payment plan pursuant to subsection (a) of this section. The forms shall be made available for distribution to the offices of magistrate clerks, and magistrate clerks shall use the payment plan form and affidavit form developed by the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals when establishing payment plans.

 (d)(1) The payment plan shall specify: (A) The number of payments to be made; (B) the dates on which the payments are due; (C) the amount due for each payment; (D) all acceptable payment methods; and (E) the circumstances under which the person may receive a late fee, have a judgment lien recorded against him or her, or have the debt sent to collections for nonpayment.

(2) The monthly payment under the payment plan shall be calculated based upon all costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties owed within the court, and shall be two percent of the person’s annual net income divided by 12 or $10, whichever is greater.

(3) The court may review the reasonableness of the payment plan, and may on its own motion or by petition, waive, modify, or convert the outstanding costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties to community service if the court determines that the individual has had a change in circumstances and is unable to comply with the terms of the payment plan.

(e) (1) The clerk may assess a $10 late fee each month if a person fails to comply with the terms of a payment plan, and if any payment due is not received within 30 days after the due date, and the person:

(A) Is not incarcerated;

(B) Has not brought the account current;

(C) Has not made alternative payment arrangements with the court; or

(D) Has not entered into a revised payment plan with the clerk before the due date.

(2) If, after 90 days, a payment has not been received, the clerk may do one or both of the following: (A) Record a judgment lien as described in subsection (f) of this section; or (B) consign the delinquent costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties to a debt collection agency contained on the State Tax Commissioner’s list of eligible debt collection agencies established and maintained pursuant to §14-1-18c of this code, an internal collection division, or both: *Provided,* That the entire amount of all delinquent payments collected shall be remitted to the court and may not be reduced by any collection costs or fees: *Provided, however,* That the collection fee may not exceed 25 percent of the delinquent payment amount. The clerk may send notices, electronically or by U.S. mail, to remind the person of an upcoming or missed payment.

 (f)(1) If after 180 days of a judgment a person fails to enroll in a payment plan and fails to pay his or her costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties, the clerk may assess a $10 late fee and shall notify the person of the following:

(A) That he or she is 180 days past due in the payment of costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed pursuant to a judgment of the court;

(B) That he or she has failed to enroll in a payment plan;

(C) Whether a $10 late fee has been assessed; and

(D) That he or she may be the subject of a judgment lien or have his or her debt sent to a collection agency if the overdue payment of costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties is not resolved within 30 days of the date of the notice issued pursuant to this subsection.

(2) If after 30 days from the issuance of a notice pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, a payment has not been received, the clerk may do one or both of the following:

(A) Record a judgment lien as described in subsection (f) of this section; or

(B) Consign the delinquent costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties to a debt collection agency contained on the State Tax Commissioner’s list of eligible debt collection agencies established and maintained pursuant to §14-1-18c of this code, an internal collection division, or both: *Provided,* That the entire amount of all delinquent payments collected shall be remitted to the court and may not be reduced by any collection costs or fees: *Provided, however,* That the collection fee may not exceed 25 percent of the delinquent payment amount.

(g) To record a judgment lien, the clerk shall notify the prosecuting attorney of the county of nonpayment and shall provide the prosecuting attorney with an abstract of judgment. The prosecuting attorney shall file the abstract of judgment in the office of the clerk of the county commission in the county where the defendant was convicted and in any county wherein the defendant resides or owns property. The clerk of the county commission shall record and index these abstracts of judgment without charge or fee to the prosecuting attorney and when recorded, the amount stated to be owed in the abstract constitutes a lien against all property of the defendant: *Provided,* That when all the costs, fines, fees, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties for which an abstract of judgment has been recorded are paid in full, the clerk of the municipal court shall notify the prosecuting attorney of the county of payment and provide the prosecuting attorney with a release of judgment, prepared in accordance with the provisions of §38-12-1 of this code, for filing and recordation pursuant to the provisions of this subdivision. Upon receipt from the clerk, the prosecuting attorney shall file the release of judgment in the office of the clerk of the county commission in each county where an abstract of the judgment was recorded. The clerk of the county commission shall record and index the release of judgment without charge or fee to the prosecuting attorney.

(h) A person whose driver’s license was suspended before July 1, 2020, solely for the nonpayment of costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties, if otherwise eligible, shall have his or her license reinstated:

(1) Upon payment in full of all outstanding costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties and a $25 reinstatement fee paid to the Division of Motor Vehicles; or

(2) Upon establishing a payment plan pursuant to subsection (a) of this section and the payment of a $25 administrative fee. The clerk shall notify the Division of Motor Vehicles that a payment plan is in effect, and upon receipt of the notification, the division shall waive the reinstatement fee.

 (i)(1) If any costs, fines, fees, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed or ordered by the magistrate court for a hunting violation described in chapter 20 of this code are not paid within 180 days from the date of judgment and the expiration of any stay of execution, the magistrate court clerk or, upon a judgment rendered on appeal, the circuit clerk shall notify the Director of the Division of Natural Resources of the failure to pay. Upon notice, the Director of the Division of Natural Resources shall suspend any privilege the person failing to appear or otherwise respond may have to hunt in this state, including any hunting license issued to the person by the Division of Natural Resources, until all the costs, fines, fees, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties are paid in full.

(2) If any costs, fines, fees, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed or ordered by the magistrate court for a fishing violation described in chapter 20 of this code are not paid within 180 days from the date of judgment and the expiration of any stay of execution, the magistrate court clerk or, upon a judgment rendered on appeal, the circuit clerk shall notify the Director of the Division of Natural Resources of the failure to pay. Upon notice, the Director of the Division of Natural Resources shall suspend any privilege the person failing to appear or otherwise respond may have to fish in this state, including any fishing license issued to the person by the Division of Natural Resources, until all the costs, fines, fees, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties are paid in full.

(j)(1) If a person charged with any criminal violation of this code fails to appear or otherwise respond in court, the magistrate court shall notify the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles thereof within 90 days of the scheduled date to appear unless the person sooner appears or otherwise responds in court to the satisfaction of the magistrate*.* Upon notice, the Division of Motor Vehicles shall suspend any privilege the person failing to appear or otherwise respond may have to operate a motor vehicle in this state, including any driver’s license issued to the person by the Division of Motor Vehicles, until final judgment in the case and, if a judgment of guilty, until all costs, fines, fees, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed are paid in full. The suspension shall be imposed in accordance with the provisions of §17B-3-6 of this code.

(2) In addition to the provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection, if a person charged with any hunting violation described in chapter 20 of this code fails to appear or otherwise respond in court, the magistrate court shall notify the Director of the Division of Natural Resources of the failure thereof within 15 days of the scheduled date to appear unless the person sooner appears or otherwise responds in court to the satisfaction of the magistrate. Upon notice, the Director of the Division of Natural Resources shall suspend any privilege the person failing to appear or otherwise respond may have to hunt in this state, including any hunting license issued to the person by the Division of Natural Resources, until final judgment in the case and, if a judgment of guilty, until all costs, fines, fees, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed are paid in full.

(3) In addition to the provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection, if a person charged with any fishing violation described in chapter 20 of this code fails to appear or otherwise respond in court, the magistrate court shall notify the Director of the Division of Natural Resources of the failure thereof within 15 days of the scheduled date to appear unless the person sooner appears or otherwise responds in court to the satisfaction of the magistrate. Upon notice, the Director of the Division of Natural Resources shall suspend any privilege the person failing to appear or otherwise respond may have to fish in this state, including any fishing license issued to the person by the Division of Natural Resources, until final judgment in the case and, if a judgment of guilty, until all costs, fines, fees, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed are paid in full.

(k) In every criminal case which involves a misdemeanor violation, a magistrate may order restitution where appropriate when rendering judgment.

(l) Notwithstanding any provision of this code to the contrary, except as authorized by this section, payments of all costs, fines, fees, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed by the magistrate court in civil or criminal matters shall be made in full. Partial payments of costs, fines, fees, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties made pursuant to this section shall be credited to amounts due in the following order:

(1) Regional Jail Fund;

(2) Worthless check payee;

(3) Restitution;

(4) Magistrate Court Fund;

(5) Worthless Check Fund;

(6) Per diem regional jail fee;

(7) Community Corrections Fund;

(8) Regional Jail Operational Fund;

(9) Law-Enforcement Training Fund;

(10) Crime Victims Compensation Fund;

(11) Court Security Fund;

(12) Courthouse Improvement Fund;

(13) Litter Control Fund;

(14) Sheriff arrest fee;

(15) Teen Court Fund;

(16) Other costs, if any;

(17) Fine.

CHAPTER 62. CRIMINAL PROCEDURE.

ARTICLE 4. RECOVERY OF FINES IN CRIMINAL CASES.

§62-4-17. Suspension of licenses for failure to appear in court; payment plan; failure to pay fines will result in late fee and judgment lien.

(a) Upon request and subject to the following requirements, the circuit clerk shall establish a payment plan for a person owing costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed by the court, so long as the person signs and files with the clerk, an affidavit, stating that he or she is financially unable to pay the costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed:

(1) A $25 administrative processing fee shall be paid at the time the payment form is filed or, in the alternative, the fee may be paid in no more than five equal monthly payments;

(2) Unless incarcerated, a person must enroll in a payment plan no later than 180 calendar days after the date the court enters the order assessing the costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties; and

(3) If the person is incarcerated, he or she enroll in a payment plan within 180 calendar days after release.

(b) The West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals shall develop a uniform payment plan form and financial affidavit for requests for the establishment of payment plan pursuant to subsection (a) of this section. The forms shall be made available for distribution to the offices of circuit clerks and circuit clerks shall use the payment plan form and affidavit form developed by the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals when establishing payment plans.

(c)(1) The payment plan shall specify: (A) The number of payments to be made; (B) the dates on which such payments are due; (C) the amount due for each payment; (D) all acceptable payment methods; and (E) the circumstances under which the person may receive a late fee, have a judgment lien recorded against them, or have the debt sent to collections for nonpayment.

(2) The monthly payment under the payment plan shall be calculated based upon all costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties owed within the court, and shall be two percent of the person’s annual net income divided by 12, or $10, whichever is greater.

(3) The court may review the reasonableness of the payment plan, and may on its own motion or by petition, waive, modify, or convert the outstanding costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties to community service if the court determines that the individual has had a change in circumstances and is unable to comply with the terms of the payment plan.

(d) (1) The clerk may assess a $10 late fee each month if a person fails to comply with the terms of a payment plan, and if any payment due is not received within 30 days after the due date, and the person:

(A) Is not incarcerated;

(B) Has not brought the account current;

(C) Has not made alternative payment arrangements with the court; or

(D) Has not entered into a revised payment plan with the clerk before the due date.

(2) If, after 90 days, a payment has not been received, the clerk may do one or both of the following: (A) Record a judgment lien as described in subsection (f) of this section; or (B) consign the delinquent costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties to a debt collection agency contained on the State Tax Commissioner’s list of eligible debt collection agencies established and maintained pursuant to §14-1-18c of this code, an internal collection division, or both: *Provided,* That the entire amount of all delinquent payments collected shall be remitted to the court and may not be reduced by any collection costs or fees: *Provided, however,* That the collection fee may not exceed 25 percent of the delinquent payment amount. The clerk may send notices, electronically or by U.S. mail, to remind the person of an upcoming or missed payment.

(e)(1) If after 180 days of a judgment a person fails to enroll in a payment plan and fails to pay his or her costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties, the clerk may assess a $10 late fee and shall notify the person of the following:

(A) That he or she is 180 days past due in the payment of costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties imposed pursuant to a judgment of the court;

(B) That he or she has failed to enroll in a payment plan;

(C) Whether a $10 late fee has been assessed; and

(D) That he or she may be the subject of a judgment lien or have his or her debt sent to a collection agency if the overdue payment of costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties is not resolved within 30 days of the date of the notice issued pursuant to this subsection.

(2) If after 30 days from the issuance of a notice pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, a payment has not been received, the clerk may do one or both of the following:

(A) Record a judgment lien as described in subsection (f) of this section; or

(B) Consign the delinquent costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties to a debt collection agency contained on the State Tax Commissioner’s list of eligible debt collection agencies established and maintained pursuant to §14-1-18c of this code, an internal collection division, or both: *Provided,* That the entire amount of all delinquent payments collected shall be remitted to the court and may not be reduced by any collection costs or fees: *Provided, however,* That the collection fee may not exceed 25 percent of the delinquent payment amount.

(f) To record a judgment lien, the clerk shall notify the prosecuting attorney of the county of nonpayment and shall provide the prosecuting attorney with an abstract of judgment. The prosecuting attorney shall file the abstract of judgment in the office of the clerk of the county commission in the county where the defendant was convicted and in any county wherein the defendant resides or owns property. The clerk of the county commission shall record and index these abstracts of judgment without charge or fee to the prosecuting attorney, and when recorded, the amount stated to be owed in the abstract constitutes a lien against all property of the defendant: *Provided,* That when all the costs, fines, fees, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties for which an abstract of judgment has been recorded are paid in full, the clerk of the municipal court shall notify the prosecuting attorney of the county of payment and provide the prosecuting attorney with a release of judgment, prepared in accordance with the provisions of §38-12-1 of this code, for filing and recordation pursuant to the provisions of this subdivision. Upon receipt from the clerk, the prosecuting attorney shall file the release of judgment in the office of the clerk of the county commission in each county where an abstract of the judgment was recorded. The clerk of the county commission shall record and index the release of judgment without charge or fee to the prosecuting attorney.

(g) A person whose driver’s license was suspended prior to July 1, 2020, solely for the nonpayment of costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties, if otherwise eligible, shall have his or her license reinstated:

(1) Upon payment in full of all outstanding costs, fines, forfeitures, restitution, or penalties and a $25 reinstatement fee paid to the Division of Motor Vehicles; or

(2) Upon establishing a payment plan pursuant to subsection (a) of this section and the payment of a $25 administrative fee. The clerk shall notify the Division of Motor Vehicles that a payment plan is in effect, and upon receipt of the notification, the division shall waive the reinstatement fee.

(h) If a person charged with a criminal offense fails to appear or otherwise respond in court after having received notice to do so, the court shall notify the Division of Motor Vehicles thereof within 15 days of the scheduled date to appear unless such person sooner appears or otherwise responds in court to the satisfaction of the court. Upon such notice, the Division of Motor Vehicles shall suspend the person’s driver’s license or privilege to operate a motor vehicle in this state until such time that the person appears as required.