

Arraignment/First Appearance

Arraignment is the term used for the time scheduled for a defendant to appear in court to enter a plea. If you are charged with a traffic infraction, a notice to appear in court for arraignment will be delivered to you in person or by mail. If you sign a traffic ticket in front of an officer, it does not mean you have entered a plea; it means you have promised to appear.

You may enter a plea of:

Guilty: You admit to committing the act charged, that the act is unlawful, and that you have no defense for the act. In most minor traffic cases, a guilty plea and fine and court costs will be accepted through the mail.

Not Guilty: You deny guilt and ask that it be required to prove at trial that the charges are true beyond a reasonable doubt. Everyone is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

No Contest: You do not wish to contest the charge and allow the judge to find you guilty. A plea of no contest is not an admission of fault and cannot be used against you in a civil suit for damages.