

KING COUNTY DISTRICT COURT

) NO. 21-01  
) GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER  
)  
) REPLACES GAO 20-06  
)  
) FTA Failure to Appear Infractions  
) during COVID-19 pandemic

**WHEREAS**, Washington has been in a state of emergency since Governor Inslee’s proclamation on February 29, 2020 due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, necessitating court-imposed restrictions on in-person court proceedings; and

**WHEREAS**, the court recognizes that while some courts have set-up remote access to court hearings, there are nevertheless a significant number of people who do not have the ability to connect remotely and thus have been unable to appear for in-person, non-criminal traffic related hearings. Non-appearance in these matters results in a Failure to Appear (FTA) Court Minute Entry and the mandatory reporting of such FTAs to the Department of License which results in license suspensions; and

**WHEREAS** the unavailability of in-person proceedings to address matters relating to license suspensions for non-criminal matters has had a negative economic impact on individuals across the state; and

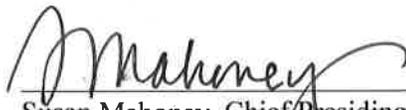
**WHEREAS**, access to public transportation is limited and where available, may pose an increased risk to some populations and there are many populations for whom the utilization of a vehicle is the only means of transportation for employment, medical needs, and essential services; and

**THEREFORE it is now ORDERED:**

When an FTA has been issued due to not responding to the citation or appearing for a requested hearing, if a defendant or their attorney contacts the court within one year of the date of the citation being issued by telephone, or in writing, and requests to have their ticket status reviewed; AND, the FTA was referred to DOL as an FTA , the clerk shall remove the FTA order, remove the \$52.00 FTA penalty and reset the matter for either a contested or mitigation hearing as requested by the defendant. This GAO shall expire on September 30, 2021.

This GAO clarifies and replaces GAO 20-06 upon the signing of this Order.

Done this 26<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2021

  
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Susan Mahoney, Chief/Presiding Judge  
King County District Court