



Juvenile Traffic Offenders

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the MTAS website ([mtas.tennessee.edu](https://www.mtas.tennessee.edu)). This website is maintained daily by MTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee municipal government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with municipal government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other MTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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Reference Number: MTAS-304

Juvenile Traffic Offenders

Generally, all cases involving juveniles are reserved for the juvenile court, and city courts have no original jurisdiction over juveniles, including cases involving traffic violations. All juvenile traffic offenders must, therefore, be tried in juvenile court, absent a waiver by the judge. T.C.A. § 37-1-103. The judge of a juvenile court for the county may waive jurisdiction over traffic violators who are 16 years of age or older. If the juvenile court judge waives jurisdiction, the city court can try those juvenile traffic cases. T.C.A. § 37-1-146(c) and §16-18-302(d).

If the court finds the juvenile to be guilty of a traffic offense, the court may make one or any combination of the following decisions:

1. Suspend the juvenile's driver's license;
2. Limit the juvenile's driving privileges;
3. Order the juvenile to attend traffic school or to receive driving instructions; and/or
4. Impose a fine of not more than \$50.
5. Perform community service work in lieu of a fine. T.C.A. §37-1-146(b)

Note: Item 5 was added to T.C.A. §37-1-146(b) in 2016, per Public Chapter 600. City courts may not have authority to impose item 5.

DISCLAIMER: The letters and publications written by the MTAS consultants were written based upon the law at the time and/or a specific sets of facts. The laws referenced in the letters and publications may have changed and/or the technical advice provided may not be applicable to your city or circumstances. Always consult with your city attorney or an MTAS consultant before taking any action based on information contained in this website.

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