

Court Action Reports

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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Court Action Reports

Reference Number: MTAS-306

All courts, including municipal courts, are required to submit a Court Action Report to the Tennessee Department of Safety. (The report was formerly called the Court Abstract.) This report, along with accident reports, creates a driver's history file at the Department of Safety. Using this information, the state can identify drivers who habitually violate traffic laws or have several traffic accidents. Drivers often receive traffic citations in different jurisdictions, and, without a central repository for traffic violation data and traffic accident data, it would be difficult or impossible to identify poor drivers.

Drivers are assigned "points" for each violation. Higher point values are assigned for more serious offenses. When a driver accumulates a certain number of points in a given period of time, he will receive a warning letter from the Tennessee Department of Safety. The driver may be required to complete a driver improvement program to avoid losing driving privileges. In extreme cases, when a driver continues to accumulate points because of violations or at-fault accidents, the driver may lose driving privileges.

The Court Action Report must be filed within 30 days of final adjudication of the case. [1] For defendants with a commercial driver's license, the court action report must be submitted within five days of adjudication. [2] The report is to be submitted for any finding of guilt or forfeiture. It does not have to be submitted when the case is dismissed or the offender is found "not guilty."

The clerk should submit the guilty disposition to the Department of Safety within 30 days. This reporting requirement still applies when the court allows additional time for the defendant to pay the fine and costs. If the defendant ultimately does not make payment, the clerk can modify the court action report to indicate that the defendant failed to satisfy the fine and costs.

All courts are encouraged to submit court action reports electronically. The Department of Safety has created an internet web program ("the portal" <https://courtreport.safety.tn.gov/> [1]) to allow court action reports to be filed directly to the Department, eliminating the requirement for paper forms. Some court software programs will allow the court action reports to be submitted electronically.

[1] See, T.C.A. § 55-10-306.

[2] See, T.C.A. § 55-50-409.

Links:

[1] <https://courtreport.safety.tn.gov/>

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.

Source URL (retrieved on 09/18/2019 - 4:20pm): <https://www.mtas.tennessee.edu/reference/court-action-reports>