

Chatham County Traffic Pretrial Diversion Program is designed to allow eligible individuals who have committed certain traffic violations to avoid formal prosecution and instead participate in an alternative resolution process, such as education programs, community service, or other rehabilitative measures. Below are key conditions and components that are included in the program:

1. Eligibility Criteria

- **Offenses Covered:** The program should be available only for specific minor traffic violations, such as:
 - Speeding
 - Running a red light.
 - Failing to yield.
 - Improper lane changes.
 - Failure to signal.
 - Vehicle equipment violations.
 - Document violations.
- **Exclusions:** Offenses that are not eligible for diversion:
 - DUI (Driving Under the Influence).
 - Reckless driving.
 - Hit-and-run.
 - Any other offense that may involve serious injury, property damage, or endangerment of others.
- **First-time Offender:** The individual must be a first-time offender or must not have participated in a diversion program in the prior 36 months or not have a serious prior traffic record.
- **No Outstanding Warrants or Criminal History:** The participant must not have any outstanding arrest warrants or a criminal history that would disqualify them from participating.

2. Admission Process

- **Application:** Eligible individuals must apply for the diversion program through the District Attorney's Office.
- **Review by Court or Prosecutor:** An assistant district attorney must review your application to determine eligibility and approve or deny entry into the program based on the criteria above.

3. Program Requirements

- **Educational Courses:** Participants must complete a traffic safety or defensive driving course. These courses would focus on safe driving habits, rules of the road, and the consequences of violating traffic laws.
- **Community Service:** In some cases, the program may require individuals to complete a set number of community service hours. This could involve assisting in local programs or community organizations.

- **Fines or Fees:** Participants may be required to pay a reduced fine, or they might be asked to cover administrative or program-related fees.
- **Probationary Period:** The programs involves a probationary period during which the participant's driving behavior will be monitored. This could include random checks to ensure compliance with the program requirements.
- **Proof of Compliance:** Participants may be required to provide proof of course completion, community service hours, and any required fines or fees before the program is considered successfully completed.

4. Program Duration

- **Timeframe for Completion:** The diversion program typically last anywhere from 30 days to 6 months, depending on the nature of the offense and the program's specific requirements.

5. Consequences for Non-Compliance

- **Failure to Complete the Program:** If the participant fails to meet any of the program conditions, they will be disqualified from the program and required to appear in court, where they would face the original charges and penalties.
- **Failure to Pay Fees:** Non-payment of any required fines, administrative fees, or restitution may result in disqualification from the program, and the participant would be subject to the original penalties.

6. Successful Completion and Benefits

- **Dismissal of Charges:** Upon successful completion of the program, the charges could be dismissed, and no conviction would appear on the individual's driving record.
- **No Points on Driver's License:** Successful completion of the program should ensure that no points are added to the participant's driving record, which helps to maintain a clean driving history and avoid the suspension of the driver's license.
- **No Insurance Rate Increase:** A successful program completion could prevent the violation from impacting the individual's insurance rates.

7. Program Fees

- **Sliding Scale Fees:** To ensure access to the program, consider offering a sliding scale fee system based on the participant's financial status, to reduce financial barriers for those with limited resources.

8. Program Monitoring and Reporting

- **Tracking Progress:** Participants will be monitored through South East Corrections to ensure they are complying with all conditions of the program, including completing educational courses and community service hours.

- **Completion Confirmation:** Once the participant successfully completes the program, a confirmation of completion would be sent to the court, which would then dismiss or reduce the charges against the individual.

9. Legal Rights

- **Right to Legal Counsel:** Participants must be informed of their right to legal counsel and the ability to reject the diversion program and proceed with regular court proceedings.
- **Voluntary Participation:** Entry into the program must be voluntary, and there are no increased penalties or sanctions for failure to participate or unsuccessful completion after entry.