



STATE OF OREGON
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
TINA KOTEK

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS & NEXT STEPS

GOVERNOR'S UPDATED REMISSION OF FINES ORDERS AND OPPORTUNITY TO REINSTATE OREGON DRIVING PRIVILEGES

On December 21, 2022, former Governor Kate Brown remitted the fines and fees associated with years-old traffic violations imposed on Oregonians, the nonpayment of which or nonappearance on which caused legacy suspensions of their driver's licenses. The remission orders forgive fines and fees related only to traffic violations; they do not forgive fines and fees related to traffic crimes (i.e. misdemeanors and felonies) and do not forgive restitution and compensatory fines owed to victims. The remission orders have the effect of clearing the fines and removing the basis for the associated suspensions, enabling the affected individuals to seek reinstatement of their driving privileges through the Driver and Motor Vehicle Services Division (DMV) division of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

Former Governor Brown's [remission orders](#) were intended to grant remission to all persons meeting those criteria. However, DMV has since discovered that some people who met the original criteria were not listed in the original remission orders.

On December 1, 2023, Governor Tina Kotek issued [new remission orders](#) to include the people who were inadvertently omitted from the original orders. Governor Kotek's orders do not alter the original criteria. Instead, Governor Kotek's orders ensure that those who met the original criteria are identified.

HOW TO START THE REINSTATEMENT PROCESS WITH DMV:

Go to [DMV's Fine Remittance – Do I Qualify?](#) web page to learn if your name is on one of the remission orders and how to reinstate your driving privileges.

You can also watch this [YouTube video](#) that the [Oregon Law Center](#) created after Governor Brown issued her 2022 remission orders. The video explains what remission orders do, how to check if you are eligible, and the steps to take to reinstate your driving privileges if you are eligible.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1. What is a remission of fines?

A remission of fines is the forgiveness of fines and fees that were imposed on an individual as a consequence of violating the law or committing a crime.

2. On which cases were the underlying fines and fees remitted by the Governor's remission orders?

The Governor remitted the unpaid fines and fees associated with traffic violations that have resulted in subsequent suspensions of driving privileges due to a failure to pay or comply or otherwise failing to appear in the case in a court in Oregon.

The following additional criteria apply:

- DMV had an Oregon address for the affected person;
- DMV records reflect that the affected person is not deceased;
- The affected person has a driver's license that is currently suspended or, due to the suspension, has downgraded to an ID card or has a valid hardship permit;
- The only sanction in Oregon preventing DMV from reinstating the affected person's driving privilege is a Failure to Comply (nonpayment) or Failure to Appear sanction imposed in the underlying traffic violation case; and
- That sanction occurred prior to October 1, 2020.

3. Will the Governor's remission orders remit fines and fees on underlying traffic offenses that are misdemeanors or felonies?

No. The remission orders specifically apply only to underlying traffic violations and exclude all underlying misdemeanor and felony convictions, as defined by Oregon law.

4. Will the Governor's remission orders forgive or remit any restitution or compensatory fines that are owed to victims?

No. The remission orders specifically exclude all restitution awards, as defined in ORS 137.103(3), and compensatory fines, as described in ORS 137.101.

5. Are non-citizens excluded from the Governor's remission orders?

No. The Governor's remission orders apply to both citizens and non-citizens, and do not exclude non-citizens who have a suspended driver's license or permit.

6. Will I be notified if the fines and fees were remitted on my case?

No. The Governor's office does not have contact information for individuals whose fines and fees were forgiven and will not notify individuals.

7. How will I know if my case was included in the remission orders?

The 2022 and 2023 remission orders include lists of affected people by first and last name and case number. You can check the orders to see if your name and case number appear on one of the lists.

There are three courts that deal with these cases: circuit, municipal, and justice. If you owe traffic fines in multiple courts, you will need to check the list for each court. If your case met the criteria described above, then the Governor's forgiveness of your unpaid fines and fees associated with that case will go forward without your involvement, as described in question-and-answer number

8 of this FAQ (see below).

- Governor Kotek’s remission orders may be found [here](#) and the compiled list of names from all three orders can be found [here](#).
- Former Governor Brown’s remission orders, including the lists of cases, may be found [here](#).

Click on the links to open the lists then can use CTRL-F to open a search bar to type in and find your last name on the list. Your name may be listed more than once if you have more than one docket number or have dockets in more than one court. Use the up and down arrows to move to the next time the name appears on the list.

You can also go to [DMV’s Fine Remittance – Do I Qualify?](#) web page to learn more about how to reinstate your driving privileges.

8. How and when will my unpaid fines and fees be forgiven and the suspension of my driver’s license, permit or right to apply for driving privileges be lifted?

For circuit court cases: If your case was in a *circuit court* in Oregon and is listed in the remission order, the [Oregon Judicial Department](#) (OJD) will centrally remit all outstanding fines and fees, as directed by the remission order, on behalf of all circuit courts in Oregon for those cases listed in the remission order.

OJD will then send notices to the DMV for each affected case. The “clearance” notice alerts DMV that there are no outstanding fines and fees associated with your case and that you are eligible to seek reinstatement of your suspended driving privilege with DMV, subject to a check by DMV of your eligibility status with other states.

For municipal and justice court cases: If your case was in a *municipal or justice court* in Oregon and is listed in those remission orders, it is the responsibility of the municipal or justice court to remit outstanding fines and fees and send a notice to the DMV in accordance with the terms of the Governor’s remission orders. The “clearance” notice alerts DMV that there are no outstanding fines and fees associated with your case and that you are eligible to seek reinstatement of your suspended driving privilege with DMV, subject to a check by DMV of your eligibility status with other states. Municipal and justice courts will need time to clear out the balance and close each case.

9. When will I be able to seek reinstatement of my driver’s license?

If you have a *circuit court* case included in the remission order, then your suspension should be cleared within 4-5 business days from the order. If you have a *municipal or justice court* case included in the remission orders, the process may take longer—potentially up to a few months.

If your name is on the list, you may contact DMV Customer Assistance at (503) 945-5000 or go to

[DMV's Fine Remittance – Do I Qualify?](#) to learn how to reinstate your driving privilege.

10. My case is not listed in the remission orders. Can I get my case added to the order?

No. However, you can take action to address your individual suspension of driving privileges and court debt.

After contacting the respective court, if you are unable to resolve your suspension and you would like to request that the Governor remit certain fines and fees, you may apply for a remission of fines and fees by submitting [this form](#) to the Governor's office. The Governor will not remit criminal restitution. The typical remission of fines and fees application process involves a case-by-case evaluation of your application by the Governor and staff in the Governor's office. A decision by the Governor, who has the sole discretion to grant or deny the application, is usually made within six to twelve months.

11. My case or cases are not included in the remission orders, but my license is suspended because of a Failure to Comply (nonpayment) or Failure to Appear sanction in a traffic violation case. What can I do?

You should first reach out to the court or courts in which you were sanctioned in your traffic violation case(s). In many cases, courts will be willing to work with you to develop payment plans or other arrangements to resolve outstanding fines and clear outstanding suspensions.

If you need assistance seeking relief from court fines and fees, Oregon Law Center and Legal Aid Services of Oregon have prepared materials to help, including a step-by-step guide to addressing your court debt and a sample letter to the court.

This information can be downloaded through [this link](#). To find your local legal aid office, [click here](#).

Please note that legal aid offices do not have information about the status of your fines and fees or steps you must take after your case or cases have been cleared. For this information, please contact the respective court or the DMV.

12. I have unpaid fines and fees associated with a traffic violation and have had my license suspended for nonpayment. Why weren't the fines and fees associated with that case remitted by the remission orders?

Governor Kotek and former Governor Brown remitted certain unpaid fines and fees associated with traffic violations that resulted in subsequent driver's license suspensions for Failure to Comply (nonpayment) or Failure to Appear. If your case is not included in the original or updated order, it is because you have a different type of suspension or you do not meet one of the other criteria listed in the order. Your fines and fees were not forgiven if your license was suspended due to public safety-related sanctions, like a criminal conviction.

If you believe that you meet the remission criteria and were wrongly excluded, you may apply for

a remission from Governor Kotek by submitting [this form](#) to the Governor's office.

13. Will the Governor's remission orders result in anyone being freed from incarceration?

No. The remission orders only forgive or remit fines and fees associated with a violation and do not alter the incarceration portion of any sentences.

14. Will the Governor's remission orders result in anyone's violation being pardoned or expunged from their record?

No. The remission orders only forgive or remit fines and fees associated with a violation and do not have the effect of pardoning the underlying violation. The underlying violation will still appear on that individual's record.

15. Do the Governor's remission orders apply to cases in another state if the individual now lives in Oregon?

No. Oregon governors have the authority to remit the fines and fees associated only with Oregon cases.

16. What is the Governor's authority to remit fines and fees?

Under Article V, Section 14 of the Oregon Constitution, the Governor has the constitutional power to remit the fines and fees associated with convictions of Oregon crimes and violations.

17. The underlying fines and fees were remitted from approximately 13,300 cases by former Governor Brown's remission orders. Governor Kotek remitted fines and fees in approximately 33,000 cases that met the criteria from the original orders. How many people does this impact?

Under the initial orders, approximately 7,000 people had fines and fees remitted on cases that had active sanctions causing suspension of their driver's license. As a result, these same roughly 7,000 individuals will be eligible to seek reinstatement of their driver's license through the DMV. Governor Kotek's orders benefits over 10,000 additional people who are now eligible to seek reinstatement of their driver's license.

18. What was the total amount of unpaid fines and fees that was remitted from Governor Kotek's orders? Approximately \$6 million was remitted from circuit court cases in Oregon. The total amount of unpaid fines and fees that was remitted from cases in Oregon municipal and justice courts is unknown because neither DMV nor OJD has access to this information.

19. How will forgiveness of this unpaid debt impact the state and local jurisdictions?

The vast majority of the fines and fees forgiven by the Governor's orders are considered uncollectible debt. According to the OJD, about 84% of the liquidated debt on its books is uncollectible. Much of the debt forgiven by the Governor's remission orders is held by OJD. OJD's collections data shows that most people who can afford to pay their violation fines do so right away, but for cases like those included in the Governor's orders, collections rates drop to roughly 10% in the second year of delinquency, and to 4% or lower in year three and beyond.

Much of the debt forgiven by the Governor's remission orders has remained unpaid for three or more years and, as a result, is considered uncollectible.

20. What are the demographics of individuals with fines and fees that were remitted by the Governor's remission orders?

The information about the cases considered by the Governor did not include any demographic information.

Resources and Quick Links

- [DMV Fine Remissions page and steps to reinstate a driver's license](#)
- [Oregon Judicial Department Fine Remittance page and court information](#)
- [Governor Kotek's Remission Orders and List of Cases](#)
 - A compiled list of names from Governor Kotek's three orders can be found [here](#).
 - The [form](#) to submit to the Governor's office to apply for a remission from Governor Kotek.
- [Governor Brown's Remission Orders and List of Cases](#)
- [DMV2U Driver License Standings](#)
- [Oregon Law Center](#)