



City of Thornton Municipal Court Policies

Contents

Paying Without Going to Court	1
Appearing in Court – Arraignment Dates and Times	2
Conduct in The Courtroom	3
Requesting Continuances	4
Extensions of: Court Orders – Classes – Payment Plans	4
Alternative Sentencing Program	4
Failure to Appear	4
Posting Bonds	5
Warrants	5
Release of Records	6
Giving Legal Advice	6
Trial to Court or Requesting a Jury Trial	6
Requesting Subpoenas	7
Requesting A Court Appointed Attorney	7
Proof of Insurance: Charged with No Proof of Insurance	7
Adult Seal of Criminal Justice Records	8
Juvenile Expungement of Records	8

Paying Without Going to Court

Please read your summons carefully to determine if you have the correct court. If your summons is marked for appearance in either Adams or Weld County Court, please contact them for assistance. You can reach Adams County Court in Brighton at 303-659-1161. Weld County Court in Greeley can be reached at 970-351-7300.

If your summons is marked for appearance in Thornton Municipal Court, and if eligible, your ticket will be marked with a fine amount that may be paid prior to your court date. Most traffic violations may be resolved by paying a fine found on the ticket. Those choosing to do so may

pay by mail or in person at the court specialist's window. There is a payment drop box located to the right of the Court entrance on the building itself for after hour payments. Please do not place cash in the drop box. The Court will also accept telephone payments by credit card. Online payments through CitePay USA is also available (not all citations are eligible to be paid on-line). To make a payment using CitePay, please use this link: [Pay Ticket Online](#).

The Court will accept the payable amount before the date of your first court appearance which appears on your summons. If not paid timely, court costs are imposed by the Municipal Court in order to cover administrative expenses.

You **MUST** appear if your summons is marked **MANDATORY**.

By making payment, the person admits their guilt to the charge, or amended charge if the Court has made an offer. A record of conviction is then forwarded to the Division of Motor Vehicle (DMV). The DMV assesses the appropriate penalty points to each violator's driving history, as established by state law.

Here are some things to remember when mailing in your payment:

- Make sure to include your ticket number on your payment and make sure you are using the correct address. The court processes thousands of summonses each year, and it is important to ensure that your payment is credited to your case. There are many courts in Colorado and they all have different procedures. Thornton Municipal Court has two forms of summonses. One form is blue and begins with the letter T. The other form is white and starts with the letter E. Read the summons carefully to ensure you have the correct address.
- Never mail cash. If you wish to pay in cash, please pay in person at the court specialists' window during business hours. The court accepts checks, money orders, cash, Visa, MasterCard and Discover cards. We do not accept temporary checks.
- Always pay on time. Failure to make a payment when due, or appear as ordered, may result in additional penalties and procedures.

Appearing in Court - Arraignment Dates and Times

Thornton Municipal Court has jurisdiction over violations of City Ordinances. Some violations require an appearance in court, while others may be resolved simply by paying a fine instead of appearing. If you have any questions whether or not you must appear in Court, you may contact the court at (720) 977-5400. The Thornton Municipal Court is in session Monday through Thursday. Walk-ins are welcome on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursdays mornings between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. The system is designed to resolve most offenses in a single appearance.

Children under 18 years of age must be accompanied by at least one parent or legal guardian when appearing in municipal court, and parents may not represent or act as attorney for their child.

If you wish to contest a municipal court summons and complaint, you are expected to appear in court at **9551 Civic Center Drive in Thornton, Colorado** on the date and time specified on your ticket. Arraignment sessions are normally scheduled Monday, Tuesday and Thursday morning; juvenile cases on Tuesday afternoon. Check-in time begins 15 minutes before each session.

Upon entering the building you will be required to go through security. After you have been cleared, you will be directed to the court check-in desk. There the Bailiff will take your name and will provide you with your written Advisement of Rights. This form should be read carefully before you sign it. Those wishing to discuss their case with the Prosecuting Attorney in an attempt to resolve the matter without having to go to trial will be directed to the Court's waiting room. Because many people choose to do this, it will take some time, so be prepared to wait.

After speaking with the Prosecuting Attorney, you may be sent to the courtroom or directed to the court specialist. This depends on the circumstances of your case. If you do not reach a satisfactory agreement with the Prosecuting Attorney to resolve your case, you will be scheduled for a trial at a later date.

Walk-ins are welcome any Monday, Tuesday, or Thursday (excluding holidays) with check-in from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. for matters not already scheduled on the docket.

Please be prepared to make payment according to the **THORNTON MUNICIPAL COURT FINE AND FEE SCHEDULE**. Full payment is expected by end of the business day at 5:00 p.m. If payment is not received when due, or appear as ordered, it may result in additional penalties and procedures. The Court accepts cash, checks, money order, certified funds, Visa, MasterCard, and Discover for the amount of fines and costs. An additional fee will be charged for all returned checks. We do not accept temporary checks. There is a payment drop box located to the right of the court entrance for after-hour payments. Please do not place cash in the drop box. Online payments are also available for eligible cases. The maximum sentence a municipal court may impose is up to one year in jail, a fine of \$2,650, or both. Jail is not possible on certain minor charges, or for juveniles.

If you are absolutely unable to pay the fines and costs on the day of your court hearing, you may request to speak to the Collections Officer. Prior to speaking with the Collections Officer you will be requested to complete a financial information sheet. After reviewing your completed financial information, the Collections Officer will determine if you are eligible for additional time to pay your fine. ***NOTE: There are no guarantees that your request for additional time will be granted.***

Conduct in The Courtroom

You should appear promptly at the date and time of trial, or any hearings set by the Court. No pagers or cellular telephones or similar electronic devices are to be on at any time while court is

in session. If your pager or cell phone should go off, you will be asked to turn it off or exit the building.

We discourage bringing children to Court since there are no facilities available in which to monitor them. Shirts, shoes, and appropriate attire are required when appearing in Court. Hats are to be removed prior to entering the courtroom. All persons are to remain seated and keep quiet while Court is in session. Please refrain from smoking, eating, drinking or chewing gum when Court is in session. Refrain from reading newspapers, magazines, or other matters unrelated to the business of the Court.

Requesting Continuances

If you choose not to pay your ticket, you are to appear in Court on the date given. However, if for an appropriate reason you cannot appear, the Court may allow one continuance for your arraignment. The Court is unable to continue cases by phone. To have your court date changed, you need to appear in person at the Court Specialists window to make your request.

Continuances for trial or hearing dates require a personal appearance before the judge. This request should be made prior to your trial or hearing date and can be done any Monday, Tuesday, or Thursday morning when Court is in session. Under normal conditions the court has placed witnesses under subpoena approximately four weeks in advance of any trial or hearing.

Extensions of: Court Dates – Court Ordered Classes – Payment Plans

To request an extension of time to complete a court ordered class, community service hours, or additional time to pay your fine, you must appear in person and speak with the Collections Officer. Documentation or proof of circumstances may be required by the Collections Officer in order to grant any continuance. A stay of execution fee is added every time an extension of payment is granted. Please note, **THERE ARE NO GUARANTEES THAT YOUR REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL TIME WILL BE GRANTED. *Failure to pay may also result in the case being referred to a private collection agency.***

Alternative Sentencing Program

The Alternative Sentencing Program may be court ordered by the Judge, or may be offered by the Collections Officer provided you are able to meet the criteria necessary to qualify for the program. This program allows a defendant to work off their fines and court costs within a city department. If restitution or OJW fees are owed, they may not be worked off through this program. They must be paid.

Failure To Appear

If you fail to appear for a court date, or fail to comply with a court order; a warrant may be issued for your arrest. A warrant is a legal document ordered by the judge that gives any law enforcement officer the authority to place you under arrest. Once arrested, the judge could do the following, not inclusive: 1) You may be detained in any jail until your next Court date; 2) You may be given an opportunity to post bond and be released. If you are arrested for failure to

appear, you will need to post the amount of the bond, plus a non-refundable \$25 processing fee. At that time, your warrant will be cleared and you will be given a return court date; The Thornton Municipal Court allows walk-ins every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday mornings. If you have an active warrant, you may appear at this time to try to resolve your case. The judge will then review your case and make a decision on the status of your warrant. Check in for walk-ins ends promptly at 10:00 a.m. The Thornton Municipal Court issues warrants for juvenile defendants who have not appeared in Court, paid their fines, or completed their court orders. Shortly after the juvenile turns 18 years of age, the warrant is automatically changed to an adult warrant. Once an adult warrant is issued, the defendant is subject to being held in an adult detention facility. On certain minor traffic violations, failure to pay the ticket or appear in court will result in a judgment being entered against you and the original points will be assessed to your driving record. Once judgment has been entered, your driver's license will be cancelled and you will not be able to renew your driver's license until all fines, costs, and an additional charge of \$30 has been paid to the Court. Failure to appear may also result in the case being referred to a collection company, incurring an additional fee. For further information, call the Court Specialist's office at 720-977-5400 during normal business hours.

Posting Bonds

A bond is a legally binding document that a defendant signs, and serves to guarantee an appearance in Court. In order to be released from custody, a specified amount of money is posted, and a bond form is completed which indicates a return date and time for a court appearance. Failure to appear in Court at the date and time indicated could cause a forfeiture of the bond posted, and another arrest warrant being issued.

Cash and surety (professional) bonds are the only types of bonds the Thornton Municipal Court accepts. Both types of bonds may be posted at the Court office during business hours Monday through Thursday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (excluding holiday). Cash bonds may be paid by cash, cashier's check, money order or certified funds. Personal checks will not be accepted.

A bond may be posted only for someone in the Thornton Police Department's custody, or for someone appearing at the court specialist's window. When the person is in custody at another agency, the bond must be posted at that agency since the bond requires the person's signature.

Warrants

If you should fail to appear or fail to comply with a court order, a warrant may be issued for your arrest. A warrant is a legal document ordered by a judge giving any law enforcement officer the authority to place you under arrest for failing to appear or not complying with completing court orders. You may be given an opportunity to post bond and be released or you may be seen via video hearing or be transported to Court.

Copies of Court Documents - Release of Records

In accordance with C.R.S. 24-72-302 et seq. All records of non-traffic criminal offenses in the custody of the Municipal Court are considered to be open to inspection by any person with the following exceptions:

- Juvenile Records
- Presentence Investigations
- Medical/Psychological and Financial Records
- Division of Motor Vehicle Driving Reports
- NCIC or CCIC Criminal Histories
- Names of Victims of Sexual Crimes
- Address/Telephone Numbers of Victims
- Correspondence to Court concerning Defendants
- Police Reports that may be investigator or intelligence related
- School Principal/Designee

The defendant, defendant's attorney, or any person of interest in the case may obtain discovery at any time while the case is in the court's possession. In some cases, as mentioned above, exceptions do occur. If a question arises regarding these exceptions, the Prosecuting Attorney may review the case and authorize the release of information. There is a charge for copies of records that is equal to the amount stated on the City Clerk's Fee Schedule.

Giving Legal Advice

Court staff is not permitted by law to give legal advice. Court staff is not permitted by law to make referrals for posting bonds.

Requesting a Trial to Court or Jury Trial

If you enter a plea of Not Guilty to the charge against you, your case will be set for trial. A Trial to Court is a trial that is held before a judge. A jury trial is held before a jury panel of eligible citizens of the City of Thornton. If you wish to set your case for a jury trial, the case must involve an adult defendant and the violation must be aailable offense. The law does not allow juvenile defendants to set their cases for jury trial since there is no possibility of jail time.

To request a jury trial you must complete the Jury Demand form, which is available from the Court Specialist, and post a \$25.00 jury deposit within 21 days of the Not Guilty plea. If you cannot afford the jury deposit you can request to fill out a financial affidavit, if eligible the deposit fee may be waived. The Jury Demand requests the defendant's name, and number of jurors requested. The number of juror requested may range from three to six. If both the jury demand and fee are not posted within the 21-day time frame, you will only be eligible for a trial to the judge.

Trials are held all day each Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons for trial by judge; and Monday's and Wednesday's for jury trials.

Requesting Subpoenas

A subpoena is a written command to a person to appear and give testimony. If your case is scheduled for trial and you have witnesses you want to appear, you may request a subpoena from the Court. You will be responsible for having them served. Subpoenas may be obtained at the Court Specialist's Office during normal business hours at no cost. In order to issue the subpoena, the defendant's name and summons number must be provided. The court will prepare the subpoena and provide you with two copies. You will be required to fill in the name and address of the person to be served. It is your responsibility to have the subpoena served. The person serving the subpoena must be over the age of 18, and not involved in the case. The return of service is to be filled out by the person serving the subpoena. You should bring a copy of the served subpoena with you to court. This serves as proof that a witness was placed under court order to appear for the trial. Without this proof, sanctions can not be imposed against someone not appearing in court for trial. For further information, call the Court Specialist's office at 720-977-5400 during normal business hours.

Requesting A Court Appointed Attorney

Court appointed attorney applications are available, by request, at the Court Specialist's window. Please request these forms as early as possible in the process of your court case. When a court appointed attorney is appointed to handle your case, there must be ample time for you to meet with the attorney, and for the attorney to prepare your case prior to appearing in Court.

When the application has been submitted, you will be informed to contact the Court within 7 to 10 days to see if your request has been granted. If your request is denied, you should know as soon as possible so that you have time to contact an attorney of your choice. If your application has been approved, the Court will notify you by mail, advising you of the attorney's name, address, and phone number that has been appointed to represent you.

The Prosecuting Attorney and the Judge review each application. Determination for granting a court appointed attorney depends on two factors. The first is whether or not the Prosecuting Attorney is recommending a jail sentence if defendant is convicted of the offense in the case. If the prosecuting attorney is not recommending jail time, an attorney will not be appointed. The second determining factor is whether or not the defendant meets the state's indigence guidelines. If it is determined that a defendant is not indigent, a court appointed attorney will not be granted.

Proof of Insurance: Charged with No Proof of Insurance

If you have been charged with Failure to Present Insurance and you were insured on the date you received the violation, or are currently insured please provide a copy of your insurance, including the policy number, included driver, VIN and the effective dates of the policy. Write your Citation number on the copy submitted.

You may provide proof either by:

- **Mail:** Prosecuting Attorney's Office at 9551 Civic Center Dr., Thornton, CO 80229,
- **Fax:** 720-977-5433 or
- **Email:** insurance@cityofthornton.net.

All policies will be verified.

Providing proof of insurance does not waive your requirement to appear. If you have an additional charge or if your insurance is not accepted (verifiable) by the Prosecuting Attorney's office, you will need to appear in court on the date and time on the front of your summons. The Thornton Municipal Court is located at 9551 Civic Center Drive.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding proof of insurance, you may contact the Prosecuting Attorney's office at 303-538-7210. Please confirm that the home address on your ticket is correct and update any address information with the Court.

Adult Seal of Criminal Justice Records

Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes 24-72-702.5 you may immediately motion the court to have your record sealed at any time after your case has been completely dismissed, you have been acquitted, or you have successfully completed a diversion agreement or a deferred judgment and sentence. This does not pertain to juvenile records for persons under the age of 18. Juveniles to follow the expungement process as outlined in C.R.S. 19-1-306(9).

Juvenile Expungement of Records

Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes 19-1-306(9), expungement of **eligible** non-traffic juvenile records, apart from any objections filed or hearing held, will be expunged forty-two days after completion of a municipal sentence. **Eligible – Case finding acquitted of all charges, case completely dismissed, completed a diversion agreement and/or completed a deferred judgment and sentence.* Municipal court case is closed.