

Plea Options

If you signed a citation in front of an officer, you did not plead guilty, but you signed a promise to appear in court. You must decide upon and enter a plea to the charge brought against you on or before the appearance date on your citation. If you received a summons, you are also required to appear on or before the appearance date on your summons. There are three possible pleas to a complaint:

1. Guilty
2. Nolo Contendere (also known as No Contest)
3. Not Guilty

Innocent Until Proven Guilty

All persons are presumed innocent until proven guilty. Your decision concerning which plea to enter is important. You should review the following material before determining your plea.

Plea of Not Guilty

When you enter a plea of not guilty, you are stating to the court that you believe you are innocent of the charge and you wish to have your case placed on the pre-trial docket. You also must decide if you want to request a judge trial or a jury trial. You may represent yourself, or you may hire an attorney to represent you.

Plea of Guilty

A plea of guilty means that the act with which you are charged is prohibited by law, that you committed the act, and that you have no defense or excuse for the act. You will be required to pay the applicable fine plus court costs.

Plea of Nolo Contendere (No Contest)

A plea of nolo contendere means that you do not contest (challenge) the State's charge against you. You are not admitting that you committed the offense nor are you denying it. However, you understand that you will still be responsible for paying the applicable fine and costs of the said violation.