NOTICE TO THE BAR AND PUBLIC

DISMISSAL OF APPROXIMATELY 551,200 MUNICIPAL CASES MORE THAN 11 YEARS OLD; RESCISSION OF DRIVER'S LICENSE SUSPENSIONS AND RECALL OF ARREST WARRANTS

By Order of August 24, 2026 (attached), the Supreme Court has dismissed approximately 551,200 unresolved, minor municipal court cases that are more than 11 years old (Dismissal Order). The Court ordered these dismissals following review by the respective municipal prosecutors. The Order extends the eligibility period to include cases in which driver's license suspensions and/or arrest warrants had been issued to defendants for a failure to appear prior to January 1, 2015, rather than the previous date of January 1, 2010. This change aligns with Rule 7:8-5(c), which specifies dismissal for cases older than ten years. All driver's license suspensions will be rescinded and all arrest warrants recalled for these matters.

The dismissed cases include unresolved parking offenses, motor vehicle offenses, municipal ordinances, and other minor municipal matters. The Dismissal Order exempts certain more serious Municipal Court cases from dismissal – for example, disorderly persons and petty disorderly persons offenses, driving while intoxicated, reckless driving, and refusal to submit to a chemical test.

This Dismissal Order is the fifth in a series of Supreme Court orders that collectively will address approximately 1.7 million minor, unresolved Municipal Court cases involving the same types of charges. As with the prior dismissal Orders, this process serves the interests of justice, considering the use of limited public resources by law enforcement and the courts, the ability of the State to prosecute cases successfully in light of how long matters have been pending and the availability of witnesses, and administrative efficiency.

The first order, issued May 21, 2021, dismissed 313,231 cases. The second order, issued December 12, 2022, dismissed approximately 266,000 cases. The third order, issued December 11, 2023, dismissed approximately 298,000 cases. And the fourth order, issued October 7, 2024, dismissed approximately 257,500 cases.

The Judiciary has created a webpage to assist the public in identifying what matters are included or not included in this Dismissal Order. The webpage, located at https://www.njcourts.gov/courts/municipal/dismissal-old-cases, includes a database

that can be searched to determine whether or not a particular case is included in the Dismissal Order. The webpage also includes: the list of serious charges excluded from this Dismissal Order; further details on charges that are included in the Dismissal Order; a set of Frequently Asked Questions; and an explanation of how an individual can, if necessary, contact the Motor Vehicle Commission to restore a suspended license.



Michael J. Blee, J.A.D.
Acting Administrative Director of the Courts

Dated: August 24, 2026

SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY

1. Open arrest warrants and license suspensions in old, unresolved, minor Municipal Court matters raise questions of fairness, the best use of limited public resources by law enforcement and the courts, the ability of the State to prosecute old cases successfully in light of how long matters have been pending and the availability of witnesses, and administrative efficiency.

2. Accordingly, following notice and review by prosecutors, the Supreme Court in its May 21, 2021 Order dismissed approximately 300,000 unresolved, minor Municipal Court cases in which driver's license suspensions had been issued to defendants for a failure to appear more than 27 years earlier. The Court in that Order indicated that it was the first in a series of Orders that would address approximately 1.7 million minor, unresolved Municipal Court cases.

3. Subsequently, the Court in its December 12, 2022 Order dismissed approximately 266,000 complaints in which the warrant was issued and/or license suspension was ordered prior to January 1, 1998.

4. The Court in its December 11, 2023 Order dismissed approximately 298,000 complaints in which the warrant was issued and/or license suspension was ordered prior to January 1, 2004.

5. The Court in its October 7, 2024 Order dismissed approximately 257,500 complaints in which the warrant was issued and/or license suspension was ordered prior to January 1, 2007.

6. This is the fifth such Order providing for the dismissal of old, unresolved, minor Municipal Court cases in accordance with Rule 7:8-5(c) and Administrative Directive #26-20, which require the periodic dismissal of certain eligible complaints that are more than 10 years old.

7. This present Order (Phase 5) addresses approximately 551,200 complaints in which the warrant was issued and/or license suspension was ordered prior to January 1, 2015.

8. Administrative Directive #26-20 anticipated the fifth omnibus Order would cover eligible cases with bench warrants and/or license suspensions issued before January 1, 2010. This Order revises that timeframe to include cases where such actions were ordered before January 1, 2015.

9. The following provides the scope of the minor matters addressed by this Order and the four previous Dismissal Orders (May 21, 2021; December 12, 2022; December 11, 2023; and October 7, 2024):

a. The minor, outstanding matters include parking violations; motor vehicle offenses (such as going through a stop sign, improper passing,

general motor vehicle equipment violations, certain speeding offenses, and running a red light); local ordinance violations; fish and game violations; and penalty enforcement actions.

b. The cases dismissed do not include more serious matters, namely:

i) Indictable charges

ii) Disorderly persons charges

iii) Petty disorderly persons charges

iv) The following motor vehicle charges:

- N.J.S.A. 39:3-10 - Driving without a license
- N.J.S.A. 39:3-10.13 - Operating a commercial vehicle while intoxicated
- N.J.S.A. 39:3-10.24 - Refusal to submit to a breath test while operating a commercial vehicle
- N.J.S.A. 39:3-10.18(b) - Operating a commercial vehicle while commercial license suspended or revoked
- N.J.S.A. 39:3-40 - Driving while license suspended or revoked
- N.J.S.A. 39:4-49.1 - Drugs in a motor vehicle
- N.J.S.A. 39:4-50 - Driving while intoxicated
- N.J.S.A. 39:4-50.4a - Refusal to submit to a chemical test
- N.J.S.A. 39:4-50.14 - Underage driving while intoxicated
- N.J.S.A. 39:4-50.19 - Failure to install an interlock device
- N.J.S.A. 39:4-96 - Reckless driving
- N.J.S.A. 39:4-98 - Speeding (only those complaints in which the speed was alleged to be in excess of 35 mph over the posted speed limit)
- N.J.S.A. 39:4-128.1 - Passing a stopped school bus
- N.J.S.A. 39:4-129(a), (b) - Leaving the scene of an accident with personal injury or property damage
- N.J.S.A. 39:6B-2 - Driving without insurance
- N.J.S.A. 12:7-46 - Boating while intoxicated

c. Charges associated with any of the above charges.

10. In accordance with Directive #26-20 and Rule 7:8-5(c), Municipal Court Administrators and the Administrative Office of the Courts shared lists of cases that would be subject to this Order with each affected municipal prosecutor. Prosecutors were provided 45 days to review and make any objections to the proposed dismissal of cases within their jurisdiction. In response to substantiated objections by prosecutors, certain cases were removed from the lists.

11. N.J.S.A. 2C:52-6 requires that certain non-traffic, dismissed matters be expunged following dismissal. Matters subject to this Order that are required to be expunged by N.J.S.A. 2C:52-6 will be centrally removed from the Judiciary's computer system as expeditiously as possible, following issuance of this Order.

Accordingly, it is therefore **ORDERED**, in the interest of justice and consistent with Rule 7:8-5(c) and the general principles of Directive #26-20, that effective immediately:

a. the approximately 551,200 unresolved Municipal Court matters designated as Phase 5 cases shall be **dismissed;**

b. any associated arrest warrants for failure to appear shall be **recalled;**

c. any associated court-ordered driver's license suspensions or revocations

shall be **rescinded.** Any rescission of a court-ordered driver's license suspension or revocation pursuant to this Order is separate from any license restoration fee or process required by the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission;

d. any of the Phase 5 dismissed matters that qualify for an expungement under N.J.S.A. 2C:52-6 shall be **expunged**. For Phase 5 expunged cases, defendants or their attorneys can seek confirmation of the dismissal and expungement pursuant to the procedures set forth in Administrative Directive #24-21; and

e. the list of non-expunged dismissed cases shall be **made available** to the public on the Judiciary's website.

For the Court,

Chief Justice

Dated: August 24, 2026