

Tips for Traffic Tickets

By Angela Rainey, Marcello & Kivisto, LLC

When you or a driver for your company receive a traffic citation, it is important to have a plan of action and to be aware of the steps you need to take in order to protect you or your driver's driving record, CSA score and CDL. Here are some considerations and tips to help you or your driver be better prepared to deal successfully with a traffic citation.

1. Carefully review the citation for pertinent procedural information.

2. If the violation occurred outside of your licensed state consider contacting an attorney in your licensed state regarding the consequences of a conviction.

3. Don't forget about your inspection report and make any necessary DataQ challenges - winning the ticket does not remove the CSA points.

4. Consider whether the ticket carries an automatic suspension or is it a first offense that can lead to the suspension of your CDL.

5. Consider consulting an attorney.

6. If you do consult an attorney be prepared - you will need information like the alleged vehicle code sections violated, the date of the alleged violation, the location, court information and any upcoming deadlines or court dates.

7. An officer who thinks he is giving a driver a break by giving a no points violation may be unaware of other potential consequences that the violation may carry.

8. Consider who the defendant is listed on the ticket. If an attorney is retained and the driver is listed as the defendant on the ticket, even if the attorney is retained by the driver's company, it is the driver who is the client.

9. Keep in mind potential consequences of a guilty plea vs. conviction in any subsequent civil action that may arise out of the same occurrence as the traffic stop.