

## CHAPTER 345

## VEHICLES — CIVIL AND CRIMINAL LIABILITY

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## GENERAL PROVISIONS

**345.01 Words and phrases defined.** Words and phrases defined in s. 340.01 are used in the same sense in this chapter unless a different definition is specifically provided.

## CIVIL LIABILITY

**345.05 Municipal liability for motor vehicle accidents. (1)** In this section the following terms have the designated meanings:

(a) "Municipality" means any county, city, village, town, school district (as enumerated in s. 67.01 (1)), sewer district, drainage district and, without restriction because of failure of enumeration, any other political subdivision of the state.

(b) "Governing body" means the county board with reference to counties, the town board with reference to towns, the legislative body of a city or village with reference to cities and villages and the board of any district, center or other municipality with reference to other municipalities enumerated in par. (a).

(c) "Business" means any business whether governmental or proprietary.

(2) A person suffering any damage proximately resulting from the negligent operation of

a motor vehicle owned and operated by a municipality, which damage was occasioned by the operation of the motor vehicle in the course of its business, may file a claim for damages against the municipality concerned and the governing body thereof may allow, compromise, settle and pay the claim. In this subsection, a motor vehicle is deemed owned and operated by a municipality if the vehicle is either being rented or leased, or is being purchased under a contract whereby the municipality will acquire title.

(3) A claim under this section shall be filed in the manner, form and place specified in s. 893.80. The limitations under s. 893.80 (3) are not applicable to a claim under this section.

(4) In this section, judgments against municipalities shall be certified, filed and collected as provided in s. 66.09 whether named therein or not.

(5) If the allowance of claim is by or the judgment is against any municipality lying in more than one town, city, village or county, the governing body of the debtor municipality shall prorate the amount of the claim allowed or the judgment and so certify to the proper officials for tax levy, so that the taxable property of the debtor municipality will equitably bear the amount of the claim or judgment.

(6) This section does not create any liability against a county for any act of the sheriff where

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such liability is prohibited by Article VI, section 4, Wisconsin constitution.

**History:** 1975 c. 200; 1977 c. 285; 1979 c. 32 s. 92 (5); 1979 c. 221, 323, 355.

Statute is applicable when the injury can be traced to incidents of vehicle operation on the highway rather than any collateral use such as loading. *Rabe v. Outagamie County*, 72 W (2d) 492, 241 NW (2d) 428.

**345.06 Owner's liability for act of operator.** The owners of every vehicle operating upon any highway for the conveyance of passengers for hire are jointly and severally liable to the party injured for all injuries and damage done by any person in the employment of such owners as an operator, while operating such vehicle, whether the act occasioning such injuries or damage was intentional, negligent or otherwise, in the same manner as such operator would be liable.

**345.07 Civil actions by secretary.** In addition to all existing remedies afforded by civil and criminal law, the secretary is authorized to bring civil actions for the recovery of all fees, taxes, interest and penalties to which the state may be entitled by reason of the operation by any person of a motor vehicle upon the highways of this state.

**History:** 1977 c. 29 s. 1654 (7) (c)

**345.08 Suit to recover protested tax or fee.** No suit shall be maintained in any court to restrain or delay the collection or payment of the taxes levied or the fees imposed or enacted in chs. 341 to 349. The aggrieved taxpayer shall pay the tax or fee as and when due and, if paid under protest, may at any time within 90 days from the date of such payment sue the state in an action at law to recover the tax or fee so paid. If it is finally determined that such tax or fee or any part thereof was wrongfully collected for any reason, the department of administration shall issue a warrant on the state treasurer for the amount of such tax or fee so adjudged to have been wrongfully collected and the state treasurer shall pay the same out of the transportation fund. A separate suit need not be filed for each separate payment made by any taxpayer, but a recovery may be had in one suit for as many payments as were made within the 90-day period preceding the commencement of the action. Such suits shall be commenced as provided in s. 775.01.

**History:** 1977 c. 29 s. 1654 (1); 1979 c. 32 s. 92 (5).

**345.09 Service of process on nonresident.** (1) The use and operation of a motor vehicle over the highways of this state by a nonresident is deemed an irrevocable appointment by such nonresident of the secretary to be

the true and lawful attorney upon whom may be served all legal processes in any action or proceeding against the nonresident or the nonresident's executor, administrator or personal representative, growing out of the use or operation of the motor vehicle in this state and resulting in damage or loss to person or property, whether the damage or loss occurs on a highway or on abutting public or private property. Such appointment is binding upon the nonresident's executor, administrator or personal representative. Such use or operation of a motor vehicle by such nonresident is a signification of the nonresident's agreement that any such process or notice against such nonresident or the nonresident's executor, administrator or personal representative which is so served shall be of the same legal force and validity as if served on them personally.

(2) The secretary as attorney upon whom processes and notices may be served under this section shall, upon being served with such process or notice, forthwith mail by registered mail a copy thereof to such nonresident at the out-of-state nonresident address given in the papers so served. It is the duty of the party or the party's attorney to certify in the papers so served that the address given therein is the last-known out-of-state nonresident address of the party to be served. In all cases of service under this section there shall be served 2 authenticated copies for the secretary and such additional number of authenticated copies as there are defendants so served in the action. One of the secretary's copies shall be retained for the secretary's record of service and the other copy shall be returned with proper certificate of service attached for filing in court as proof of service of the copies by having mailed them by registered mail to the defendants named therein. The service fee shall be \$4 for each defendant so served. The secretary shall keep a record of all such processes and notices, which record shall show the day and hour of service.

(3) This section applies to a nonresident defendant who was a resident of this state at the time of the accident or occurrence which gave rise to the cause of action sued on.

**History:** 1977 c. 29 ss. 1467, 1654 (7) (c); 1977 c. 60, 418.

See note to 801.05, citing *Chilcote v. Shertzer*, 372 F Supp. 86.

**ARRESTS, BAIL, PENALTIES**

**345.11 Uniform traffic citation and complaint.** (1) On and after July 1, 1969, the uniform traffic citation created by this section shall in the case of moving traffic violations and may in the case of parking violations and all

violations of ch. 194 be used by all law enforcement agencies in this state which are authorized to enforce the state traffic laws and any local traffic laws enacted by any local authority in accordance with s. 349.06.

(1m) The uniform traffic citation shall be used for violations of ch. 350 relating to highway use or ordinances in conformity therewith when committed on the highway, but no points shall be assessed against the driving record of the operator of a snowmobile. The report of conviction and abstract of court record copy shall be forwarded to the department.

(2) The uniform traffic citation and complaint shall be on a form prescribed by the committee created by sub. (3) and shall consist of 4 parts: a complaint, a report of conviction and abstract of court record for the department, a police record and report of action on the case and a traffic citation and stipulation of guilt. The form shall provide for the name, address, birth date, operator's license number of the alleged violator if known, the license number of the vehicle, the offense alleged, the time and place of the offense, the section of the statute or ordinance violated, a designation of the offense in such manner as can be readily understood by a person making a reasonable effort to do so, and such other information as may be pertinent to the offense.

(3) The secretary shall appoint a committee to prescribe the form of the uniform traffic citation and complaint. The committee shall be composed as shown in pars. (a) to (i), but if any appointment is not made by March 1, 1968, the secretary shall designate the appointee from the proper category.

(a) The secretary, or his or her designee, as chairperson.

(b) A member of the department responsible for law enforcement.

(c) A member of the Wisconsin sheriffs and deputy sheriffs association, designated by the president thereof.

(d) A member of the county traffic patrol association, designated by the president thereof.

(e) A member of the chiefs of police association, designated by the president thereof.

(f) A member of the state bar of Wisconsin, designated by the president thereof.

(g) A member of the Wisconsin council of safety, designated by the president thereof.

(h) A member of the Wisconsin district attorneys' association, designated by the president thereof.

(i) A member of the Wisconsin traffic judges association, designated by the president thereof.

(4) The committee shall meet at the call of the chairperson. Members of the committee

shall receive no compensation for their services and shall not be reimbursed for their expenses. Upon approval of a form for the uniform traffic citation and complaint by the committee, the secretary shall under s. 110.06 promulgate such form as an administrative rule, and with the approval of the committee shall make such other rules as are necessary for the implementation and operation of this section.

(5) Notwithstanding any other provision of the statutes, the use of the uniform traffic citation and complaint promulgated under sub. (4) by any peace officer in connection with the enforcement of any state traffic laws or any local traffic ordinances in strict conformity with the state traffic laws, shall be deemed adequate process to give the appropriate court jurisdiction over the person upon the filing with such court of the uniform traffic complaint.

(6) The secretary shall cause to be printed and sold to all law enforcement agencies in this state with authority to enforce state traffic laws or local laws adopted under authority of s. 349.06 serially numbered uniform traffic citations and complaints.

(7) Each law enforcement agency issuing uniform traffic citations and complaints shall be responsible for the disposition of all such forms issued under its authority, and such law enforcement agencies shall prepare and submit such records and reports relating to the uniform traffic citations and complaints in the manner and at the time prescribed by the secretary.

(8) Any person who, with criminal intent, solicits or aids in the disposition or attempted disposition of a uniform traffic citation and complaint in any unauthorized manner is in contempt of the court having original jurisdiction of the cause of action.

**History:** 1971 c. 164 s. 81; 1971 c. 277; 1973 c. 218; 1975 c. 41; 1977 c. 29 ss. 1468, 1654 (7) (a), (c); 1977 c. 273; 1979 c. 34, 257.

In general, sheriff, traffic officer or policeman who issues a uniform traffic citation where no warrant has been issued is not entitled to service or mileage fees for delivering citation. 63 Atty. Gen. 99.

**345.17 Penalty for false statements.** Any person making a false statement to the department or secretary of said department on which such department or the secretary relies in performing an act, issuing a duplicate title, license or operating privilege, or administering any law which the department or secretary is required by law to administer or perform, shall, on the first offense be required to forfeit not less than \$25 nor more than \$100; and, on the 2nd and each subsequent offense not less than \$100 nor more than \$500.

**History:** 1973 c. 218; 1977 c. 29 s. 1654 (7) (a), (c)

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**345.18 Sentencing of juveniles.** A person under the age of 18 years shall be present at the imposition of sentence in cases for violation of chs. 341 to 348 and 351 or ordinances enacted in conformity therewith under ch. 349. This section does not apply to parking violations or to cases where a stipulation of guilt or no contest has been accepted for a violation of a local ordinance. A court may waive the requirement of personal appearance under this section in cases of exceptional hardship.

**History:** 1979 c. 110 s. 60 (6); 1979 c. 333 s. 5.

**345.20 General provisions in traffic forfeiture actions. (1) DEFINITIONS.** In ss. 345.20 to 345.53:

(a) "Traffic regulation" means a provision of chs. 194 or 341 to 349 for which the penalty for violation is a forfeiture, or an ordinance enacted in accordance with s. 349.06.

(b) "Judge" has the meaning specified in s. 967.02 (6).

(2) **PROCEDURE.** (a) Except as provided in par. (b), the apprehension of alleged violators of traffic regulations and the trial of forfeiture actions for the violation of traffic regulations shall be governed by ss. 345.21 to 345.53. Where no specific procedure is provided in ss. 345.21 to 345.53, ch. 799 shall apply to such actions in circuit court.

(b) The trial of forfeiture actions in municipal court for the violation of traffic regulations shall be governed by ch. 800. Provisions relating to the uniform traffic citation and complaint in s. 345.11, to arrests in ss. 345.21 to 345.24, to deposits and stipulations of no contest under ss. 345.255 to 345.27, to the authority of the court under ss. 345.47, 345.48 and 345.50 and to guaranteed arrest bonds under s. 345.61 apply to violations of ordinances to be tried in municipal court.

**History:** 1971 c. 278; 1977 c. 305; 1979 c. 32 s. 92 (16), (17); 1979 c. 34; 1979 c. 175 s. 50.

Wisconsin's uniform traffic court procedure. Hough, 1972 WBB No. 4.

**345.21 Authority to arrest with a warrant.**

(1) A person may be arrested for the violation of a traffic regulation with a warrant that substantially complies with ch. 968. Except as provided in sub. (2), the person arrested shall be brought without unreasonable delay before a court having jurisdiction to try the action or a judge.

(2) In traffic regulation actions, the judge or municipal judge who issues a warrant under sub. (1) may indorse upon the warrant the amount of the deposit. If no indorsement is made the deposit schedule under s. 345.26 (2) shall apply

unless the court directs that the person be brought before the court.

**History:** 1971 c. 278; 1973 c. 218; 1977 c. 305 s. 64.

**345.22 Authority to arrest without a warrant.** A person may be arrested without a warrant for the violation of a traffic regulation if the traffic officer has reasonable grounds to believe that the person is violating or has violated a traffic regulation.

**History:** 1971 c. 278

See note to 968.07, citing 61 Atty. Gen. 419

**345.23 Officer's action after arrest without a warrant.** If a person is arrested without a warrant for the violation of a traffic regulation, the arresting officer shall issue a citation under s. 345.25, and in addition:

(1) May release him; or

(2) Shall release him when he:

(a) Makes a deposit under s. 345.26; or

(b) Makes a stipulation of no contest and deposit under s. 345.27; or

(c) Deposits his valid Wisconsin operator's license as defined in s. 343.01 (2) (b) with the officer. The license deposited shall be the license under which he was operating at the time of arrest. If the license is deposited with the officer, the officer shall issue to the licensee a receipt which shall be valid as a driver's license through the date specified on the receipt, which shall be the same as the court appearance date, and the officer shall, at the earliest possible time prior to the court appearance date, deposit the license with the court.

(d) Presents a guaranteed arrest bond certificate under s. 345.61.

(3) Shall, if the alleged violator is not released under sub. (1) or (2), bring him or her without unreasonable delay before a judge or, for ordinance violations, before a municipal judge in the county in which the violation was alleged to have been committed.

(4) Shall, if the alleged violator is released under sub. (1) or (2), specify on the citation a return date which may not be more than 90 days after the issue date.

**History:** 1971 c. 278; 1973 c. 218; 1977 c. 305, 418.

**345.24 Officer's action after arrest for driving under influence of intoxicant.** A person arrested under s. 346.63 or an ordinance in conformity therewith for operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of an intoxicant may not be released until 4 hours have elapsed from the time of his or her arrest or unless a chemical test administered under s. 343.305 (2) (b) shows that there is .05% or less by weight of alcohol in the person's blood, but

the person may be released to his or her attorney, spouse, relative or other responsible adult at any time after arrest.

**History:** 1971 c. 278; 1977 c. 193.

**345.25 Traffic citation. (1)** Traffic citations issued under ss. 345.20 to 345.53 shall conform to s. 345.11.

(2) In addition to the requirements under sub. (1), citations may inform the alleged violator that in lieu of a court appearance he may, within a specified time, make a deposit under s. 345.26 or stipulate no contest under s. 345.27. If the citation provides for mailing the deposit, it shall state the amount of the deposit, shall contain the information required under s. 343.27 and shall provide that the alleged violator shall sign a statement before mailing to the effect that he has read such information and mail the statement with the deposit. If the citation does not contain the information specified in this subsection, such information shall be given to the alleged violator in a separate printed statement attached to the violator's copy of the citation.

(3) The receipt required by s. 345.23 (2) (c) may be part of the citation or may be given to the alleged violator on a separate form.

**History:** 1971 c. 278.

**345.255 Deposit after release.** A person arrested under s. 345.22 for the violation of a traffic regulation who is released under s. 345.23 (1) shall be permitted to make a deposit any time prior to the court appearance date. The deposit shall be made in person or by mailing it to the clerk of the court of the county in which the alleged violation occurred.

**History:** 1973 c. 218.

**345.26 Deposit. (1)** (a) A person arrested under s. 345.22 for the violation of a traffic regulation who is allowed to make a deposit under s. 345.23 (2) (a) shall deposit the money as the arresting officer directs by either mailing the deposit at a nearby mailbox to the office of the sheriff, headquarters of the county traffic patrol, district headquarters or station of the state traffic patrol, city, village or town police headquarters or a precinct station, the office of the municipal judge, the office of the clerk of court, or by going, in the custody of the arresting officer, to any of those places to make the deposit. Before allowing the arrested person to make the deposit the arresting officer or the person receiving the deposit shall comply with s. 343.27 or, if the deposit is mailed, the signed statement required under s. 343.27 shall be mailed with it.

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(b) The arresting officer or the person receiving the deposit shall notify the arrested person, orally or in writing, that:

1. If the person fails to appear in court at the time fixed in the citation, the person will be deemed to have tendered a plea of no contest and submitted to a forfeiture and a penalty assessment, if required by s. 165.87, plus costs not to exceed the amount of the deposit which the court may accept as provided in s. 345.37; or

2. If the person fails to appear in court at the time fixed in the citation and if the court does not accept the deposit as a forfeiture and a penalty assessment, if required by s. 165.87, for the violation, the person will be summoned into court to answer the complaint.

(2) (a) The basic amount of the deposit for the alleged violation of a traffic regulation shall be determined in accordance with a deposit schedule which the judicial conference shall establish. Annually, the judicial conference shall review and may revise the schedule.

(b) In addition to the amount in par. (a), the deposit shall include court costs, suit tax and a penalty assessment if applicable.

(3) (a) The arresting officer or the person accepting the deposit may allow the alleged violator to submit a check for the amount of the deposit, and such check shall be considered a receipt in lieu of par. (b).

(b) The person receiving the deposit shall furnish a receipt on a serially numbered form, and shall deliver the original receipt to the alleged violator if requested, and shall state to the alleged violator that he may inquire at the office of the clerk of court or justice regarding the disposition of the deposit. The receipt referred to in this subsection may be included as part of the uniform citation under s. 345.25.

(4) If the alleged violator is in custody, he shall be released after he has made the deposit specified in this section.

(5) Any person, other than the clerk of court or the municipal judge before whom the defendant is directed to appear, who accepts the deposit shall, before the time fixed for the appearance of the defendant, deliver the deposit and a copy of the receipt and of the citation issued to the defendant to the clerk of the court or the municipal judge. The clerk or municipal judge shall give a receipt therefor, specifying the serial number of the receipt accompanying the deposit.

**History:** 1971 c. 278; 1973 c. 218, 228, 336; 1977 c. 29; 1977 c. 305 s. 64; 1977 c. 449.

Judges may not reduce the amounts of the deposit schedule established under (2) (a). 61 Atty. Gen. 401.

**345.27 Stipulation of no contest. (1)** If a person is issued a citation for a violation of a

traffic regulation, the person may make a stipulation of no contest and deposit in accordance with the schedule established under s. 345.26

(2) (a) at the office of the clerk of court, sheriff, or city, village or town police department or a precinct station, headquarters of the county traffic patrol, district headquarters or station of the state traffic patrol, or the office of the municipal judge in the county in which the citation was issued as designated by the arresting officer or the person may mail the stipulation and deposit to the place designated by the arresting officer. The deposit shall include the penalty assessment imposed by s. 165.87, court costs and suit tax if applicable. The stipulation shall be received within 10 days of the date of the alleged violation. The person who has mailed or filed a stipulation under this subsection may, however, appear in court on the court appearance date. If a person appears in court after making a stipulation, s. 345.37 (3) applies. Stipulations are not permitted for violations of ss. 346.62 (1) and 346.63 (1) or a local ordinance which is in conformity therewith.

(2) If a person is cited for a violation for which a stipulation is authorized and makes a timely stipulation and pays the required deposit, the person need not appear in court. Before allowing the arrested person to make a stipulation and deposit, the arresting officer or the person receiving the stipulation and deposit shall comply with s. 343.27 or, if the stipulation and deposit are mailed, the signed statement required under s. 343.27 shall be mailed with it. The official receiving the stipulation and deposit shall promptly transmit the stipulation and deposit to the clerk of court or the municipal judge having jurisdiction in the county. The clerk of the court or the municipal judge having jurisdiction in the county may receive stipulations according to this subsection and shall receive all other stipulations made under sub. (1) but the municipal judge shall process a stipulation when a citation is issued within his or her municipality. The clerk or municipal judge shall, for all stipulations, record on the court appearance date, a judgment of conviction and enter deposits as fines or forfeitures and penalty assessments and shall comply with ss. 343.28 and 345.37 (5). The judge or the court may relieve any person from a stipulation or any other order, judgment or conviction entered or made as provided in s. 345.37 (3).

History: 1971 c. 278; 1973 c. 218; 1977 c. 29; 1977 c. 305 s. 64

**345.28 Nonmoving violations.** (1) A person charged with a nonmoving traffic violation may mail the amount of the forfeiture to any of the places specified in s. 345.26 (1) or to a

violations bureau, or to the city, town or county clerk or treasurer if the traffic citation so provides. In that case, the citation shall not be filed in court. A nonmoving traffic violation is any parking of a vehicle in violation of a statute or an ordinance.

(2) If the alleged violator does not mail the amount of the forfeiture as provided in sub. (1), a summons or warrant under ch. 968 may be issued for him. Upon his appearance, the procedure under ss. 345.32 to 345.36 shall apply.

History: 1971 c. 278.

**345.30 Jurisdiction.** Jurisdiction over actions for violation of traffic regulations is conferred upon circuit courts. Municipal courts shall have jurisdiction over traffic regulations enacted in accordance with s. 349.06.

History: 1971 c. 278; 1977 c. 449.

**345.31 Venue in traffic regulation actions.** Section 971.19 on place of trial in criminal actions applies to actions for the violation of traffic regulations except that, in the case of a violation of an ordinance of a municipality which is located in more than one county, the action may be brought in any court sitting in that municipality even though in another county. As an alternative, the plaintiff may bring the action in the county where the defendant resides.

History: 1971 c. 278.

**345.315 Change of judge.** (1) In traffic regulation cases a person charged with a violation may file a written request for a substitution of a new judge for the judge assigned to the trial of that case. The written request shall be filed not later than 7 days after the initial appearance in person or by an attorney. If a new judge is assigned to the trial of a case, a request for substitution must be made within 10 days of receipt of notice of assignment, provided that if the notice of assignment is received less than 10 days prior to trial, the request for substitution must be made within 24 hours of receipt of the notice and provided that if notification is received less than 24 hours prior to trial, the action shall proceed to trial only upon stipulation of the parties that the assigned judge may preside at the trial of the action. The judge against whom a request has been filed may set initial bail and accept a plea.

(2) Except as provided in sub. (5), no more than one judge can be disqualified in any action.

(3) In a court of record assignment of judges shall be made as provided in s. 751.03.

(4) In municipal court a case shall be transferred as provided in ss. 751.03 (2) and 800.05.

(5) If upon an appeal from a judgment or order or upon a writ of error the appellate court orders a new trial or reverses or modifies the judgment or order in a manner such that further proceedings in the trial court are necessary, the person charged with a violation may file a request under sub. (1) within 20 days after the entry of the judgment or decision of the appellate court whether or not another request was filed prior to the time the appeal or writ of error was taken.

**History:** 1971 c. 278; 1973 c. 218; 1977 c. 135; 1977 c. 187 s. 135; 1977 c. 305, 449; 1979 c. 32 s. 92 (1), (17).

**Judicial Council Note, 1977:** This section has been amended so that a judge against whom a substitution of judge request has been filed in traffic regulation cases may, however, set initial bail and accept a plea. The provision that all defendants must join in any substitution of judge request has been deleted to conform to a provision in chapter 149, laws of 1975. In addition, the transfer fee from municipal to county court has been deleted and a municipal justice will no longer retain the option of transferring the case to another municipal justice rather than county court when a request for substitution has been filed against him or her. [Bill 74-S]

**345.32 Initial appearance before judge.** If a defendant is arrested and brought without unreasonable delay before a judge who, or a court which, does not have jurisdiction to try the case, he shall be committed to await trial in a court with jurisdiction and all papers shall be sent forthwith to that court. In lieu of commitment, the judge may release the defendant if he posts bond for his appearance in such court, or the judge may release him on his own recognizance for such appearance, or the judge may release him without bail. The court to which the case is sent may similarly release the defendant.

**History:** 1971 c. 278.

**345.34 Arraignment; pleas.** (1) If the defendant appears in response to a citation, or is arrested and brought before a court with jurisdiction to try the case, he shall be informed that he is entitled to a jury trial and then asked whether he wishes presently to plead, or whether he wishes a continuance. If he wishes to plead, he may plead guilty, not guilty or no contest.

(2) If he pleads guilty or no contest, the court shall accept the plea, find him guilty and proceed under s. 345.47.

(3) If a summons is served or citation is issued by a police officer for a violation of any municipal ordinance or of chs. 194 or 340 to 348 and 350, the defendant may enter a plea of not guilty based on such summons or citation by letter to the judge at the address indicated on the summons or citation, the letter to show the defendant's return address. The letter may include a request for trial during normal daytime business hours. Upon receipt of the letter, the judge shall reply by mail to the defendant's address setting forth a time and place for trial,

the time to be during normal business hours if requested by the defendant. The date of the trial shall be at least 10 days from the mailing by the judge. Nothing in this subsection forbids the setting of the trial at any time convenient to all parties concerned.

**History:** 1971 c. 278; 1973 c. 218; 1977 c. 305.

Courts may not dismiss traffic complaints on payment of penalty and costs, or costs alone 63 Atty. Gen. 328.

**345.35 Not guilty plea; immediate trial.**

(1) If the defendant pleads not guilty, the court shall ascertain whether he wishes an immediate trial or whether he wishes a continuance. The plaintiff shall also be entitled to a continuance if the defendant pleads not guilty.

(2) If the defendant pleads not guilty and states that he waives the right to jury trial and that he wishes an immediate trial, the case may be tried forthwith if the plaintiff consents.

**History:** 1971 c. 278.

**345.36 Not guilty plea; continuance.** If the defendant pleads not guilty and requests a continuance the court shall set a date for trial or advise the defendant that he will later be notified of the date set for trial. The defendant shall be released if he posts a bond for his appearance, or the court may release him on his own recognizance, or the court may release him without bail; if he is not so released he shall be committed to jail to await trial. If a defendant fails to appear at the date set under this section, the court shall issue a warrant under ch. 968 and, if the alleged violator has posted bond for his appearance at that date, the court may order the bond forfeited.

**History:** 1971 c. 278.

**345.37 Procedure on default of appearance.** If the defendant fails to appear in court at the time fixed in the citation or by subsequent postponement, the following procedure shall apply:

(1) If he has not made a deposit under s. 345.26 or a stipulation of no contest under s. 345.27, the court may issue a warrant under ch. 968.

(2) If the defendant has made a deposit under s. 345.26, the citation may serve as the initial pleading and the defendant shall be deemed to have tendered a plea of no contest and submitted to a forfeiture and a penalty assessment, if required by s. 165.87, plus costs and the applicable suit tax, not exceeding the amount of the deposit. The court may either accept the plea of no contest and enter judgment accordingly, or reject the plea and issue a summons under ch. 968. If the defendant fails to appear in response to the summons, the court shall issue a

warrant under ch. 968. If the court accepts the plea of no contest, the defendant may move within 6 months after the date set for the appearance to withdraw the plea of no contest, open the judgment and enter a plea of not guilty upon a showing to the satisfaction of the court that the failure to appear was due to mistake, inadvertence, surprise or excusable neglect. If on reopening, the defendant is found not guilty the court shall immediately notify the department to delete the record of conviction based on the original proceeding and shall order the defendant's deposit returned.

(3) If the defendant has stipulated no contest under s. 345.27, the court or judge having trial jurisdiction of the violation may, on motion with or without notice, for cause shown by affidavit and upon just terms, within 10 days after the stipulation has been entered into, relieve any party from the stipulation and the effects thereof. If a party is relieved from the plea of no contest, the court or judge may order the stipulation or a written complaint to be filed and set the matter for trial. After trial the penalty assessment, if required by s. 165.87, costs and fees shall be taxed as provided by law.

(4) If a violator's deposit is forfeited for, or if an alleged violator stipulates to entry of, a plea of no contest to any violation for which his or her operator's record will be charged with demerit points as established by rule under s. 343.32 (2), the official accepting the forfeiture and the penalty assessment, if required by s. 165.87, shall comply with s. 343.27 (3).

(5) Within 5 working days after forfeiture of deposit or entry of default judgment, the official receiving the forfeiture and the penalty assessment, if required by s. 165.87, shall forward to the department a certification of the entry of default judgment or a judgment of forfeiture.

(6) Any person who fails to comply with this section relative to forwarding records of convictions to the department may be fined not more than \$100.

(7) If a defendant who has not made a cash deposit or stipulation of no contest and who has deposited his or her valid Wisconsin's chauffeur's or operator's license under s. 345.23 (2) (c) fails to appear in court at the time fixed in the citation or by subsequent postponement, the court shall order the license suspended for a period of 30 days or until the case is disposed of, whichever is longer. Within 48 hours after the order of suspension, notice of the suspension shall be forwarded to the department but the court shall retain possession of the suspended license. The court may enter an order vacating the suspension if the defendant so moves within 10 days after the date set for the appearance and

proves to the satisfaction of the court that the failure to appear was due to mistake, inadvertence, surprise or excusable neglect. If no order has been entered vacating the suspension the court shall forthwith forward the license to the secretary. If the court enters an order vacating the suspension or if the disposition of the case requires termination of the suspension the court shall immediately notify the secretary. Suspension under this subsection shall not affect the power of the court to suspend or revoke under s. 343.30 or the power of the secretary to suspend or revoke under s. 343.32.

**History:** 1971 c. 278; 1973 c. 218; 1975 c. 231, 421; 1977 c. 29 ss. 1472 to 1475, 1654 (7) (a), (c); 1977 c. 273, 305.

#### 345.375 Judgment against a corporation.

(1) If a corporation fails to appear within the time required by the citation, the default of such corporation may be recorded and the charge against it taken as true and judgment shall be rendered accordingly.

(2) Upon default of the defendant corporation or upon conviction, judgment for the amount of the forfeiture and the penalty assessment, if required under s. 165.87, shall be entered.

**History:** 1973 c. 218; 1977 c. 29.

**345.38 Effect of plea of no contest.** Forfeiture of deposit under s. 345.37 (2), an accepted plea of no contest, or a stipulation of no contest under s. 345.27, to a charge of violation of a traffic regulation shall not be admissible in evidence as an admission against interest in any action or proceeding arising out of the same occurrence as the charge of violation of a traffic regulation.

**History:** 1971 c. 278.

**345.40 Pleading.** A citation which complies with s. 345.11 or a complaint which complies with the appropriate provisions of ch. 968 may be used as the initial pleading, or the justice, clerk or one of his deputies may enter upon the records of the court a statement of the offense charged, which shall stand as a complaint, unless the court directs that formal complaint be made. Several counts may be joined in one complaint or a separate complaint may be prepared for each separate violation. The defendant's plea shall be guilty, no contest or not guilty and shall be entered as not guilty upon failure to plead. A plea of not guilty shall put all matters in such case at issue.

**History:** 1971 c. 278

**345.41 Motion to dismiss.** Defenses which could be taken by pleas in abatement, in bar, demurrers and motions to quash shall be raised

by motion to dismiss, which motion shall be made before any trial on the merits, or be waived.

History: 1971 c. 278.

**345.42 No preliminary examination.** There shall be no preliminary examination.

History: 1971 c. 278.

**345.421 Discovery.** Neither party is entitled to pretrial discovery except that if the defendant moves within 10 days after the alleged violation and shows cause therefor, the court may order that the defendant be allowed to inspect and test under s. 804.09 and under such conditions as the court prescribes, any devices used by the plaintiff to determine whether a violation has been committed, including without limitation, devices used to determine presence of alcohol in breath or body fluid or to measure speed, and may inspect under s. 804.09 the reports of experts relating to those devices.

History: 1971 c. 278; Sup. Ct. Order, 67 W (2d) 776; 1975 c. 218.

**345.422 No guardian ad litem.** No guardian ad litem need be appointed for any defendant.

History: 1971 c. 278.

**345.425 Mode of trial. (1)** The defendant shall be informed of his or her right to a jury trial in circuit court on payment of fees required by s. 345.43 (1).

(2) If both parties, in a court of record, request a trial by the court or if neither demands a trial by jury, the right to a trial by jury is waived.

History: 1971 c. 278; 1977 c. 305; 1977 c. 449 s. 497.

**345.43 Jury trial. (1)** (a) If a case has been transferred under s. 800.04 (1) (d) in a traffic regulation case, or if in circuit court either party files a written demand for a jury trial within 10 days after the defendant enters a plea of not guilty under s. 345.34 and immediately pays the fees specified in par. (b), the court shall place the case on the jury calendar of the circuit court. The number of jurors shall be determined under s. 756.096 (3) (b). If no party demands a trial by a jury of 12, the right to trial by a jury of 12 is waived forever.

(b) The fee for a jury is \$2 per person on the jury, plus the applicable suit tax and clerk's fee.

(2) If there is a demand for a trial by a jury of 12, the procedure applicable to jury trials in civil actions shall apply.

(3) (a) If a jury of less than 12 persons is demanded, in counties having a population of 500,000 or more, the jury shall be drawn from the circuit court jury panel and selected as set

forth under chs. 801 to 847. In all other counties, such juries shall be selected as provided in pars. (b) and (c), except that any party may demand trial by a countywide jury and that the clerk shall select, by lot, the names of sufficient persons qualified to serve as jurors as will provide to each party entitled to peremptory challenges the number of challenges specified in par. (b).

(b) If a timely demand for a jury of less than 12 persons is made, the judge shall direct the clerk of the court to select by lot from the current jury panel the names of a sufficient number of residents of the county qualified to serve as jurors in courts of record, from which lists either party may strike 5 names. If either party neglects to strike out names, the clerk shall strike out names for the party. Except in counties having a population of 500,000 or more, no voir dire examination or challenge for cause shall be permitted. The clerk shall summon a sufficient number of persons whose names are not struck out, to appear at the time and place named in the summons.

(c) Jurors may all be residents of a municipality in which the court is held unless the defendant demands a countywide jury. For this purpose a municipal jury list may be established, known as the "..... (name of municipality) jury list", which shall be constituted as follows: The jury commissioners appointed by the circuit court of the county in which the municipality is located shall, from time to time as required by the court, provide and furnish a list containing the names of 200 jurors selected by them from citizens residing within the municipality involved. The judge or judges of the court may by court order direct the jury commissioners to furnish a list of less than 200 jurors, but in no event shall such list contain less than 50 names. Except as herein provided, the provisions of s. 756.04, relating to the preparation of jury lists for the circuit court, so far as applicable, shall apply to and govern the preparation of such list, but the slips containing the names of jurors so selected shall be deposited in a box designated the "..... (name of municipality) jury list".

(4) Any jury fee paid under this section shall be refunded if:

(a) The case is dismissed by the court prior to the commencement of the trial; or

(am) The defendant is found not guilty of the charge by the jury; or

(b) The defendant pleads guilty to the charge or a lesser charge more than 24 hours before the jury is required to report to the court.

(5) In a jury trial of a traffic regulation case, the court is not required to provide the jury with

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one complete set of written instructions under s. 805.13 (4).

**History:** 1971 c. 278; 1973 c. 218; Sup. Ct. Order, 67 W (2d) 776; 1975 c. 231, 291; 1977 c. 187 s. 135; 1977 c. 305, 318, 447, 449; 1979 c. 32 s. 92 (17); 1979 c. 89, 128.

Requirement that defendant prepay jury fees in civil traffic forfeiture action is constitutional. *State v Graf*, 72 W (2d) 179, 240 NW (2d) 387.

**345.45 Burden of proof.** The standard of proof for conviction of any person charged with violation of any traffic regulation shall be evidence that is clear, satisfactory and convincing.

**History:** 1973 c. 218.

**345.46 Verdict.** A verdict is valid if agreed to by five-sixths of the jury. If a verdict relates to more than one count, it shall be valid as to any count if any five-sixths of the jury agree thereto. The form of the verdict shall be guilty or not guilty, except where it is necessary to determine speed. The amount of the forfeiture shall be determined by the court after the court makes its finding.

**History:** 1971 c. 278.

**345.47 Judgment of forfeiture and penalty assessment. (1)**

If the defendant is found guilty, the court may enter judgment against the defendant for a monetary amount not to exceed the maximum forfeiture and penalty assessment, if required by s. 165.87, provided for the violation and for costs under s. 345.53 and, in addition, may suspend or revoke his or her operating privilege under s. 343.30. If the judgment is not paid, the court shall order:

(a) That the defendant be imprisoned for a time specified by the court until the judgment is paid, but not to exceed 90 days; or

(b) In lieu of imprisonment and in addition to any other suspension or revocation, that the defendant's operating privilege be suspended for a period of time not less than 30 days nor more than 6 months. If the person pays the forfeiture and the penalty assessment, if required by s. 165.87, after suspension under this section, the suspension shall be reduced to the minimum period of 30 days. Suspension under this paragraph shall not affect the power of the court to suspend or revoke under s. 343.30 or the power of the secretary to suspend or revoke such operating privilege.

(c) If a court or judge suspends an operating privilege under this section, the court or judge shall immediately take possession of the suspended license and shall forward it to the department together with the notice of suspension, which shall clearly state that the suspension was for failure to pay a forfeiture and a penalty assessment, if required by s. 165.87, imposed by the court. The notice of suspension and the suspended license, if it is available, shall be

forwarded to the department within 48 hours after the order of suspension. If the forfeiture and penalty assessment is paid during a period of suspension the court or judge shall immediately notify the department. Upon receipt of the notice and payment of the reinstatement fee under s. 343.21 (1) (j), the department shall return the license when the minimum period of suspension has passed.

(d) In addition to or in lieu of imprisonment or suspension under par. (a) or (b), the court may notify the department, in the form and manner prescribed by the department, that a judgment has been entered against the defendant and remains unpaid. The notice shall include the name and last-known address of the person against whom the judgment was entered, the date judgment was entered, the amount of the judgment, the license number of the vehicle involved, certification by the court that a warrant has been served on the person against whom the judgment was entered and the judgment remains unpaid and the place where the judgment may be paid. If the person subsequently pays the judgment the court shall immediately notify the department of the payment in writing in the form and manner prescribed by the department.

**NOTE:** Chapter 34, laws of 1979, created par. (d) effective July 1, 1981.

(2) The payment of any judgment may be suspended or deferred for not more than 60 days in the discretion of the court. In cases where a deposit has been made, any forfeitures, penalty assessments and costs shall be taken out of the deposit and the balance, if any, returned to the defendant.

(3) When a defendant is imprisoned for nonpayment of a forfeiture or a penalty assessment for an action brought by a municipality located in more than one county, any commitment to a county institution shall be to the county in which the action was tried.

(4) Section 343.345 takes precedence over this section to the extent the 2 sections conflict.

**History:** 1971 c. 278; 1973 c. 218; 1977 c. 29 ss. 1477 to 1482, 1654 (7) (c); 1979 c. 34

**345.48 Reporting pending appeal. (1)** If the defendant is found guilty the court shall, within 48 hours, forward to the department the record of such conviction.

(2) If the defendant is found guilty of a traffic violation for which revocation of his operating privilege is mandatory under s. 343.31, or for which the court revokes or suspends his operating privilege under s. 343.30, the court shall immediately take possession of the suspended or revoked license. The revocation or suspension is effective immediately. The

court ordered suspension or revocation shall be included as part of the report of conviction under sub. (1).

(3) If no notice of appeal is filed within 10 days, the court shall, within 48 hours after expiration of the 10-day period, forward to the department any surrendered license.

(4) If notice of appeal is filed the court shall, within 48 hours after it is filed, forward to the department a certificate stating that the appeal has been perfected and shall return any surrendered license. Thereafter, the court shall notify the department as required under s. 343.325 (1) (b) and (c).

History: 1971 c. 278; 1977 c. 29 s. 1654 (7) (a).

**345.49 Procedure on imprisonment; non-payment of forfeiture or penalty assessment.** (1) Any person imprisoned under s. 345.47 for nonpayment of a forfeiture or a penalty assessment, if required by s. 165.87, may, on request, be allowed to work under s. 56.08. If the person does work, earnings shall be applied on the unpaid forfeiture or penalty assessment after payment of personal board and expenses and support of personal dependents to the extent directed by the court.

(2) Any person who is subject to imprisonment under s. 345.47 for nonpayment of a forfeiture or penalty assessment may be placed on probation to some person satisfactory to the court for not more than 90 days or until the forfeiture or penalty assessment is paid if that is done before expiration of the 90-day period. The payment of the forfeiture or penalty assessment during such period shall be a condition of such probation. If the forfeiture or penalty assessment is not paid or the court deems that the interests of justice require, probation may be terminated and the defendant imprisoned as provided in sub. (1) or s. 345.47.

History: 1971 c. 278; 1977 c. 29.

**345.50 Appeal.** (1) JURISDICTION ON APPEAL. An appeal from circuit court shall be to the court of appeals.

(2) STAY OF EXECUTION. The amount of undertaking required to stay execution on appeal shall not exceed the amount of the maximum forfeiture plus court costs.

History: 1971 c. 278; Sup. Ct. Order, 67 W (2d) 776; 1977 c. 187, 305; 1977 c. 449 s. 497.

**345.51 Reopening of default judgment.** Except as provided in s. 345.37, there shall be no reopening of default judgments unless allowed by order of the trial court after notice and motion duly made and upon good cause shown. The notice of motion must be filed within 6 months after entry of judgment in the case

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docket. Default judgments for purposes of this section include pleas of guilty, no contest and forfeitures of deposit.

History: 1971 c. 278; 1973 c. 218

**345.52 No double prosecution.** (1) A judgment on the merits in a traffic ordinance action bars any proceeding under a state statute for the same violation. A judgment on the merits in an action under a state statute bars any proceeding under a traffic ordinance enacted in conformity with the state statute for the same violation.

(2) The pendency of an action under a traffic ordinance is grounds for staying an action under a state statute for the same violation. The pendency of an action under a state statute is grounds for staying an action under a traffic ordinance enacted in conformity with the state statute for the same violation.

History: 1971 c. 278.

**345.53 Costs not taxed against plaintiff.**

In traffic regulation actions in all courts, costs may not be taxed against the plaintiff.

History: 1971 c. 278.

**345.55 Traffic officers not to profit from arrests.** (1) No traffic officer shall demand, solicit, receive or be paid any remuneration upon the basis of number of arrests made, convictions obtained or amount of fines collected.

(2) Any person violating this section may be required to forfeit not less than \$25 nor more than \$200 for the first offense and, for the second and each subsequent conviction within one year thereafter, may be required to forfeit not less than \$50 nor more than \$500.

History: 1971 c. 278 s. 42.

**345.60 Penalty of compulsory safety school attendance.** (1) Except as provided in sub. (3), in addition to or in lieu of other penalties provided by law for violation of chs.

346 to 348, the trial court may in its judgment of conviction order the convicted person to attend, for a certain number of school days, a traffic safety school whose course and mode of instruction is approved by the secretary and which is conducted by the police department of the municipality, the sheriff's office of the county or by any regularly established safety organization.

(2) This section also applies in the case of an adjudication of violation of a local traffic regulation which is in conformity with chs. 346 to 348.

(3) In addition to other penalties provided by law for violation of s. 346.63 (1) or a local ordinance in conformity therewith, the trial court may in its judgment of conviction order

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the convicted person to attend, for a certain number of school days, a school under sub. (1).

**History:** 1971 c. 278 s. 45; 1977 c. 29 s. 1654 (7) (c); 1977 c. 193

Convicted drunk drivers may be sent to safety school in lieu of other penalties. 60 Atty. Gen. 261

The court may not waive the revocation of operating privileges by the division of motor vehicles as required by 343.31 (1) (b). 62 Atty. Gen. 31.

**345.61 Guaranteed traffic arrest bonds.**

**(1) SURETY COMPANIES AUTHORIZED TO GUARANTEE.** (a) Any domestic or foreign surety company which has qualified to transact surety business in this state may, in any year, become surety in an amount not to exceed \$200 with respect to any guaranteed arrest bond certificates issued in such year by an automobile club, association or by an insurance company authorized to write automobile liability insurance within this state, by filing with the commissioner of insurance an undertaking thus to become surety.

(b) An association providing a guaranteed arrest bond certificate may obligate itself in an amount not to exceed \$1,000 for violations of ch. 348. All courts in this state must accept such guaranteed arrest bond certificate. When a state traffic patrol officer or state inspector or any local law enforcement officer stops an operator of a vehicle, having in his possession a valid guaranteed arrest bond certificate, he shall obtain the necessary information for his citation and if such guaranteed arrest bond covers the fine for the violation such officer shall release such vehicle and operator.

**(2) FORM OF BOND.** Such undertaking shall be in the form prescribed by the commissioner of insurance and shall state the following:

(a) The name and address of the automobile clubs, association or companies with respect to the guaranteed arrest bond certificates of which the surety company undertakes to be surety.

(b) The unqualified obligation of the surety company to pay the fine or forfeiture in an amount not to exceed \$200, or \$1,000 as provided in sub. (1) (b), of any person who, after posting a guaranteed arrest bond certificate with respect to which the surety company has undertaken to be surety, fails to make the appearance to guarantee which, the guaranteed arrest bond certificate was posted.

(c) "Guaranteed arrest bond certificate" as used in this section means any printed card or other certificate issued by an automobile club, association or insurance company to any of its

members or insureds, which card or certificate is signed by the member or insureds and contains a printed statement that the automobile club, association or insurance company and a surety company, or an insurance company authorized to transact both automobile liability insurance and surety business, guarantee the appearance of the persons whose signature appears on the card or certificate and that they will in the event of failure of the person to appear in court at the time of trial, pay any fine or forfeiture imposed on the person, including the penalty assessment required by s. 165.87, in an amount not exceeding \$200, or \$1,000 as provided in sub. (1) (b).

(d) A guaranteed arrest bond certificate under sub. (1) (b) need not be secured by a surety company. The commissioner of insurance may promulgate rules to insure such bond if he feels it necessary.

**(3)** Any guaranteed arrest bond certificate with respect to which a surety company has become surety, or a guaranteed arrest bond certificate issued by an insurance company authorized to transact both automobile liability insurance and surety business within this state as herein provided, shall, when posted by the person whose signature appears thereon, be accepted in lieu of cash bail or other bond in an amount not to exceed \$200, or \$1,000 as provided in sub. (1) (b), as a bail bond, to guarantee the appearance of such person in any court in this state, including all municipal courts in this state, at such time as may be required by such court, when the person is arrested for violation of any vehicle law of this state or any motor vehicle ordinance of any county or municipality in this state except for the offense of driving under the influence of intoxicating liquors or of drugs or for any felony committed prior to the date of expiration shown on such guaranteed arrest bond certificates; provided, that any such guaranteed arrest bond certificates so posted as bail bond in any court in this state shall be subject to the forfeiture and enforcement provisions with respect to bail bonds in criminal cases as otherwise provided by law or as hereafter may be provided by law, and that any such guaranteed arrest bond certificate posted as a bail bond in any municipal court of this state shall be subject to the forfeiture and enforcement provisions, if any, of the charter or ordinance of the particular county or municipality pertaining to bail bonds posted.

**History:** 1977 c. 29