

(UN)WARRANTED

Strengthening Public Safety While Saving Taxpayer Dollars by
Reducing Missed Court Appearances

Options to Modernize Oklahoma's Criminal Corrections System

October 1, 2025



UNWARRANTED: OUR WORK

INCREASING COURT APPEARANCE RATES ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Improve forms providing court appearance notifications

- Citations
- Summonses
- Bond/release forms

Help create effective court reminder programs

- Increase defendant participation and minimize costs using best practices
- Improve collection of contact information and enrollment
- Choose best technology and set up



GOAL: Reduce nonappearances by up to 40% and help the system save time, money, and effort currently wasted on missed court dates

MILLIONS OF LOW-LEVEL CHARGES LEAD TO MILLIONS OF MISSED COURT DATES AND POTENTIAL JAIL BOOKINGS

Tens of Millions

low-level charges each year



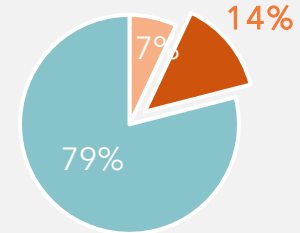
Over 1 in 3

court dates are missed



Drive Jail Admissions

Ex: Most common reason for jail in North Carolina



Ex. Orange County

Warrants are issued for nonappearance for misdemeanors in all states, and in several states for traffic violations if do not pay or show up at court. Court appearance data based on misdemeanor rate across several jurisdictions.

MISSED COURT DATES ARE (SURPRISINGLY) COSTLY FOR BOTH THE SYSTEM AND THE PEOPLE MISSING COURT

~\$2,850 per missed court date prevented*

GOVERNMENT COSTS:

~\$1,500

For each missed appearance

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| \$ Court staff | \$ Booking |
| \$ Attorneys | \$ Jail |
| \$ Warrant issuance | \$ Possible pretrial supervision |
| \$ Warrant clearance | |
| \$ Arrest | |

PERSON COSTS:

~\$1,350

When missed appearance results in warrant

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| \$ Fines | \$ Benefits forgone |
| \$ Lost wages (jail) | -Food (SNAP) |
| \$ Potential loss of bail/release | -Housing (Section 8) |
| \$ Possible pretrial supervision | -Tax refunds (EITC) |
| \$ Inability to work | -Health (Medicaid) |

** Conservative estimate with only easily quantifiable costs. Based on misdemeanor cases; cases with warrants for missing court. We can provide detailed calculations upon request.*

MISSED COURT DATES HARM EVERYONE

- **Court administrators:** *Inefficient operations*
- **Judges:** *Caseloads move slowly; backlogs*
- **Court staff:** *Significantly larger workload*
- **County taxpayers:** *Wasted tax dollars needed for courts, policing, and jails*
- **Sheriffs:** *Capacity and staffing challenges from non-threatening offenses*
- **Police:** *Time spent arresting and processing people for simply missing a court date*
- **Defendants:** *Sanctions and economic harm to themselves and their communities*
- **Employers:** *Staffing and productivity undermined by unexpected absences*
- **Families:** *Economic and emotional harm*
- **County Commissioners:** *Higher tax rates or fewer funds for needed services*

Proven Methods to Increase Court Dates

WHAT WORKS TO DECREASE MISSED COURT DATES



Improving court date forms

Release forms, bond forms, etc.



Court date reminders

Text messages, email, especially for first out of custody appearance



Notifications after missed court date

Text messages, email

36%

DECREASE in
missed court dates

PROVEN, COST-EFFECTIVE, AND FEASIBLE FOR ALL COURTS

- **Strongly backed by research**
 - Effective communications have been found to **decrease nonappearance rates by as much as 20-40%**
- **Highly cost-effective**
 - Redesigning forms can **cost little or nothing;**
 - Annualized cost of reminders can be **less than 50 cents per case**
- **Something all governments can do**
 - Even **small improvements** can go a long way & build toward even bigger savings

Improving Court Date Notification Forms

REDESIGNED FORM WITH COURT DATE INFORMATION

SMALL CHANGES MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

Foreign title with no clear meaning

OLD

CRC-3206 (5/12)

Complaint/Information

The People of the State of New York vs.

Name (Last, First, MI)									
Street Address							Apt. No.		
City				State		Zip Code			
ID/License Number			State	Type/Class	Expires (mm/dd/yy)		Sex		
Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy)		Ht	Wt	Eyes	Hair	Plate/Reg			
Reg State	Expires (mm/dd/yy)	Plate Type	Veh Type	Make	Year				

The Person Described Above is Charged as Follows:

Time 24 Hour (hh:mm)		Date of Offense (mm/dd/yy)		NYC Pak Copy	County
Place of Offense		Precinct			

Subsection	VTL	Admin Code	Penal Law	Park Rules	Other
Section	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Title of Offense

! ! ! ! !

Consequences of FTA; loss frame

Court date buried at bottom

NEW

Title with clear, plain meaning

CRC-3206 (2/15)

Criminal Court Appearance Ticket

Name (Last, First, MI)		Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy)	
Cell Phone Number (where court may contact you)		Home Phone Number (where court may contact you)	
()		()	

Show up to court on:

Court Appearance Date (mm/dd/yy): **at: 9:30 a.m.**

Your court appearance location:

☐ Bronx Criminal Court
 ☐ Kings & New York Criminal Court
 ☐ Midtown Community Court
 ☐ Redhook Community Justice Center
 ☐ Queens Criminal Court
 ☐ Richmond Criminal Court

****To avoid a warrant for your arrest, you must show up to court.****

At court, you may plead guilty or not guilty.

Please see back for exceptions for Public Urination and Public Consumption of Alcohol offenses.

Court Locations: You must appear at the court location identified above.

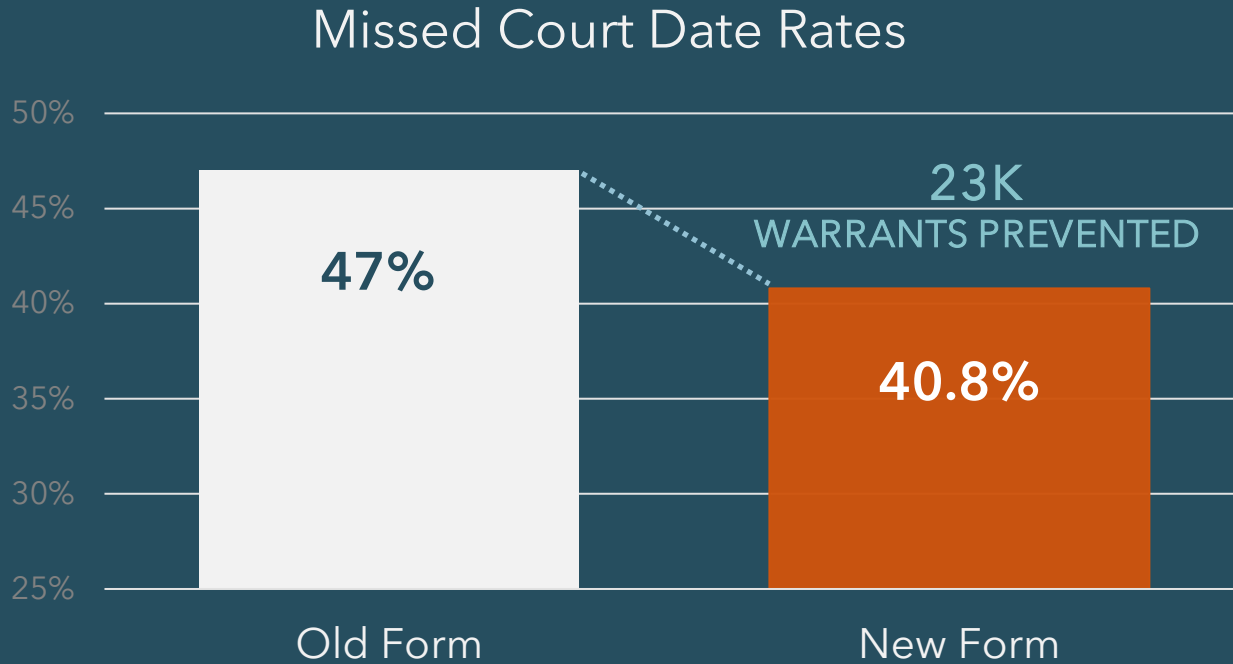
Bronx Criminal Court 215 E 161 Street, Bronx, NY 10451
 Kings & New York Criminal Court 346 Broadway, New York, NY 10013
 Redhook Community Justice Center 88-94 Visitation Place, Brooklyn, NY 11231
 Midtown Community Court 314 W 54 Street, New York, NY 10019
 Queens Criminal Court 120-55 Queens Boulevard, Kew Gardens, NY 11415
 Richmond Criminal Court 26 Central Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10301

You are Charged as Follows:

Court date and time near top

Website and phone number located below

OUTCOME: 13% DECREASE FROM REDESIGNED SUMMONS

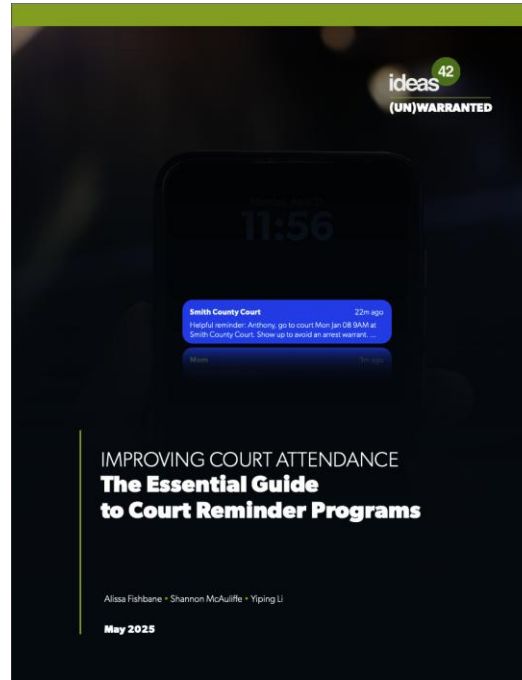


Court Date Reminders

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO COURT REMINDER PROGRAMS

COMPREHENSIVE OPTIONS TO BEST SUIT YOUR JURISDICTION

- Guidance from Start to Implementation
- Best Practices for Optimal Results
- Testimonials from Various Stakeholders



"Our criminal courts, law enforcement, and jails dedicate more focus on serious offenses—and taxpayers get the break they deserve."

- Harris County Commissioner Adrian Garcia

SPECIFIC WAYS TEXT MESSAGE REMINDERS HELP CONSEQUENCES AND PLAN MAKING

Helpful reminder: go to court Mon Jun 03 9:30AM. We'll text to help you remember. Show up to avoid an arrest warrant. Reply STOP to end texts. www.mysummons.nyc

7 days before

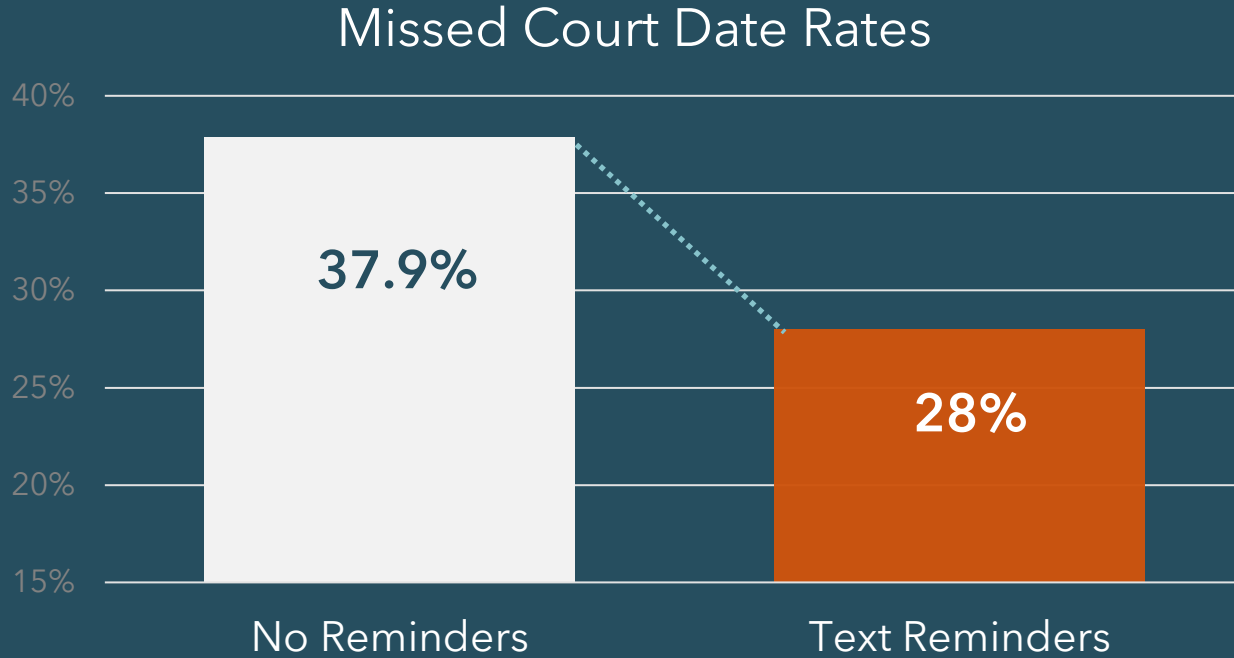
You have court on Mon Jun 03 at 346 Broadway Manhattan. What time should you leave to get there by 9:30AM? Any other arrangements to make? Write out your plan.

3 days before

Remember, you have court tomorrow at 9:30AM. Tickets could be dismissed or end in a fine (60 days to pay). Missing court for #1232456789 can lead to your arrest.

1 day before

OUTCOME: 26% DECREASE FROM TEXT MESSAGE REMINDERS AMONG THOSE WHO PROVIDED A PHONE NUMBER



AUTOMATIC ENROLLMENT IS KEY TO EFFECTIVENESS



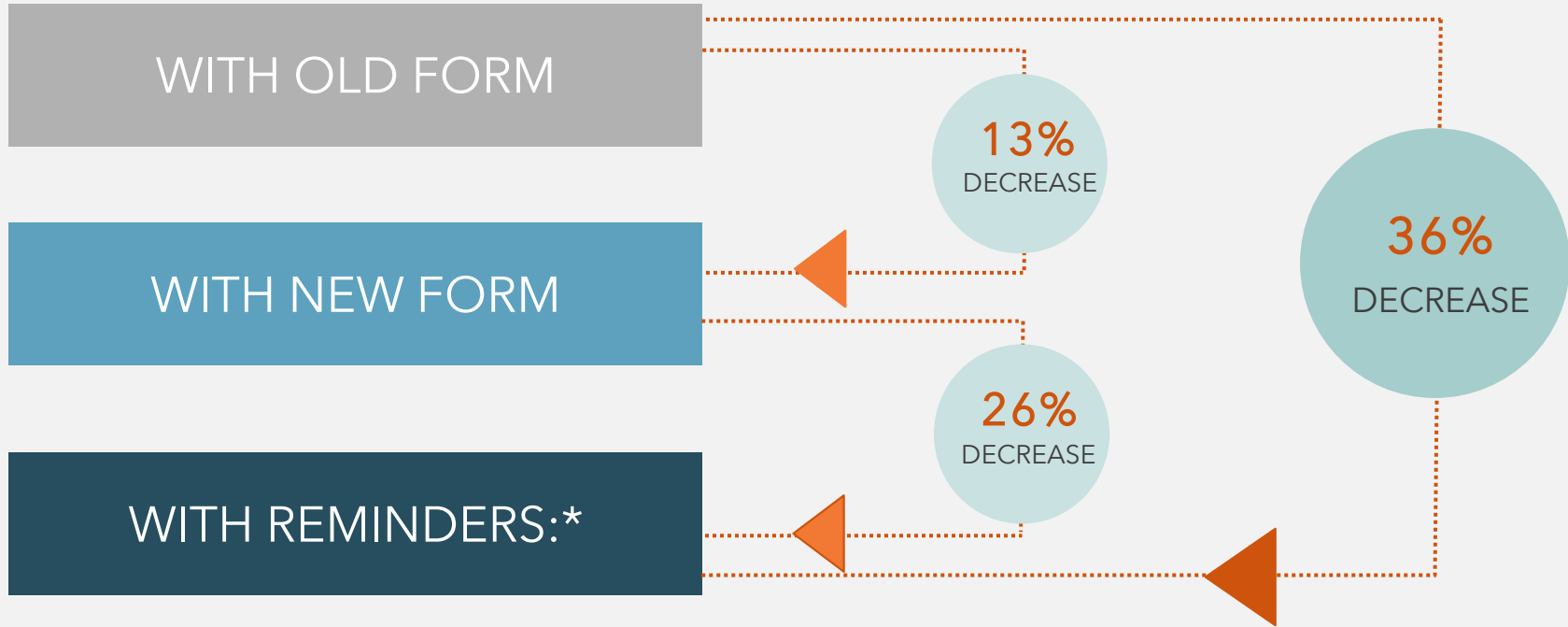
Automatically enroll all court users into reminders.
They can opt out if they choose.

Q. Why not have people sign up?

A. Sign-up requires 3 additional steps and drop-off at each step

- Step 1: Knowledge ✗
- Step 2: Intention ✗
- Step 3: Action ✗

TOGETHER, 36% DECREASE IN MISSED COURT DATES TOTAL IMPACT AMONG THOSE WHO PROVIDED A PHONE NUMBER



* Most effective text message reminders. Note: Impact based on court appearance rate prior to implementation.

Securing Savings by Implementing Solutions

PREVENTING MISSED COURT DATES IS A HUGE OPPORTUNITY FOR SAVINGS

Annually: 67K Hearings Missed → Government Costs: \$100 Million
($\$1500 \times 25K$)

With Improved Notices (13%)
8.7K more hearings attended

=

\$13 million
saved annually

+ Reminders (36% total)
24.1K more hearings attended

=

\$36 million
saved annually

RECOMMENDATIONS TO START SAVING RESOURCES WHILE IMPROVING JUSTICE IN OKLAHOMA

- **Start now**, to prevent missed court dates ASAP
- Have Oklahoma AOC create best practice models for all forms providing court appearance information, for agencies to follow
- Create a “Reminder Program Working Group” of court leaders and key stakeholders, to enable Oklahoma to systematically use best practices to prevent missed court dates
- Take advantage of available resources and supports:
 - Ideas42 and key stakeholders can help Oklahoma successfully pursue and implement these reforms

NOW IS A CRITICAL TIME TO ACT

- Public Safety and Courts represent ~25% of county budgets.
- Federal grant support to states and counties is being slashed
- **Constituent needs for government services will only increase** in the years ahead, so every dollar will be needed for essential services.

ACTING NOW WILL PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT, LASTING SAVINGS

IT'S OUR MISSION TO IMPROVE COURT DATE COMMUNICATIONS TO ENABLE THE MANY BENEFITS TO EVERYONE INVOLVED

(Un)warranted helps policymakers adopt and implement effective court date communications.



Reach out:

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Learn more:

ideas42.org/unwarranted