

Mississippi to reinstate driver's licenses suspended for failure to pay fines

The Mississippi Department of Public Safety (DPS) will reinstate the driver's licenses of all Mississippi drivers whose licenses were suspended due to non-payment of fines, fees or assessments, and will no longer suspend licenses simply

because a person fails to make such court-ordered payments. DPS will continue to suspend driver's licenses for all other reasons available under Mississippi law.

The change in policy was announced today by the DPS, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) and the Roderick and Solange MacArthur Justice Center at the University of Mississippi School of Law.

Under the new procedures, DPS will also waive its \$100 reinstatement fee, will notify these drivers that their licenses are no longer suspended and—if their licenses have expired since they were suspended—will instruct motorists how to reinstate them. The process of reinstating driving privileges for affected drivers is expected to start in January, and letters will be sent to all drivers who benefit from the new policy. DPS has hired dedicated staff to restore

the affected licenses. Drivers with a suspended license should wait until they receive written confirmation from DPS that their license has been reinstated before driving.

Additionally, DPS will no longer suspend licenses solely for non-payment. Drivers with multiple reasons for suspension will have non-payment removed from their driving records as a basis for suspension, and DPS will notify them regarding the reason their licenses remain suspended. Those other reasons for suspension will remain in place and the license will remain suspended until the driver gets those other reasons for suspension cleared.

According to DPS, this official policy will remain

in place unless and until future significant developments occur, such as a statutory change. Drivers affected by this policy are not relieved of any existing obligation to pay fines, fees or assessments.

Marshall Fisher, director of the Mississippi Department of Public Safety, said, "We will continue to suspend licenses for other reasons allowed under Mississippi law, and we certainly take it seriously when people drive with suspended licenses. The reinstatement of these licenses will not relieve the drivers of the legal obligation to pay the fines, fees or assessments. Driver's licenses will continue to be suspended for all other reasons available under Mississippi law, including but not limited to suspension pursuant to a court order finding a driver in contempt for failure to pay a fine or fee or failure to respond to a traffic summons or citation." Fisher said, "The process of discontinuing

suspension of licenses due solely to the nonpayment of fines, fees or assessments will remain in place until future significant developments occur, such as a statutory amendment."

SPLC and the MacArthur Justice Center contend that Mississippi courts have not been following the law regarding collection of fines and fees, and both entities have been pursuing litigation throughout Mississippi addressing the rights of indigent defendants.

"We commend the state of Mississippi for taking steps to ensure that in the future, no one will lose their license if the only reason they failed to pay a traffic ticket is that they simply did not have enough money," said Sam Brooke, SPLC deputy legal director. "We also welcome Mississippi's decision to reinstate licenses that had been previously suspended because people were unable to pay."

"Poverty is not a traffic crime," Brooke said.

"There is a growing recognition across the country that people should not face additional punishment just because of their poverty, and that includes taking away their driver's licenses when they can't pay fines."

The policy changes came about after the SPLC and the MacArthur Justice Center raised concerns about the practices.

"Being poor in Mississippi is hard enough without having your license suspended just because you can't afford to pay off outstanding fines," said Cliff Johnson, director of the MacArthur Justice Center at the University of Mississippi School of Law. "We don't have subways or other reliable public transportation in Mississippi, and a suspended license makes it impossible to legally drive to job interviews, take loved ones to the hospital, pick your kids up from school, or even go to church."

It is estimated that more than 100,000 license holders are affected by this policy change. Licenses suspended for other reasons allowed under Mississippi law will remain suspended.

People who have questions about the status of their Mississippi driver's license can call 601-987-1224 for more information.



Bridal Registry

Lorene McCoy
Ben Courts
March 9

Jenny Clare Christopher
Garrett Holland
May 25



Peoples Drug Store

Court Square 834-2721 Lexington

Locked Doors

Every time I leave my house, I lock the door. Every time I come into my house, I lock the door. We have a rather large house and it would be so easy for anyone to come in and be hiding in wait. I have a loaded weapon, which I said I would never have, in my home that I can easily reach. We now have a sophisticated, high alert alarm system embedded into our wiring system of our home. There are sensors on each and every door and window. Alert cameras pick up motion in all parts of our house and there is an alarm for glass breakage.



Peggy's Take

dreams of break-ins or burglaries never entering our minds.

Later on we moved into a larger home on the east side of town, still fragile locks on our doors. I can remember sleeping right next to a large open window, only the screen between me and the dark

of night with a window fan bringing in cool air. My next door friend would visit through this opening late in the night. No fear!

My grandmother's house didn't even have the semblance of a lock on her doors. Maybe a screen door hook to keep the young ones from going outside. I never heard of her or any of her not-so-close neighbors having any unwanted entries. I was never afraid to close my eyes and sleep with the confidence that I was nothing but safe.

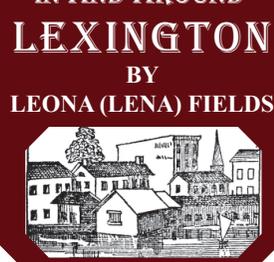
Now every morning we turn on the television and always make the comment, "Wonder who got shot or killed last night?" Because for sure more than not someone was harmed or killed in the night. The news told of one man who was sleeping in his bed and was shot in the leg by

a 'drive-by'. How would you like your sleep to be disrupted by a bullet to the leg? And, so many times there are children involved, innocent children who are just riding in a car or playing outside. It seems to me that people are just so greedy for "things" that they have to kill and steal to have what they want. I would so love to go back to the "olden days" when we slept with our doors open, our windows cooling us, our children safe in their beds, and when people loved people.

I love things I can put in my slow cooker and come home to a cooked meal. This is a favorite.

- Chicken Cordon Bleu Casserole**
- 2 pounds of skinless boneless chicken breasts
 - 1/2 pound of ham slices
 - 1 can of stove top cornbread stuffing mix
 - 1 (10 1/2) ounce of Cream of chicken soup
 - 1/3 cup butter
 - 1/4 cup milk
 - 1 (6 oz package of Swiss cheese
 - 1/4 t. garlic powder
 - 1/2 t. oregano salt and pepper

Place chicken breast in bottom of slow cooker and place ham on top. Mix rest of ingredients and smooth over meat except for stuffing and butter. Sprinkle cornbread stuffing on top and pour butter on top. Cover and cook on low for 5 hours.



IN AND AROUND LEXINGTON BY LEONA (LENA) FIELDS

I talked to Emma Carnegie Thursday morning, January 31. She said she went to the Greenwood-Leflore Hospital Wednesday night, January 30 and stayed a few hours. Not too long ago she went to the hospital for a real bad cold. This time it had turned to be bronchitis.

Mr. Jimmie Gamble of Mileston passed. He was funeralized Saturday, January 26. Keep the Gamble family uplifted in prayer.

By the Grace of God my mother is still here, but she is a real sick lady. Prayers for all sick people.

The sewing ladies at the Senior Citizens' Feeding Site in Lexington say "Thank You" to the lady that brought the material. Believe it or not, we appreciate every scrap of cloth people give us.

* Peggy Sims is a lifelong resident of Attala County and columnist.

Crop	CBOT Month	Delivery Period	Futures Price	EGT Basis	Net Price	Change
Wheat	Jul 19	2019 Jun	5.23	-0.22	5.01	0.01
Corn	Mar 19	2019 Feb	3.73	0.10	3.83	-0.01
Corn	Sep 19	2019 Aug	3.92	-0.04	3.88	-0.02
Soybeans Sidon	Nov 19	2019 Aug-Sep	9.49	-0.48	9.01	-0.08
Soybeans G'wood	Mar 19	2019 Feb - Deferred Pricing only	9.05	-0.44	8.61	-0.09
Soybeans G'wood	Nov 19	2019 Aug-Sep	9.49	-0.35	9.14	-0.08
Soybeans Minter City	Nov 19	2019 Aug-Sep	9.49	-0.38	9.11	-0.08
Rice	Jan 19		10.270			-0.095
Rice	Mar 19		10.455			-0.115
Cotton	Mar 19		70.55			-2.000
Cotton	May 19		71.76			-1.230

Prices as of 2:00 p.m. on 02/11/19

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**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

The Town of Goodman, Mississippi, is considering applying to the Mississippi Development Authority for a Community Development Block Grant of up to \$450,000.00. The State of Mississippi has been allocated approximately \$23 million that will be made available to cities and counties on a competitive basis to undertake eligible community development activities. These funds must be used for one of the following purposes:

1. To benefit low- and moderate-income persons and households;
2. To meet other community development needs having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community where other financial resources are not available to meet such needs.

The activities for which these funds may be used are in the areas of economic development and public facilities. The Town of Goodman's proposed project consists of possible Sewer System or Lagoon Improvements. The public hearing will be held March 5, 2019, at 5:30 p. m. at the Goodman Town Hall and will provide more specific details regarding the activities, program requirements, and the rating system. The purpose of this hearing will be to obtain citizen input into the development of the application.