



MEMORANDUM

Date: October 26, 2016

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator *[Signature]*

Re: **Weekend Warrant Resolution Court on October 1 and Night Court on October 11**

Pima County Consolidated Justice Court conducted additional warrant resolution courts on Saturday, October 1, 2016, and in the evening on Tuesday, October 11, 2016, as part of Pima County's efforts to increase access to the courts and safely reduce the jail population.

On Saturday, October 1, a total of 156 arrest warrants were quashed; and 156 driver's license suspensions lifted during the session, which was held from 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM. In addition, 420 individuals were assisted at payment windows with paying financial obligations or setting up payment plans.

Another 32 warrants were quashed during the first night court session on October 11, which was held from 4 PM to 7 PM. A total of 80 driver's license suspensions were lifted, and 224 individuals were served at windows.

The extended court hours are part of Pima County's strategies to reduce incarceration at the jail by reducing the number of outstanding arrest warrants issued for misdemeanor defendants because of their failure to appear at court hearings (FTA). The Justice Court also uses automated court hearing reminders to reduce the incidence of failure to appear. The FTA problem became a focus of the jail reduction efforts because of data showing that FTAs were the single largest driver of jail use. In 2014, more than 10,000 individuals were booked and held in jail on FTA warrants, 93 percent of whom had only underlying misdemeanor charges, using more than 200,000 bed days. The FTA-related jail use accounted for more than half the total jail bed days used that year. Such jail use is an enormous cost to Pima County and other local jurisdictions.

Providing an opportunity for individuals to have driver's license suspensions lifted and to deal with their financial obligations to the court is also important. Nonpayment of fines – even in civil traffic cases – can result in a suspended license, which can then escalate to a criminal matter if the individual drives with a suspended license, creating the potential for jail time and greatly increased fines.

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A multijurisdictional weekend warrant court was also held on June 11, when more than 300 warrants were quashed by Pima County Consolidated Justice Courts; Tucson City Court; and Oro Valley, Marana and Sahuarita courts.

Pima County Consolidated Justice Courts plan to hold monthly Tuesday night court sessions and quarterly weekend court sessions, and it also hosts walk-in warrant court each weekday at 1:30 PM. Tucson City Court also plans additional night court sessions and has walk-in warrant court Monday through Thursday afternoons.

CHH/mjk

c: The Honorable Keith Bee, Presiding Justice of the Peace, Consolidated Justice Courts
Ellen Wheeler, Assistant County Administrator