

# Living in Suspension

## Consequences of Driver's License Suspension Policies

February 2018  
Chicago Jobs Council



In 1999, LaSheria got several parking tickets. She was 19. She disputed them, sending in pictures showing there was no sign about the parking restrictions. She never heard back, and figured it was fine.

It was 2008 before she heard about them again. LaSheria was driving her son to school, changed lanes in a jerky maneuver, and was pulled over. She realized her mistake and figured she'd get a ticket, and have to pay it. Instead, the officer returned to tell her that she was driving illegally. This is how she found out that her license was suspended due to unpaid parking tickets.

"I never received any kind of mailing home to say, 'Hey, these tickets are doubling. You need to pay these tickets by this day.' Nothing." She renewed her license multiple times, and still heard nothing until 2008.

She found out that over the years, the ticket debt had grown into \$2,500, which she didn't have. In the following weeks, she spent long days bringing her daughter to school on the bus, bundled against the snow. She prayed her son did not become the next Trayvon Martin on his way back from school all alone. She missed days of work just taking care of her family. She needed to keep driving for them and for her job. The only way out was to file Chapter 7 bankruptcy. That cleared up her first suspension.



### In Brief

80% of Illinoisans drive to work.

Half of survey respondents lost a job because they lost their license. This hurts them, their families, and their employers.

When driver's licenses are suspended for failure to pay parking tickets and other non-driving violations, individuals, employers, and communities suffer.

Without a license, there's no way out of debt. Without money to pay off debt, there's no way to get a license. This traps people in poverty.

72% of survey respondents with suspensions owe over \$500 to get their license back. A third owe over \$3,000.

Illinois has no statute of limitations on parking tickets, and payment plans often require unreasonable down payments and schedules. For many, bankruptcy is the only way out.

Local governments have other collection tools without the catastrophic consequences of license suspension.



**Illinois suspends driver's licenses for dozens of non-driving violations, including:**

- Failure to pay 10 or more parking tickets
- Failure to pay 5 or more tolls
- Failure to pay child support
- Failure to pay fines
- Failure to appear in court

In Illinois, 80% of people drive to work.<sup>1</sup> Many need to drive for their jobs, or would need to drive to be promoted to a better job. Some find that non-driving jobs still require a driver's license to apply. At least 30,000 licenses are suspended in Illinois every year for reasons that don't have anything to do with driving.<sup>2</sup> Too often, their stories look something like LaSheria's.

What happens to people with licenses suspended for non-driving violations? This report details the employment and life consequences of our driver's license suspension policies to real people in Illinois. It is based on a survey of over 500 people across the state, shared by the Chicago Jobs Council and numerous partners. Additionally, we

conducted a dozen interviews to learn more details about specific circumstances. We share recommendations based on our findings. We also lift up questions worth further investigation. More research and advocacy are needed at multiple levels of Illinois government to understand how driver's license suspension and related policies impact our communities. Our goal is the promotion of fair and effective policies that do not present unnecessary burdens to workers, families, and people experiencing poverty.

**The second time** LaSheria found out her license was suspended was in Georgia. It was 2015. She moved her family there after getting a good paying job. Things were going well. When she was pulled over during a routine traffic stop, her old parking tickets didn't even cross her mind. The officer checked her ID, found out her license was suspended, and put her under arrest.

Locked up and confused, she felt like a criminal. "I had my one phone call. I had to call my husband to ask, could he get a bail bondsman to bond me out of jail." The judge told her she had tickets in Chicago, and she would need to return to clear them up. So she left her good job, and was forced to return to Chicago to clear up the same parking tickets from when she was 19.

"While I was trying to handle the license situation, my job just wasn't willing to wait."  
-LaSheria

**Xavier: No License, No Job**

Xavier has been walking around Peoria for over 10 years. He's 32 years old, a father, football coach, and graphic artist. He used to drive, but his license is suspended.

He found out his license was suspended in 2009 while doing transportation for a medical center through a temp agency. He came into work for his second shift of the day, but was told by his supervisor, "You no longer work here." Driving home, he was pulled over and arrested for driving while suspended.

There was a mistake with the child support payments he had been making every month, and he owed more than he realized. As a penalty, the state of Illinois took away his driver's license and his job went with it. Without a license, he had trouble finding another. Without a job, he couldn't get out of debt. Without paying off the debt, he couldn't get his license back.

"All this for child support? I was at work, and y'all suspended my license while I was at work, got me fired, now I'm going to jail?"



Since she moved away from Chicago, bankruptcy policies had changed, and her Chapter 7 plan was no longer sufficient. After more interest accrued, more attorney fees, and the total upheaval of her life, she moved the ticket debt into a Chapter 13 bankruptcy plan. She's currently paying \$300 every month over two years, to pay the city almost \$8,000 in parking ticket debt.

### Findings: The Consequences of Our Policies

We distributed a survey through workforce development, legal aid, adult education, and other community based organizations, asking them to share it with their clients. We received responses from 540 individuals, and conducted longer interviews with a dozen people.

Here is what we learned:

Who responded to the survey?	
Black:	59%
White:	36%
Latino:	18%
Asian:	2%
Female:	56%
Male:	44%
Chicago:	48%
Suburbs:	26%
Greater IL:	25%



#### Driver's license suspension is a job killer.

We found that 52% of respondents suspended for non-driving violations lost or missed out on a job opportunity because they didn't have a license.<sup>3</sup> Many report needing a license to be considered, whether or not the job required driving.

**52% of respondents with non-driving suspensions have lost or missed out on a job because of their license**

Other research backs up this result: taking away licenses takes away jobs. A study by Rutgers University prepared for the New Jersey Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration in 2007 found that 42% of individuals lost their jobs following the suspension of their licenses, and 45% of those who lost their job couldn't find another one. **Of those who did find another job, 88% reported a decrease in income.**<sup>4</sup>

Research on car access (a closely related indicator) confirms the same pattern. In a 2016 study of Welfare to Work program participants in 5 US metro areas over 6 years, researchers concluded that access to a vehicle "will notably improve employment outcomes among very-low-income adults."<sup>5</sup> A similar study in Tennessee from 2005 found that car access increased the probability of someone being employed, leaving welfare, and finding better paying jobs.<sup>6</sup> Another found that among 62 single mothers in Pittsburgh, **mobility status had a bigger impact on employment than work experience or education.**<sup>7</sup>

Suspensions for non-driving violations also burden local employment and training services. Publicly funded employment programs help the un- and under-employed gain skills and find employment. But debt-related suspensions make employment less likely for many participants. Among survey respondents served by workforce development and adult education programs across the state, 25% have ever had a suspended or revoked license.

"Just recently lost my job yesterday because of my fluctuating attendance due to my license being suspended and me working an hour plus from home. Not a lot of people want to drive that far and pick me back up. Majority of the time I had to call off because of transportation issues." – 25 year old mother of two, Glendale Heights.



## Talibah: Debtors Need Not Apply

Five years ago, Talibah got a job with the city of Chicago. During the orientation process, she found out that she needed to pay off any debt to the city before starting work, and she still had parking tickets and red light tickets. Without working, she couldn't get the money to pay. She started calling family to get together the money, but it wasn't enough.

"It was like the saddest moment ever because I had it!" But the job slipped through her fingers because of her debt. Owing money stopped her from making money.

Cities have other ways to collect on the debt, including booting cars, impounding cars, diverting tax refunds, working with debt collectors, and garnishing wages. Those are just the basics. In Chicago, city policies prohibit hiring people who owe municipal debt. This can put someone in the same catch 22 as a license suspension: if you can't work, you can't pay. If you can't pay, you can't work.



## A suspended license is a family sentence.

When someone loses their license, their families are also punished. During the weeks when LaSheria was without her license for the first time, she spent long days making sure everyone got where they needed to be, sometimes taking the day off to make time.

"This impacted every aspect of my life," she shared. "At the time, my son was younger. He was still in high school. I had to trust my gut and pray that my son would be able to come home in one piece... And then, I have to catch the bus to my daughter's school in winter, snow up to your neck. You know, she's freezing, I'm freezing."

Plus, public transit is especially dangerous for her husband, who has epilepsy. "Say that there's someone on the bus that has the iPhone flash that goes off. That's something I can eliminate in my car—we have tinted windows. Luckily, we never had a seizure on the bus. But it was a real fear. It was a reality that could have happened at any given time."

On days like this she would come home to look at her perfectly good vehicle sitting in front of the house. "But I can't touch it, because my driver's license is suspended. All for tickets from 1999," she said.

Survey respondents shared a variety of other family impacts. One 37 year old mother from north of Rockford reported, **"This has placed a negative impact on my life and my son who was a straight A student who almost got kicked out of school because of his attendance trying to get me back-and-forth to work."**

## Xavier: It's Hard on Kids

"From high school till now, all I've been trying to do is stay in the kids life," Xavier says. He supports them too, but not through official child support. With interest on his arrears, official payments are divided, with some money going to his kids, and some going to the state for interest. So he buys them things directly. But that also means he's locked out of driving, which makes it harder to provide.

"You're 14, 13, you're gonna want a car eventually. You're looking at Dad like, 'he ain't had a car in probably 10, 12 years. So Dad, we can't ask you, can you help me get a car.'" He said it's "heart breaking" because of what he can't provide for them financially and materially.

"You know, it's giving them a wrong perspective about their father that's been there since day one. Because of what he can't provide to them or show through materialistic things... You would die for your children, so like, anything harm them, you're going to feel the pain. If you feel like they are mad at you you're going to feel it even though you made them mad."



“Every time I try to get ahead I get snapped back. How am I going to overcome my past if you can't give it up?”  
 –William

Many parents reported difficulty providing for their children because of a suspended license and subsequent challenges finding work. William is 49 and has been without a license for about 3 years. “I’m barely living. My mom is retired, she doesn’t have anything. My son is in college, I’m trying to help him.” He has forklift experience and used to own his own business, but he can’t get to the suburbs where most jobs are. “The people in offices get second chances but we don't. I'm not a bad guy, I teach kids, I mentor kids on my own time... Every time I try to get ahead I get snapped back. How am I going to overcome my past if you can't give it up?”

Isaiah, 53, is almost done clearing up his child support case, which resulted in his license suspension. He has a 4 year old, and started taking care of his mother a few years ago after she had a heart attack and a stroke. But it’s hard to provide when he has missed out on numerous job opportunities because of the license. Sometimes, he’s gone without a home as well.

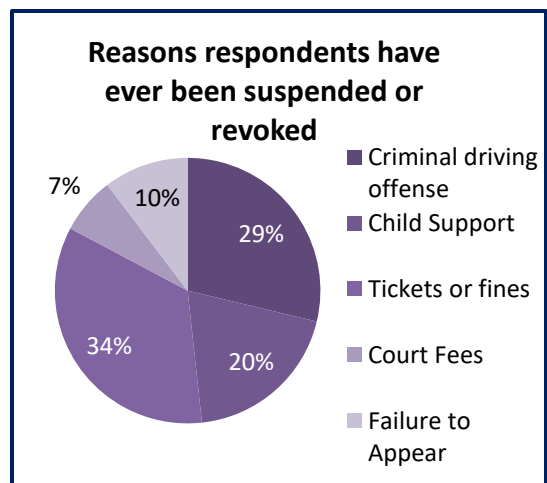
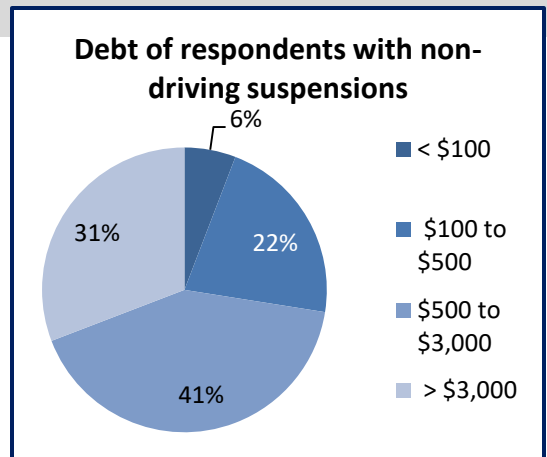


**The amounts individuals owe are staggering.**

LaSheria’s original tickets totaled \$600. They doubled to \$1,200 when she didn’t pay them in 1999. In 2008, they had grown to \$2,500. Going into her Chapter 13 bankruptcy, her final debt was nearly \$8,000. She is currently paying about \$300 each month over a two year period. She is paying off 100% of the debt because the city refused to negotiate a reduced price even though she filed bankruptcy.

**Of survey respondents with non-driving suspensions, 72% report owing more than \$500 and 31% over \$3,000 before they can re-obtain a valid license.** These amounts are particularly staggering given that most Americans would struggle to deal with a \$400 emergency.<sup>8</sup>

Suspensions for non-driving violations appear to be motivated by interest in revenue, not public safety. **Our survey found that most suspensions were debt related. Together, failure to pay tickets, fines, fees, and child support made up 61% of causes for suspension among licenses ever suspended or revoked.** And in Chicago, the city publicly acknowledges that collecting on parking tickets is a top priority.<sup>9</sup> The federal government also incentivizes state governments to use licenses as a child support collection tool.<sup>10</sup>



However, the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators recommends that states do not suspend licenses for non-driving offenses, and instead focusing limited resources on suspending licenses of people with moving violations who pose a threat to highway safety.<sup>11</sup> The Department of Justice warned against the trend in local government to rely on tickets, fines, and fees for revenue in its report on Ferguson, Missouri.<sup>12</sup>





### Repayment plans are not the solution.

While licenses are suspended centrally by the Secretary of State, every city and county can have their own repayment plans for tickets, fines, and fees. Often, the plans require large down payments and are very unforgiving of any late or missed payments.

A number of respondents cited impossibly large down payments of \$500, \$1000, or \$1800, for example. This might explain why so many fail to get their license back. Among those with suspensions for non-driving reasons, **49% reported trying but failing to get their license reinstated.**

A number recounted failed attempts to pay off debt, overwhelming penalties for missed or late payments, and steep thresholds to meet plan requirements. One 50 year old man from Chicago simply said, “I do not have the funds for even a payment plan.”

### Talibah: Fees on Top of Fees

Talibah has plenty of experience with payment plans in Chicago.

“I had defaulted on the payment plan as usual, because it’s just so hard to keep up with it... You know, it’s fees on top of fees on top of fees...and it’s like a 100 dollar default payment. But that 100 dollars doesn’t go towards your tickets.... I’ve been on so many payment plans with them. I think I have always put down between like 300, 500 dollars. Always. I have one ticket now and it has doubled.”

But since it’s only one ticket, she doesn’t owe enough to qualify for a payment plan. “So you have to owe so much before they can help you out.... [you] can’t win for losing.”

### Rosalva: Let Me Pay!

Rosalva remembers the frustration of offering what she could pay, and being turned away because it wasn’t enough to make a qualifying payment on Chicago’s payment plan:

“If I have \$500 to pay on my ticket, and then I’m not working, and they say ‘well you have to come back with another 500 and make it 1000 for you to make a payment’—I have that \$500, I’m going to use it for whatever I have with my kids. My kids need shoes, my kids need transportation on the bus. It’s difficult, because you have to figure out, do I buy my kid new shoes, or do I pay my ticket? And when you have the money to pay them, they wouldn’t accept the payment... So what do you do? You spend it. And here we go, here comes the cycle all over again.”

“It’s not that I don’t want to pay. It’s that I just don’t have it. I’m not trying to get away, I’m not trying to make any kind of excuse. But if I don’t have it—give me the opportunity to pay what I can!”



### Communication to drivers about tickets, suspensions, debt, and options are ineffective. People are confused.

LaSheria didn’t know about either of her suspensions until she was pulled over, and she’s not alone. Fifty one percent of survey respondents who have ever been suspended or revoked reported finding out during a traffic stop or other police interaction, rather than from another type of notification. This is unsurprising given that the Secretary of State only has one type of contact information on file: the address on a person’s license, which is often outdated. They have no email address, phone number, or backup address.

**51% of respondents found out they were suspended when they were pulled over.**



Nationally, 75% of drivers keep driving even when suspended.<sup>13</sup> Our survey, interviews, and research offer two primary explanations: people don't know and they don't have a choice.

Many respondents reported getting in trouble for tickets from 10, 20, or more years ago. An investigation by ABC-7 found many individuals with similar experiences. Some had tickets that were not only old, but "bogus," according to the report. Some individuals with misattributed tickets on their record don't even drive or have a car.<sup>14</sup>

Others are confused by the number of government offices involved, and don't know what they need from each of the various agencies. These local government offices may not share data

"I paid \$3500 to obtain my driving license only to be stopped and learn my license was suspended again for unpaid tickets from more than 10 years ago." –41 year old man, Chicago

"Unpaid ticket over 20 years ago. Got stopped and found out it was suspended. Paid most of it off, but [it] kept adding up. I feel I am buried deep in money & fines. I see no way out and I'm very discouraged and see no hope." –32 year old woman, Peoria

"Was confusing, couldn't understand what was needed. Needed DL to perform duties." –52 year old woman, Peoria (lost her job)

"I had a ticket in another county some years back, that I paid. Some how the payment check didn't post. 2 yrs later, I was pulled over for tail light. I was arrested, unknown to me, my license had been suspended. A year later they mailed me the canceled check, because I had paid it again in cash." –50 year old woman, Chicago

"My city and state vehicle sticker expired and the brakes went out on my car. I was unemployed and homeless. Every day I watched the police pile tickets on my car if they were in a two or three man patrol then each office would put tickets onto my car. When I got money to pay for the city sticker then I still had to buy a state sticker. They keep piling on tickets by the day. When I got money to buy the state sticker then I had to find money to repair my brakes. I never received notice of suspension until I went to court to work out some way to pay for a ticket for each sticker. They refused and triple the fines on the stickers and suspended my license. I can't get work that requires a drivers license so how can I pay if they won't let me make money?" –61 year old man, Chicago

either, and researching one's case can take multiple trips to multiple offices at different locations. All the while, they need to get to these offices without driving.

Many also reported getting multiple tickets for the same offense. LaSheria remembers the tickets she contested when she was 19, "I would come home from work and there would be five parking tickets on my car at one time."

Some respondents also expressed confusion around SR-22 insurance, an additional auto insurance requirement for some drivers depending on their driving record. One 28 year old woman from the western suburbs of Chicago shared that while she didn't get in trouble for driving, she could have. She didn't know about the SR-22 insurance requirement until she had already been driving: "NO MAIL WAS EVER RECIEVED REGAURDING [sic] THIS. I DID NOT GET PULLED OVER BUT MY LICENSE WAS SUSPENDED ALMOST A YEAR WITHOUT MY KNOWING. "





## People with low incomes and people of color are less likely to have a valid license.

Our survey results indicate that suspending driver’s licenses for non-driving violations has a disproportionate impact on people with low incomes and people of color.

Of respondents with a household income under \$10,000, only 38% reported having a valid license, while 91% of respondents making \$75,000 or more reported having a valid license. White respondents were almost twice as likely as Black respondents to have a license. (We are cautious to draw conclusions about the percentage of Latino respondents who report having a valid license, because our Spanish-language outreach was not as broad as our English-language outreach while administering the survey.)

Again, the researchers in the Rutgers study found similar results: individuals with a history of suspension tended to be non-white, and were more likely to have low incomes.<sup>15</sup>

### Drivers with a valid license by race and income

Black:	45%
Latino:	70%
White:	76%

\$0-10,000:	38%
\$10,000-20,000:	50%
\$20,000-35,000:	71%
\$35,000-50,000:	75%
\$50,000-75,000:	88%
\$75,000 & more:	91%

## Recommendations

We believe that dangerous drivers should not be allowed behind the wheel. We also believe that laws should be enforceable. But as multiple complex institutions interact to regulate driver’s licenses, we have created a system with major unintended consequences to individuals who fall through the cracks. License suspension is not an appropriate tool to coerce payments out of people who simply don’t have the money, and will never be able to get it if they can’t work.

**80% of Illinoisans drive to work**

Whether you’re an employer trying to fill jobs, an individual trying to work, or a child who needs a ride to school, we all have a shared interest in protecting the ability of safe drivers to keep driving. About 80% of Illinoisans drive to work.<sup>16</sup> Even in Cook County, where public transit gets over 470,000 people to work, 70% of workers still drive to their jobs.<sup>17</sup>

Luckily, it doesn’t have to be this way. State, local, and federal policy makers have options to mitigate the dramatic consequences of license suspension on people who simply cannot afford to keep their license. In Illinois, we recommend the following steps to reduce the harm caused by license suspension for non-driving violations.

### Change how license suspension works.

- Eliminate driver’s license suspension as a penalty for failure to pay parking tickets, failure to pay child support, and other non-driving violations. Passing and implementing the provisions in the [License to Work Act](#) (HB5340) is an important first step.
- Revise and standardize payment plans for tickets, fines, and fees. Allow people with limited income to both pay and continue to drive.





- Modernize outdated notification processes. All notifications related to anything that can lead to license suspension, jail time, or other life altering consequences must be conveyed using more than the single (often outdated) address.
- End municipal hiring policies that prevent the hiring of individuals who owe money to the city.

**Eliminate systemic financial incentives driving local suspension practices.**

- Equitable tax and revenue policies at both the state and federal level will reduce the need for local government to seek revenue through regressive tickets, fines, and fees.
- Eliminate local law enforcement practices that incentivize generating ticket revenue.
- Replace ticket, fine, and fee policies with equitable approaches such as day-fines (which tie amounts owed to income).
- End federal requirements that states maintain authority to suspend driver’s licenses for non-payment of child support.

**Improve the public information on suspension practices.**

While we can say conclusively that driver’s license suspension is a barrier to employment, our research revealed many more questions that need answers. For example, we have strong evidence to believe that license suspension policy and practice has a disproportionate impact on people of color. We know that people of color are more likely to be stopped by police, and face higher rates of poverty and unemployment, making it harder to pay off tickets, fines, and fees.<sup>18</sup> We also strongly suspect that license suspension for non-driving violations is a waste of money, based on the administrative cost to arrest, process, and incarcerate individuals who drive on a suspended license. Research and reform in other states further confirms this suspicion. To better inform the reform of suspension policy and practice, we must start with:

- The release of comprehensive data about driver’s license suspensions, including at least demographics of individuals, number and type of individual suspension requests by requesting municipality or agency, number and types of individual suspensions enacted, lengths of suspensions, and geography by zip code.
- To augment existing data, the state could require agencies and municipalities requesting license suspensions to prepare a public annual report with the following details: license suspension requests by number, type, demographics, and actual time suspended; administrative costs to process suspensions; descriptions of additional debt collection measures used; details about revenue generated from license suspension, other debt collection tools, and uncollected revenue.
- A comprehensive cost benefit analysis of license suspensions for non-driving violations, to include at least: administrative costs across all public entities to use and enforce suspensions; family income and tax income lost due to job loss; impact on public benefit; and revenue generated from the use of suspension.

For more details about the specific research and information we believe is necessary, please see our working paper, “Driver’s License Suspension Research and Information Needs,” ([cjc.net/research-and-information-needs](http://cjc.net/research-and-information-needs)).



## Conclusion

---

Recently, LaSheria had another surprise. It turns out she has a felony from Georgia, where it is a criminal offense to drive on a suspended license. Because of those parking tickets from age 19, she has been marked as among the worst criminals in our society. It's hard to argue that this makes sense.

Illinois can do better than this. Our communities' long term well-being requires people to be able to participate in the labor market and support themselves and their families. Already, California, Washington, and Vermont have eliminated license suspension for most non-driving suspensions, and similar reforms are advancing through legislatures and courts in others. Let's move forward, and let safe drivers move on.

## Further Reading

---

["Access to Driving and License Suspension Policies," The Mobility Agenda](#)

["Best Practices Guide to Reducing Suspended Drivers," American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators](#)

["Chicago's Bankruptcy Boom," ProPublica](#)

["Child Support Enforcement and Driver's License Suspension Policies," Congressional Research Service](#)

["Cited in Milwaukee: The Cost of Unpaid Municipal Citations," Justice Initiatives Institute](#)

["Driving Into Debt: The Need for Traffic Ticket Fee Reform," Insight Center for Community Economic Development](#)

["Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department," United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division](#)

["License Suspensions For Nondriving Offenses: Practices in Four States That May Ease the Financial Impact on Low-Income Individuals," US Government Accountability Office](#)

["Motor Vehicles Affordability and Fairness Task Force Final Report," Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey & New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission](#)

["Not Just a Ferguson Problem: How Traffic Courts Drive Inequality in California," Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area](#)

["Reinstating Common Sense: How driver's license suspensions for drug offenses unrelated to driving are falling out of favor," Prison Policy Initiative](#)

["Rethinking Driver's License Suspensions for Nonpayment of Fines and Fees," National Center for State Courts](#)

["Roadblock to Economic Independence: How Driver's License Suspension Policies in Indiana Impede Self-Sufficiency, Burden State Government & Tax Public Resources," Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law](#)

["Suspended Indefinitely: Driver's Licenses and the Long Road to Work," Chicago Jobs Council](#)

["Stopping the Debt Spiral," Community Organizing and Family Issues](#)

["Stopped, Fined, Arrested: Racial Bias in Policing and Traffic Courts in California," Back on the Road California](#)

["Targeted Fines and Fees Against Communities of Color: Civil Rights & Constitutional Implications," U.S. Commission on Civil Rights](#)

## Methods & Acknowledgements

---

The Chicago Jobs Council received 540 responses to our survey of people with experience of driver's license suspension in January and February of 2017. This is not a representative sample. The survey was shared with organizations through Jobs Council announcement emails, personal outreach, and the Transit Table coalition. The target respondents were clients of workforce development, legal aid, and other social service and community based organizations, as well as inmates at the Cook County Jail.



Organizations that shared the survey with their participants include:

All Chicago and the Lived Experience Commission  
Cabrini Green Legal Aid  
Cara  
Central States SER  
CEDA Evanston  
Centro Romero  
Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network  
Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI)  
Community Assistance Programs  
Cook County Jail  
Employment & Employer Services  
Chicago Greencorps  
Heartland Alliance  
Howard Area Community Center  
Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies  
The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership

Jane Addams Resource Corporation  
LAF  
Navicore Peoria  
Neighborhood House, Peoria  
North Lawndale Employment Network  
Peoria Adult Transition Center  
Peoria Citizens Committee for Economic Opportunity  
Shawnee Development Council  
St. Sabina Employment Resource Center  
UCAN  
Washington Heights Workforce Center  
YMCA  
YouthBuild Lake County  
YouthBuild Rockford  
YWCA

Thanks to the individuals who shared their experiences through the survey, and especially to those who spoke to us for interviews. Thank you to members of the Transit Table coalition for input on and distribution of the survey. Thanks to North Lawndale Employment Network for sharing their experiences surveying their own job seekers about their licenses. Thanks to Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI) for their parent leaders who shared stories and continue to organize on this issue. Thanks to Heartland Alliance for their dedicated partnership to research and advocacy on this issue.

This report was written by the Chicago Jobs Council.  
The lead author was Eric Halvorson.  
Research by Ted Barzev and Eric Halvorson.



Chicago Jobs Council  
29 E. Madison St., Suite 1700-C  
Chicago, IL 60602-4415  
312.252.0460  
www.cjc.net

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

<sup>2</sup> Data provided upon request by the office of the Secretary of State of Illinois.

<sup>3</sup> We identified individuals with license suspended for non-driving violations as those that selected any of the following as reasons for being suspended or revoked: "I did not pay tickets or fines," "I did not make child support payments," or "I did not pay my court fees."

<sup>4</sup> "Affordability and Fairness Task Force: Final Report," Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, and the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission, (2006), [http://www.state.nj.us/mvc/pdf/About/AFTF\\_final\\_02.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/mvc/pdf/About/AFTF_final_02.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Evelyn Blumenberg and Gregory Pierce, "The Drive to Work: The Relationship between Transportation Access, Housing Assistance, and Employment among Participants in the Welfare to Work Voucher Program," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 37, no. 1 (March 1, 2017) <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X16633501>.

<sup>6</sup> Tami Gurley and Donald Bruce, "The Effects of Car Access on Employment Outcomes for Welfare Recipients," *Journal of Urban Economics* 58, no. 2 (September 1, 2005): 250–72, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jue.2005.05.002>.

<sup>7</sup> Sara Lichtenwalter, Gary Koeske, and Esther Sales, "Examining Transportation and Employment Outcomes: Evidence for Moving Beyond The Bus Pass," *Journal of Poverty* 10, no. 1 (April 28, 2006): 93–115, [https://doi.org/10.1300/J1134v10n01\\_05](https://doi.org/10.1300/J1134v10n01_05).

<sup>8</sup> "Report on the Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households in 2015" (Federal Reserve, May 2016), <https://www.federalreserve.gov/2015-report-economic-well-being-us-households-201605.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Jason Knowles, "Residents Say City Demanded Payment for Old, Bogus Parking Tickets," ABC7 Chicago, February 6, 2018, <http://abc7chicago.com/3040174/>; "Emanuel Wants More Parking Tickets on Weekends," WGN-TV (blog), October 24, 2017, <http://wgntv.com/2017/10/24/emanuel-wants-more-parking-tickets-on-weekends/>; Dick Johnson, "City Uses Predictive Analytics to Cash in On Parking Tickets," NBC Chicago, accessed February 22, 2018, <http://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local/chicago-parking-tickets-predictive-analytics-452644233.html>; "City to Expand



---

Crackdown on Illegal Parking, Boost Debt Collection,” *Chicago Sun-Times* (blog), accessed February 22, 2018, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/chicago-politics/city-to-expand-crackdown-on-illegal-parking-boost-debt-collection/>.

<sup>10</sup> 42 U.S.C. § 666(a)(16).

<sup>11</sup> “Best Practices Guide to Reducing Suspended Drivers” (American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, February 2013), <https://www.aamva.org/Suspended-and-Revoked-Drivers-Working-Group/>.

<sup>12</sup> “Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department” (United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, March 4, 2015), [https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/opa/press-releases/attachments/2015/03/04/ferguson\\_police\\_department\\_report.pdf](https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/opa/press-releases/attachments/2015/03/04/ferguson_police_department_report.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> “Best Practices Guide to Reducing Suspended Drivers.”

<sup>14</sup> Knowles, “Residents Say City Demanded Payment for Old, Bogus Parking Tickets.”

<sup>15</sup> “Affordability and Fairness Task Force: Final Report.”

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

<sup>18</sup> “Racial Disparity in Consent Searches and Dog Sniff Searches,” ACLU of Illinois, July 17, 2017, <https://www.aclu-il.org/en/publications/racial-disparity-consent-searches-and-dog-sniff-searches>.

