



NEW JERSEY STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

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June 12, 2020

Honorable Phil Murphy
Governor, State of New Jersey
Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Re: Re-Opening of Motor Vehicle Commission/Prioritizing Municipal Court
Defendants

Dear Governor Murphy:

On behalf of the New Jersey State Bar Association, thank you for your leadership in guiding New Jersey through the pandemic crisis. Our members are appreciative of the efforts of Chief Justice Stuart Rabner and Acting Administrative Director of the Courts, Judge Glenn Grant, as well, for their efforts to keep New Jersey's courts open and operational during these unprecedented times.

For some municipal court defendants, though, additional issues have arisen with the closure of collateral offices, such as the motor vehicle commission (MVC) offices that warrant your consideration. We are appreciative of the plans to open the MVC offices, but are concerned about the needs described below that require prompt and particular action.

As you are aware, the imposition of ignition interlock devices and embossed licenses as an alternative to a license suspension in certain driving while intoxicated matters took effect on December 1. The measure allows individuals convicted of DWI to continue driving so they can keep their jobs and meet familial obligations, but ensures they cannot do so if they are intoxicated. The extended closure of MVC offices, though, has prevented individuals from getting "chipped" and obtaining the requisite embossed license. This leaves those defendants with a suspended license, and the state without the assurance the interlock provides that, if they drive, they are doing so safely.

In light of these issues, the NJSBA requests that you prioritize these services as part of the re-opening of MVC offices so that, as the state continues to re-open, individuals subject to ignition interlock and embossed license requirements can fulfill those requirements quickly so they are not penalized further and to ensure the continued safety of New Jersey's roadways.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kimberly A. Yonta". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "K".

Kimberly A. Yonta, Esq.
President

cc: George Helmy, Governor's Chief of Staff
Matt Platkin, Esq. Governor's Chief Counsel
B. Sue Fulton, Chair and Chief Administrator, Motor Vehicle Commission
Domenick Carmagnola, Esq. NJSBA President-Elect
Angela C. Scheck, NJSBA Executive Director