

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
YOSEMITE COURT**

INFORMATION FOR NON-MANDATORY VIOLATION NOTICES

VIOLATIONS

Many violations issued in Yosemite National Park do not require a court appearance. If your ticket indicates an appearance is optional and specifies an amount of collateral to be paid, you may pay that amount directly to the Central Violations Bureau (“CVB”) and are not required to appear in court. Please refer to the back of your violation notice for more information.

Violations paid directly to the CVB are **not** reported on your *criminal record* by the CVB. Please note that moving violations are reported by CVB to your state’s Department of Motor Vehicles whether they are paid through the court or the CVB.

TRAFFIC SCHOOL

You may be eligible to take traffic school which may afford some protection concerning DMV points depending on your driving record, license type, and violation. Please note, to be eligible for traffic school, you must apply at least one week before your scheduled court date. You may apply at the following link:

<http://www.caed.uscourts.gov/traffic-school/formynp.asp>

CONTESTING A VIOLATION

Although your violation does not require a court appearance, you have the right to appear in court to challenge your violation. You may plead not guilty and proceed to trial or plead guilty and argue mitigating circumstances to reduce the amount of your fine. Please be aware that a plea of guilty or a conviction after trial may result in a criminal conviction because most citations issued in Yosemite are Class “B” Misdemeanors.

In certain instances, and only with court approval, you may appear remotely. As a rule, if the court approves a video appearance you will be required to appear from the closest federal courthouse to your location. You must make this request at least one week prior to the hearing date. Further information about violation notices issued by CVB is available on Judge Barch-Kuchta’s homepage at the following link:

<https://www.caed.uscourts.gov/caednew/index.cfm/judges/all-judges/502311/>

You have the right to have an attorney represent you. Parties wishing to contest their violation or argue mitigating circumstances are encouraged, but not mandated, to try to reach a resolution prior to appearing in court.

If you choose to represent yourself or if you have retained an attorney, depending on where your violation notice was issued, you may contact the following government representative to discuss your violation and attempt to resolve your ticket without court intervention.

Yosemite National Park: Legal Officer Sean Anderson at sean_o_anderson@nps.gov;
Stanislaus National Forest or **Sierra National Forest:** Michael Cone at michael.cone@usda.gov; and
Bureau of Land Management: Kevin Lawson at kevinlawson@blm.gov

If you are seeking the assistance of an attorney, you may contact Federal Defender Kara Ottervanger for the Eastern District of California at 559-487-5561 or Kara.Ottervanger@fd.org. In limited cases, a person charged with a nonmandatory collateral offense may be entitled to have an attorney appointed by the court to represent them. The Federal Defender is available to discuss your violation and explain your options with you before you appear in court.