

Assembly Bill No. 602

CHAPTER 13

An act to amend Sections 40200.5 and 40215 of the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

[Approved by Governor May 16, 2008. Filed with
Secretary of State May 16, 2008.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 602, DeVore. Parking violations: issuing and processing agencies.

(1) Existing law, governing the enforcement and processing of parking violations and penalties, authorizes an issuing agency to contract with a public entity or private vendor for processing notices of parking violations and notices of delinquent parking violations.

This bill would require the above described contracts to be based on either a fixed monthly rate or the number of notices processed if the contract includes the provision of qualified examiners or administrative hearing providers and would prohibit a contract from including incentives for the processing entity based on the number of notices upheld or denied or the amount of fines collected.

(2) Existing law provides for an administrative hearing process in the enforcement and processing of parking violations and penalties, and requires, if an issuing agency contracts with an administrative provider, that hearings be held within the jurisdiction of the issuing agency or no more than 21 miles outside the county.

This bill would instead require these hearings to be held within the jurisdiction or county of the issuing agency.

(3) Existing law requires the issuing agency or the processing agency to mail the results of the initial administrative review to the person contesting the notice of parking violations or delinquent parking violations and places a similar notification requirement on an administrative examiner following an administrative review hearing.

This bill would require the issuing agency or the processing agency, following an initial review, and a qualified examiner, following the issuance of an examiner's decision, to include in the notice to the person a reason for the denial of a cancellation of a notice of parking violations or delinquent parking violations.

(4) Because this bill would increase the level of service of a city or county processing agency and because a violation of these provisions would be a crime under an existing provision of law, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(5) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that with regard to certain mandates no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

With regard to any other mandates, this bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs so mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 40200.5 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

40200.5. (a) Except as provided in subdivision (c) of Section 40200.4, an issuing agency may elect to contract with the county, with a private vendor, or with any other city or county processing agency, other than the Department of the California Highway Patrol or other state law enforcement agency, within the county, with the consent of that other entity, for the processing of notices of parking violations and notices of delinquent parking violations, prior to filing with the court pursuant to Section 40230.

If an issuing agency contracts with a private vendor for processing services, it shall give special consideration to minority business enterprise participation in providing those services. For purposes of this subdivision, "special consideration" has the same meaning as specified in subdivision (c) of Section 14838 of the Government Code, as it relates to small business preference.

(b) A contract entered pursuant to subdivision (a) shall provide for monthly distribution of amounts collected between the parties, except those amounts payable to a county pursuant to Chapter 12 (commencing with Section 76000) of Title 8 of the Government Code and amounts payable to the Department of Motor Vehicles pursuant to Section 4763 of this code.

(c) If a contract entered into pursuant to subdivision (a) includes the provision of qualified examiners or administrative hearing providers, the contract shall be based on either a fixed monthly rate or on the number of notices processed and shall not include incentives for the processing entity based on the number of notices upheld or denied or the amount of fines collected.

SEC. 2. Section 40215 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

40215. (a) For a period of 21 calendar days from the issuance of a notice of parking violation or 14 calendar days from the mailing of a notice of delinquent parking violation, a person may request an initial review of the notice by the issuing agency. The request may be made by telephone, in writing, or in person. There shall be no charge for this review. If, following the initial review, the issuing agency is satisfied that the violation did not occur, that the registered owner was not responsible for the violation, or that extenuating circumstances make dismissal of the citation appropriate

in the interest of justice, the issuing agency shall cancel the notice of parking violation or notice of delinquent parking violation. The issuing agency shall advise the processing agency, if any, of the cancellation. The issuing agency or the processing agency shall mail the results of the initial review to the person contesting the notice, and, if following that review, cancellation of the notice does not occur, include a reason for that denial.

(b) If the person is dissatisfied with the results of the initial review, the person may request an administrative hearing of the violation no later than 21 calendar days following the mailing of the results of the issuing agency's initial review. The request may be made by telephone, in writing, or in person. The person requesting an administrative hearing shall deposit the amount of the parking penalty with the processing agency. The issuing agency shall provide a written procedure to allow a person to request an administrative hearing without payment of the parking penalty upon satisfactory proof of an inability to pay the amount due. Notice of this procedure shall be provided to all persons requesting an administrative hearing. After January 1, 1996, an administrative hearing shall be held within 90 calendar days following the receipt of a request for an administrative hearing, excluding time tolled pursuant to this article. The person requesting the hearing may request one continuance, not to exceed 21 calendar days.

(c) The administrative hearing process shall include the following:

(1) The person requesting a hearing shall have the choice of a hearing by mail or in person. An in-person hearing shall be conducted within the jurisdiction of the issuing agency. If an issuing agency contracts with an administrative provider, hearings shall be held within the jurisdiction of the issuing agency or within the county of the issuing agency.

(2) If the person requesting a hearing is a minor, that person shall be permitted to appear at a hearing or admit responsibility for the parking violation without the necessity of the appointment of a guardian. The processing agency may proceed against the minor in the same manner as against an adult.

(3) The administrative hearing shall be conducted in accordance with written procedures established by the issuing agency and approved by the governing body or chief executive officer of the issuing agency. The hearing shall provide an independent, objective, fair, and impartial review of contested parking violations.

(4) (A) The issuing agency's governing body or chief executive officer shall appoint or contract with qualified examiners or administrative hearing providers that employ qualified examiners to conduct the administrative hearings. Examiners shall demonstrate those qualifications, training, and objectivity necessary to conduct a fair and impartial review. An examiner shall not be employed, managed, or controlled by a person whose primary duties are parking enforcement or parking citation, processing, collection, or issuance. The examiner shall be separate and independent from the citation collection or processing function. An examiner's continued employment,

performance evaluation, compensation, and benefits shall not, directly or indirectly, be linked to the amount of fines collected by the examiner.

(B) Examiners shall have a minimum of 20 hours of training. The examiner is responsible for the costs of the training. The issuing agency may reimburse the examiner for those costs. Training may be provided through (i) an accredited college or university, (ii) a program conducted by the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training, (iii) American Arbitration Association or a similar established organization, or (iv) through any program approved by the governing board of the issuing agency, including a program developed and provided by, or for, the agency. Training programs may include topics relevant to the administrative hearing, including, but not limited to, applicable laws and regulations, parking enforcement procedures, due process, evaluation of evidence, hearing procedures, and effective oral and written communication. Upon the approval of the governing board of the issuing agency, up to 12 hours of relevant experience may be substituted for up to 12 hours of training. In addition, up to eight hours of the training requirements described in this subparagraph may be credited to an individual, at the discretion of the governing board of the issuing agency, based upon training programs or courses described in (i) to (iv), inclusive, that the individual attended within the last five years.

(5) The officer or person who issues a notice of parking violation shall not be required to participate in an administrative hearing. The issuing agency shall not be required to produce any evidence other than the notice of parking violation or copy thereof and information received from the Department of Motor Vehicles identifying the registered owner of the vehicle. The documentation in proper form shall be prima facie evidence of the violation.

(6) The examiner's decision following the administrative hearing may be personally delivered to the person by the examiner or sent by first-class mail, and, if the notice is not cancelled, include a written reason for that denial.

(7) Following a determination by the examiner that a person has committed the violation, the examiner may, consistent with the written guidelines established by the issuing agency, allow payment of the parking penalty in installments, or an issuing agency may allow for deferred payment or allow for payments in installments, if the person provides evidence satisfactory to the examiner or the issuing agency, as the case may be, of an inability to pay the parking penalty in full. If authorized by the governing board of the issuing agency, the examiner may permit the performance of community service in lieu of payment of a parking penalty.

(d) The provisions of this section relating to the administrative appeal process do not apply to an issuing agency that is a law enforcement agency if the issuing agency does not also act as the processing agency.

SEC. 3. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution for certain costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district because, in that regard, this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or

changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.

However, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains other costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.