

## Technology Makes Reno Municipal Court More User-Friendly



*Reno Municipal Court continues to explore new ways to make the misdemeanor court system more user-friendly and responsive to a new generation of customers.*

Reno Municipal Court has recently launched two new technology features to better serve its customers. The first one gives customers the ability to easily request new court dates online, which helps to reduce long lines and minimize trips to the courthouse. On the court's website, [www.renomunicipalcourt.com](http://www.renomunicipalcourt.com), defendants can simply click "Request New Court Date" to complete the online form and electronically submit their request. The court will respond via email within two hours confirming the new court date.

The second innovation is a texting service to remind defendants of upcoming court dates or fine payment dates. When a person is given a citation, the police officer will ask if they want to "opt-in" for text notifications. If they agree, the driver will provide their cell phone number and the court will text them one week in advance of their court date. This procedure serves as a friendly reminder, which will save public funds by not mailing post card notifications. This will also help reduce the issuance of arrest warrants for failure to appear or pay.

Over the past few years, Reno Municipal Court has implemented other uses of technology to help improve its customer service. The court has a "chat" line through its website where court staff can assist customers. The court's Alternative Sentencing Unit uses a Smart-Phone app that turns defendants' cell phones into mobile breathalyzers so people can do their mandatory alcohol testing without coming into the court. The court also operates its own drug screening lab to quickly perform urinalysis to confirm abstinence from drugs and/or alcohol.