

DATA SHARING SPOTLIGHT

TraCS: NEW YORK

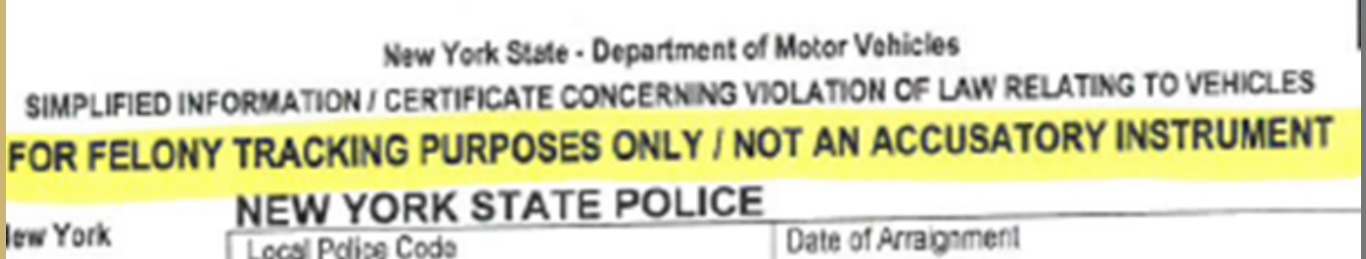
WHO

New York's Harrison Town Court Clerk works with state and local law enforcement officers to ensure felony convictions for commercial drivers' license (CDL) holders don't slip through the cracks. With a creative use of their citation software, TraCS, felony convictions are sent directly to the state driver's license agency (SDLA) through the same software.

WHAT

TraCS citation software is deployed to the New York State Police and 567 local law enforcement agencies. In 2021, 1.9 million traffic citations were issued through TraCS.[1] Using the TraCS system, citation data is electronically transferred from law enforcement, to courts, and then to the SDLA to update a driver's record. The officers devised a creative use for the citation software, developing a feature in TraCS that allows officers to create a citation with a clear notation at the top of the citation, "For Felony Tracking Purposes Only." Although felonies must be prosecuted with a criminal complaint not a TraCS citation, officers file the tracking citation with the court clerk, who then alerts the SDLA of the potential felony conviction.

[1] http://www.nationalmodel.us/nm_about_newyork.html



WHY

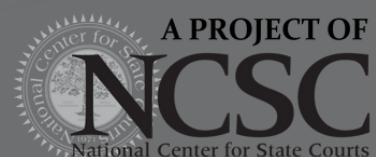
Criminal cases, including felonies may be heard in a different court, splitting the case from its traffic or misdemeanor charges. This results in severing the necessary driver data from the felony case file, which prevents these felony convictions from being reported to the SDLA to be recorded on the CDL holder's license. The process for reporting a CDL felony conviction (such as an aggravated DUI or human trafficking) to the SDLA is often disconnected from the process of electronically reporting dispositions for traffic or motor vehicle offenses. The tracking citation creates a parallel citation for reporting dispositions and repairs the connection of the data to the felony case file.

HOW

By creating a "For Felony Tracking Purposes Only" citation to accompany a felony complaint, law enforcement officials link the commercial driver and motor vehicle data to the felony case and start communication across stakeholders. Whether the case is transferred and results in a felony conviction, or the charge is amended to a misdemeanor in the Town Court, the court can transmit the transfer or the disposition electronically to SDLA immediately. The SDLA is already on the lookout for the case and can quickly track which court it was transferred to or update the record if a conviction was submitted.

NEXT STEPS

Further training is needed on this felony tracking functionality in TraCS to ensure all officers in New York are aware of and utilize the feature. Currently sixteen states use TraCS citation software and these states might benefit from this approach used in New York. New York's modification to the citation form for felony tracking may be a low-cost solution for other states looking to bridge the process gap when reporting felony CDL convictions.



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