

As Introduced

**136th General Assembly
Regular Session
2025-2026**

S. B. No. 394

Senator Blessing

To enact section 2709.01 of the Revised Code to 1
require courts to supply electronic notification 2
of hearings to defendants in criminal and 3
traffic cases and to make an appropriation. 4

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 2709.01 of the Revised Code be 5
enacted to read as follows: 6

Sec. 2709.01. (A) (1) The administrative director of the 7
supreme court shall develop, make available, and require each 8
clerk of courts for every municipal, county, and common pleas 9
court to employ a court reminder program that allows the court 10
to send a text or electronic mail message to notify all criminal 11
and traffic defendants of scheduled court appearances. The 12
program shall be made available to every court at no cost to the 13
court. The purposes of the program shall include: 14

(a) Reducing costs associated with defendants who fail to 15
appear for a scheduled court appearance; 16

(b) Improving the efficiency of courts; 17

(c) Reminding criminal defendants to appear at each 18
scheduled court appearance; 19

(d) Reducing the number of criminal defendants who are 20
admitted to and confined in a county jail solely due to the 21
defendant's failure to appear for a scheduled court appearance. 22

(2) The program shall do all of the following: 23

(a) Comply with applicable state and federal laws 24
requiring the consent of an individual before sending a reminder 25
by text message; 26

(b) Provide three text or electronic mail reminders before 27
each court appearance, with at least one message sent the day 28
before the court appearance; 29

(c) Use plain language that includes, at a minimum, the 30
date and time of appearance, court name and address, 31
consequences for nonappearance, and contact information for 32
questions relating to the appearance; 33

(d) Allow for the defendant to select the language in 34
which the reminders will be sent; 35

(e) For court appearances that can be attended virtually, 36
provide the link to the virtual court appearance in at least the 37
final reminder sent before the appearance; 38

(f) Provide at least one text or electronic mail notice 39
within one day after any missed court appearance, to notify the 40
defendant how to resolve the missed appearance, including how to 41
remove a warrant if one has been issued. 42

(B) Each court, as part of the program, shall do all of 43
the following: 44

(1) Establish procedures for court personnel to confirm or 45
update text or electronic mail contact information at each court 46
appearance; 47

<u>(2) Document each occurrence of a criminal defendant</u>	48
<u>receiving a text or electronic mail message reminder;</u>	49
<u>(3) Identify criminal defendants with scheduled court</u>	50
<u>appearances who lack access to devices with the technological</u>	51
<u>capability of receiving text or electronic mail messages;</u>	52
<u>(4) Document the number of criminal defendants who fail to</u>	53
<u>appear at scheduled court appearances after being sent one or</u>	54
<u>more text or electronic mail message reminders;</u>	55
<u>(5) Include the technological capability to provide</u>	56
<u>additional information to criminal defendants concerning</u>	57
<u>scheduled court appearances including, but not limited to, the</u>	58
<u>location of the court appearance, available transportation</u>	59
<u>options, court closures or changes in court dates, procedures</u>	60
<u>for defendants who are unable to attend court appearances, and</u>	61
<u>instructions about how to resolve a missed appearance and any</u>	62
<u>resulting warrant;</u>	63
<u>(6) Automatically enroll all defendants to receive text or</u>	64
<u>electronic mail message reminders for each court appearance, if</u>	65
<u>the defendant has provided information for receiving text or</u>	66
<u>electronic mail messages, and with all messages providing</u>	67
<u>defendants with the option to opt-out of receiving reminders;</u>	68
<u>(7) Partner with local law enforcement agencies, local</u>	69
<u>governments, and local public defenders to ensure that the</u>	70
<u>intake processes or forms relating to a defendant's court</u>	71
<u>appearance include fields to record the person's telephone</u>	72
<u>number and electronic mail contact information, and that law</u>	73
<u>enforcement, corrections, and court staff are educated, trained,</u>	74
<u>and required to secure and convey that information to the court</u>	75
<u>reminder program;</u>	76

<u>(8) Provide one or more publicly available internet web</u>	77
<u>sites through which eligible criminal and traffic defendants may</u>	78
<u>request text or electronic mail reminders;</u>	79
<u>(9) Record the average amount of days in between a warrant</u>	80
<u>being issued for a failure to appear and the warrant being</u>	81
<u>removed, if applicable;</u>	82
<u>(10) Collect data concerning the number of the following:</u>	83
<u>(a) Defendants eligible for the court reminder program;</u>	84
<u>(b) Defendants who provide an electronic mail or cellular</u>	85
<u>telephone number upon arrest or citation;</u>	86
<u>(c) Defendants successfully enrolled with electronic mail</u>	87
<u>or cellular telephone contact information in the court reminder</u>	88
<u>program;</u>	89
<u>(d) Reminders sent, by electronic mail and by text</u>	90
<u>message;</u>	91
<u>(e) Messages successfully delivered, by electronic mail</u>	92
<u>and by text message;</u>	93
<u>(f) Times a defendant did not appear at a scheduled court</u>	94
<u>appearance and whether a non-appearing defendant was sent</u>	95
<u>reminders by electronic mail and by text message, and if so, how</u>	96
<u>many reminders were sent to that defendant;</u>	97
<u>(g) Defendants who opt out of receiving reminders;</u>	98
<u>(11) Transmit the data collected under division (B) (10) of</u>	99
<u>this section to the administrative director of the supreme court</u>	100
<u>for publication by the supreme court.</u>	101
Section 2. All items in this act are hereby appropriated	102
as designated out of any moneys in the state treasury to the	103

credit of the designated fund. For all operating appropriations 104
made in this act, those in the first column are for fiscal year 105
2026 and those in the second column are for fiscal year 2027. 106
The operating appropriations made in this act are in addition to 107
any other operating appropriations made for these fiscal years. 108

Section 3. 109

1	2	3	4	5
A		JSC JUDICIARY/SUPREME COURT		
B	General Revenue Fund			
C	GRF 005506 Automated Court		\$6,000,000	\$1,000,000
	Appearance Reminder Program			
D	General Revenue Fund Total		\$6,000,000	\$1,000,000
E	TOTAL ALL BUDGET FUND GROUPS		\$6,000,000	\$1,000,000

AUTOMATED COURT APPEARANCE REMINDER PROGRAM 112

The foregoing appropriation item 005506, Automated Court 113
Appearance Reminder Program, shall be used to implement an 114
automated court appearance reminder program as described in 115
section 2709.01 of the Revised Code. 116

Section 4. Within the limits set forth in this act, the 117
Director of Budget and Management shall establish accounts 118
indicating the source and amount of funds for each appropriation 119
made in this act, and shall determine the manner in which 120

appropriation accounts shall be maintained. Expenditures from	121
operating appropriations contained in this act shall be	122
accounted for as though made in, and are subject to all	123
applicable provisions of, H.B. 96 of the 136th General Assembly.	124