

# Municipal Courts

## Explanation of Case Categories

### CRIMINAL CASES

#### **TRAFFIC MISDEMEANORS**

This category includes cases relating to motor vehicle operation or ownership for which the maximum punishment does not involve confinement in jail or prison (i.e., class C misdemeanors).

**Non-Parking** cases involve violations of the provisions of Title 7, Transportation Code and related statutes that do not involve parking (e.g., speeding, passing a school bus, driving without a valid inspection sticker, driving with an expired or no driver's license).

**Parking** cases involve violations of Sections 545.301 through 545.304, Chapter 681 or Chapter 683, Transportation Code and related statutes concerning the improper stopping, standing, or parking of a vehicle (e.g., parking in an intersection, parking within 15 feet of a fire hydrant, parking where an official sign prohibits parking).

**City Ordinance** cases involve violations of traffic or parking-related ordinances enacted by municipalities.

#### **NON-TRAFFIC MISDEMEANORS**

This category includes cases not involving traffic or parking violations for which the maximum punishment does not involve confinement in jail or prison.

**Penal Code** cases involve laws enacted by the Texas Legislature that are set out in the Penal Code (e.g., disorderly conduct, public intoxication, theft of property valued at less than \$50).

**Other State Law** cases involve laws enacted by the Texas Legislature that are set out in statutes other than the Penal Code (e.g., Alcoholic Beverage Code, Education Code, Health and Safety Code, Occupations Code, etc.).

**City Ordinance** cases involve ordinances enacted by municipalities (e.g., building codes, zoning laws, dog ordinances). Ordinance violations involving litter, fire safety, zoning, public health, and sanitation are punishable by fines only, up to a maximum of \$2,000. Punishment for violation of other types of city ordinances is limited to fines only, not to exceed \$500.

### CIVIL CASES

Civil cases are those involving all complaints, citations or suits within the civil or administrative jurisdiction of the municipal court, including red light camera, vehicle parking and stopping (Transportation Code, Ch. 682), dangerous dog, substandard building, and abandoned motor vehicle cases, as well as any other cases involving the enforcement of health and safety and nuisance abatement ordinances. Bond forfeiture (nisi) proceedings conducted pursuant to Code of Criminal Procedure, Article 22.02 are also included.