

Traffic Violation Penalties Shifted to Support Court Clerks Funding

HB 925 – Rep. Dana Trabulsy (SB 532 – Sen. Corey Simon)

General Bill Summary

CS/HB 925 makes several statutory changes affecting clerks of the court, legal notice publication, and the distribution of civil traffic penalties. The bill authorizes the use of cumulative excess funds retained in the Clerks of the Court Trust Fund as part of clerks' total combined budgets, subject to reserve requirements.

The bill updates budget development and oversight provisions for the Florida Clerks of Court Operations Corporation to incorporate these excess funds and clarifies reserve thresholds.

The bill also expands the definition of a “publicly accessible website,” allowing clerks to publish legal notices on their own or designated platforms.

Importantly, the bill revises the distribution of civil traffic penalties. It maintains that 28.2% of certain revenues from violations within municipalities are distributed to municipalities, while increasing the portion deposited into the county fine and forfeiture fund to 50.6%, with the remainder distributed pursuant to existing law.

Potential County Impact

The bill has several implications for county governments:

- **Revenue Distribution Adjustments:** While municipalities retain 28.2% of applicable traffic fine revenues, the bill increases the share directed to the county fine and forfeiture fund (50.6%). This represents a shift that may modestly enhance county revenues depending on citation volume and location.
- **Clerk Budget Flexibility:** Clerks gain authority to use cumulative excess trust fund revenues in their budgets, potentially improving financial stability and reducing the need for midyear adjustments. Counties may see indirect benefits through more predictable clerk operations.
- **Reserve Requirements:** The requirement to maintain reserves up to 16% of total budget authority may influence how clerks manage funds and coordinate with county financial processes.
- **Administrative Coordination:** Expanded options for publishing legal notices may require coordination between counties and clerks, particularly where counties designate or maintain websites.
- **School Bus Penalty Exception:** Adjustments to school bus infraction revenues may alter how funds flow to school districts, with limited indirect county implications.

Effective Date

July 1, 2026

Primary Statutory References

- s. 28.35, F.S.
- s. 28.36, F.S.
- s. 28.37, F.S.
- s. 50.0311, F.S.
- s. 318.18, F.S.
- s. 318.21, F.S.