

Answering Your Questions about AMPS

Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS)

A faster and more efficient way of processing parking tickets in the City of Port Colborne.

What is AMPS?

The Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS) is a faster and more flexible process for payment, appeal and collection of parking penalties of \$100.00 or less. AMPS will be fully managed by the City of Port Colborne and replaces the current judicial appeal process.

AMPS started September 2014 and it applies to parking tickets/violations within the City of Port Colborne that meet the following criteria:

- The parking penalty is not more than \$100; and the violation does not relate to accessible parking.

Under the new AMPS program a 'Parking Violation' will become known as the 'Parking Penalty Notice'. These parking penalties must be paid within 15 days of being issued.

Payment options:

- **Cash**
- **Cheque**
- **Debit**

Alternatively, the person will have the right, within a limited time, to dispute the parking penalty by requesting a Screening Review meeting. With the new system, you will be able to schedule a Screening Review meeting:

- by phoning 905-835-2900 - By-law Enforcement Division
- In person at the City Hall – 2nd Floor By-law Enforcement Division, 66 Charlotte Street, Port Colborne, Ontario.

The Screening Review meeting will be overseen by a Screening Officer, who has the authority to uphold, cancel or reduce the parking penalty.

The holder of the penalty notice has up to 15 days after the Screening Officer's decision to appeal the outcome of the Screening Review meeting to a Hearing Review Meeting. The Hearing Officer's decision, following the Hearing Review meeting, will be final.

What is different?

The previous process for disputing parking tickets was through the judicial system. (This is now only for accessible parking tickets). Currently wait times to appeal a parking ticket can be as much as a year. AMPS however, will be fully managed by the City of Port Colborne and both Screening Review meetings and subsequent Hearing Review appeals to the Screening Review are expected to be resolved within several months from the date of the parking penalty being issued.

With AMPS replacing the current judicial process for appealing parking tickets, valuable court time will be freed up and utilized by our courts to deal with more serious issues.

The City of Port Colborne's new AMPS program will also provide the public with greater flexibility as to where, when and how they can interact with the City in resolving their parking penalty, creating a more streamlined, customer-focused service. Screening Reviews can be written only, your attendance is not required.

About the AMPS Program

The City of Port Colborne's Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS) is an approach to dealing with minor parking by-law infractions; those that are \$100 or less, in a manner that is fair, effective and efficient.

The AMPS program of enforcement transfers parking by-law disputes from the courtroom to the municipality through the use of Screening Officers and independent Hearings Officers who will be able to modify, cancel, or affirm penalties. This approach aids in reducing congestion in the courts as well as providing a more local and accessible dispute resolution system. The new AMPS program began on September 1, 2014.

Why did the City of Port Colborne move to the new AMPS program?

The Provincial Courts in the Niagara Region downloaded the adjudication of the parking tickets to each municipality. This measure was introduced to help the over-burdened courts by streamlining the process and allowing municipalities to handle minor parking by-law infractions, City Council first adopted the use of AMPS in May 2014.

How is the new AMPS program better?

Resolving minor parking by-law infractions could potentially take months in the congested court system. The new AMPS program helps to speed up the process by resolving minor parking by-law infraction matters in weeks while maintaining an individual's right to request a review of their Penalty Notice

The AMPS Program is more effective because:

- Citizens can resolve parking by-law matters in a more convenient and citizen-friendly environment
- The City is more capable in dealing with minor parking by-law infractions in a timely manner; Citizens may request an extension of time in which to request a review by a Screening or Hearing Review officer:
- Citizens may request an extension of time to pay a penalty from a Screening or Hearing Review Officer:
- It reduces congestion in provincial courts; and,
- Better use of court time and other resources for more serious matters – the AMPS Program allows the over-burdened provincial courts to address more serious matters such as Highway Traffic Act offences and matters under Part 1 and 3.

About Penalty Notice

What is the Penalty Notice? And what do they look like?

A Penalty Notice is the same as a “ticket” except that it requires payment of a penalty instead of a fine. The Penalty Notice is issued by a Municipal Law Enforcement Officer to an individual when they have committed a parking by-law infraction.

To view an image of a Penalty Notice - [Click here.](#)

How are Penalty Notices issued?

The City of Port Colborne Municipal Law Enforcement Officers can issue a Penalty Notice through the following methods:

- In person
- On vehicle
- In the mail

Note: Parking-related Penalty Notices are generally issued by attaching the notice to the vehicle or by serving the notice directly to the operator.

Are there any additional administrative fees?

Yes,

Under specific circumstances, additional fees are applied to the original penalty due. For Instance, additional administrative fees are applied to late payments, the failure to attend a scheduled Screening or Hearing review, and Ministry of Transportation (MTO) searches.

I just received a Penalty Notice, What Now?

What are my options when a Penalty Notice is issued?

1. Pay the Penalty Notice; or
2. Request a review by a Screening Officer,

How can I pay?

- By mail
- In person

How can I request a review?

The registered owner of the vehicle or the person named in the Penalty Notice may request an initial review (Screening) of the Penalty Notice by a Screening Officer by submitting a request for a Screening by contacting the By-law Enforcement Division at 905-835-2900 or attending in person to schedule a review at:

City Hall, 66 Charlotte Street, 2nd Floor Port Colborne, ON
Monday to Friday – 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Screening Form Application - [Click here](#)

What if I am still not satisfied with the results of a Screening?

If the matter is still in dispute following the review by the Screening Officer, you may request a review by a Hearings Officer at City of Port Colborne, City Hall. A request must be made within fifteen (15) calendar days following the receipt of the Screening Officer's decision. It is important to note that you may only appeal the Screening Officer's decision and that only the information/evidence submitted at the Screening will be considered at the Hearing Review.

Does it cost anything to request a Screening or Hearing?

No.

A fee is not charged for a review of a Penalty Notice.

Can I authorize someone else to act on my behalf?

Anyone can make payment on your behalf as long as they have your Penalty Notice and license plate number.

The registered owner of the vehicle or the person named in the Penalty Notice is the only one who can request a Screening or Hearing Review and must attend the scheduled Screening or Hearing Review appointment.

An authorized representative (witness) may also attend a Screening or Hearing Review provided that they are authorized by the registered owner of the vehicle or the person named in the Penalty Notice.

When and where are Screening and Hearing Reviews held?

All Screening Reviews are held on the first available Wednesday and all Hearing Reviews are held on the first available Tuesday (dates are subject to change) at the City of Port Colborne City Hall, 66 Charlotte Street – 3rd Floor, Port Colborne Ontario Monday to Friday (excluding holidays) 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m... While every attempt will be made to accommodate your preferred appointment time period, you should be aware that specific requests cannot always be guaranteed.

What if I don't attend a scheduled Screening or Hearing Review?

The penalty notice amount will be affirmed and the registered owner of the vehicle or the person named in the Penalty Notice will be assessed a Failure to appear fee of \$50 for a Screening or \$100 for a Hearing.

What If I missed the deadline to schedule a Screening?

You may request an extension in time to schedule a Screening, The request must be made within **15 Days** of the Penalty Notice being issued. The decision to grant an extension in time may or may not be approved by the Screening Officer.

What happens if I do nothing and ignore the Penalty Notice?

Failure to pay a Penalty Notice not only results in additional administrative fees but in addition parking penalties will be sent to the Ontario Registrar of Motor Vehicles who will deny the renewal of existing, or the issuance of new vehicle license plates.