

NOTICE TO THE BAR

DISMISSAL OF CERTAIN MINOR MUNICIPAL COURT MATTERS OLDER THAN 2003 – SUPPLEMENTAL ORDER FOR BERGEN COUNTY MATTERS

By Order of September 23, 2019, the Supreme Court dismissed 16,777 unresolved, minor municipal court matters in Bergen County. This Order, effective September 24, 2019, supplements the Court's January 17, 2019 Order dismissing unresolved, minor municipal court matters dated from before January 1, 2003, where arrest warrants were issued to defendants for failure to appear, and the warrants remained open.

The 16,777 matters in Bergen County were originally included in the 2018 reports developed by the AOC to identify the matters to be dismissed by the Court's January 17, 2019 Order. These Bergen matters were not included in the Court's January 17, 2019 Order because bench warrants had been recalled prior to the issuance of that Order.

The Court has determined that this dismissal is appropriate in the interests of justice, will benefit the safety and operational needs of law enforcement, will provide administrative efficiency, and will further the conservation of limited public resources.

The Judiciary has created a webpage to assist the public which is located at www.njcourts.gov/courts/mcs/dismissals.html. It includes a database that can be searched to determine whether or not a case is one of those included in either the January 17, 2019 or the September 23, 2019 Orders.



Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D.
Acting Administrative Director of the Courts

Dated: September 24, 2019

SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY

WHEREAS in 2018 a review by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) revealed that many unresolved complaints on minor municipal court matters dated from before January 1, 2003, and in those matters, arrest warrants were issued to defendants for failure to appear, and the warrants remained open;

WHEREAS the Court having found that those old outstanding complaints and open warrants in minor matters raise questions of fairness, the appropriate use of limited public resources by law enforcement and the courts, the ability of the State to prosecute cases successfully in light of how long matters have been pending and the availability of witnesses, and administrative efficiency;

WHEREAS, those cases primarily arose from 1986 to 2003 and did not include more serious matters, including indictable charges, disorderly persons charges, petty disorderly persons charges, and certain motor vehicle charges such as driving while intoxicated, driving while suspended or revoked, and reckless driving;

WHEREAS the Court on January 17, 2019 issued an Order that dismissed 787,764 of the above-referenced complaints;

WHEREAS 16,777 unresolved minor matters in municipal courts in Bergen County were originally included in the 2018 reports developed by the AOC to identify those matters, those reports having been provided to Bergen municipal prosecutors and municipal leaders for review and comment, prior to public hearings that were conducted on whether the identified municipal complaints should be dismissed;

WHEREAS those 16,777 Bergen County matters were not included in the Court's January 17, 2019 dismissal order because bench warrants had been recalled in those pending matters before the January 17, 2019 omnibus dismissal order;

THEREFORE, in the interest of justice, and consistent with Rule 7:8-5 ("Dismissal"), and in accordance with the findings set forth in the Court's January 17, 2019 Order, it is ORDERED that:

(a) the above-referenced 16,777 unresolved, minor municipal court matters in municipal courts in Bergen County are hereby dismissed; and

(b) any associated court-ordered driver's license suspension or revocation shall be rescinded. Any rescission of a court-ordered driver's license suspension or revocation pursuant to this Order is separate from any license restoration fee or process required by the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission.

The provisions of this Order are effective September 24, 2019.

For the Court,



Chief Justice

Dated: September 23, 2019