

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I contact the Town of Cairo Court?

Cairo Town Court
PO Box 755
Cairo, New York 12413
Phone: 518-622-3388 ext. 251
Facsimile: 518-622-0172
Email: cairotowncourt@nycourts.gov

The court office is open Monday through Friday except for federal holidays and scheduled training. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday hours are 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., with the office being closed from 12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. Tuesday hours are 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.; court is held at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. You may still enter the building during court sessions to return pleas for tickets in person however, no civil filings will be accepted after 12:00 p.m. on Tuesdays.

How do I handle a Traffic Summons?

First you must determine whether you received a traffic summons for an infraction or a misdemeanor charge. Pleas for infractions may be returned to the court either by mail or in person ON or BEFORE the summons date; the summons date is not a court date. Fill out all required information on the right-hand side of the traffic summons. Pleas for misdemeanor traffic charges may not be accepted by a court clerk and require a personal appearance on the date and time listed on the ticket; the summons date is a court date.

Once you have entered your plea of guilty or not guilty in the appropriate box you may return it to the court in person during the hours listed above, leave it in the locked drop box labelled "*Court Documents Only*" located at the rear of the court building or mail it to:

Cairo Town Court
PO Box 755
Cairo, New York 12413

Be sure your correct mailing address is noted on the summons and correct if necessary.

If you return a plea of guilty to a traffic infraction the Judge will assess a fine and surcharge, if applicable, and you will receive a fine notice in the mail with payment instructions.

If you return a plea of not guilty to a traffic infraction the ticket will be reviewed by the Assistant District Attorney and you will receive a traffic infraction plea agreement through the mail. Upon careful review you will need to sign where appropriate and return the plea agreement to the Court. If you agree with the plea offered to you a fine notice will be mailed to you with payment instructions. If you do not agree with the plea offered to you a trial will be scheduled with the officer at which time either you or a duly licensed attorney must appear on your behalf and the matter will proceed to trial.

How do I address a suspension of my driving privileges?

If you received a notice from the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles notifying you of a suspension of your driving privileges, you should call the court office at

(518) 622-3388 ext. 251 and a court clerk will notify you of the steps you will need to take to clear the suspension. A fee of \$70.00 is assessed by the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles for each suspension on your license, and the fee is collected by the Court. Any administrative suspensions of your driving privileges must be cleared directly through the Department of Motor Vehicles. If you are in doubt as to the status of any tickets and/or suspensions on your license, you may contact any New York State Department of Motor Vehicles office and obtain a copy of your New York State Driver's Abstract or refer to <https://dmv.ny.gov> for further information.

What do I do if I have been charged with a criminal offense?

If you have received an appearance ticket directing that you appear in court to answer a criminal offense you must appear in-person on the date and time specified. Failure to do so may result in a Warrant being issued for your arrest. You have the right to counsel at all stages of a criminal proceeding and should contact an attorney prior to your court date.

The Greene County Public Defender provides free legal representation for individuals charged with misdemeanor and/or felony matters based upon eligibility. You should refer to www.greenegovernment.com/departments/public-defender for application requirements or call 518-719-3220. Additionally, even if you live in a county other than Greene County, you will need to apply to the Greene County Public Defender for offenses alleged to have been committed in the Town of Cairo.

What if I need to request an adjournment?

Requests for adjournments may not be emailed to the court office or left on the voice answering system; all such requests must be made directly through a court clerk at 518-622-3388 ext. 251 during the hours listed above.

The Court will require proof of unavailability to attend a court appearance, such as a letter from a doctor, printed airline itinerary, etc. Adjournments are generally not granted due to transportation issues and will be determined by the Judge on a case-by-case basis.

How do I file a Small Claim matter?

A Small Claim action may be brought for any amount up to and including \$3,000. The Defendant must reside in, pay taxes in, or have a place of business in the Town of Cairo.

The application may be found through the link entitled "Small Claims Application" and must be downloaded and fully completed prior to filing. Small Claims may be filed in person with a court clerk between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and Tuesday between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. along with the filing fee or mailed to PO Box 755, Cairo, New York 12413. No filings will be accepted and/or processed during court sessions.

Upon filing, a court date will be mailed to both the Plaintiff and the Defendant via First Class Mail. In addition, the court date will be mailed to the Defendant via Certified Mail. Litigants should review "A Guide to Small Claims in the NYS City, Town and Village Courts" which can be obtained at the court office during normal business hours or located through the link entitled "Small Claims Handbook."

The Small Claims fee schedule is as follows:

\$10.00 for claims up to and including \$1,000

\$15.00 for claims of \$1,001 up to and including \$3,000

* Exact cash, money orders, bank checks and credit or debit cards are accepted. There is a convenience fee assessed on credit or debit card payments. **NO personal or business checks will be accepted.**

Applications to file Small Claims matters may not be filed via email or facsimile.

How do I file an Eviction/Summary Proceeding?

Individuals filing or defending an eviction can find the necessary paperwork and instructions through following the appropriate links on the Court's webpage at www.townofcairo.com

Unrepresented landlords must appear at the court office between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday or Tuesday between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. to obtain a court date. After all the necessary paperwork is served you must submit the documents to the Court and pay the filing fee of \$20.00.

Attorneys/process servers may call the court office during the hours listed above to obtain a court date for filing. If the court date is not provided by court staff the matter will not be heard on the date and time outlined in the Petition/Notice of Petition.

Court personnel MAY NOT assist landlords or tenants in the preparation of documents, nor advise as to the correct methods of filing a landlord-tenant matter. There is a fee of \$20.00 for each summary proceeding filing which must be paid at the time of filing. Exact cash, money order, bank check or a credit or debit card are acceptable forms of payment. **NO PERSONAL OR BUSINESS CHECKS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** No filings will be accepted and/or processed during court sessions.

Court personnel are not permitted to supply any of the necessary forms for filing. The New York State Unified Court System provides a free do-it-yourself online service that provides instructions and forms based on your answers to questions asked by the program. This information can be accessed at www.nycourthelp.gov or at the appropriate link(s) on the Court's webpage at www.townofcairo.com

Documents related to summary proceedings may not be filed with the Court via email or facsimile.

How do I obtain a Certificate of Disposition?

A Certificate of Disposition is a certified court document which summarizes the outcome of a case which is issued by a court clerk. This document can be issued for all types of cases except for civil matters. There is a fee of \$5.00 to obtain this document from the Court which can be paid by exact cash, money order or credit or debit card.

A Certificate of Disposition can be requested by any citizen however, not all cases meet the criteria for release by the Court. You should contact the court office by telephone at (518) 622-3388 ext. 251 to obtain information as to the criteria required by the Court for these types of documents.

Requests for Certificates of Disposition may not be made via email or facsimile unless by an approved agency for release.