

MISDEMEANOR DIVERSION PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. I'm clicking the "Submit" button on the Contract page but nothing is happening?

Either one of the following is happening; you're either using the wrong browser type (only Internet Explorer, and Firefox are compatible), or you do not have the most updated version of Adobe (there is a link to that site on the top of the Diversion page). Always try refreshing the page after making any changes. **A box will pop up when you hit the "Submit" box stating "Thank you for completing the Misdemeanor Diversion Program Contract". If you do not get that box or an email stating your contract was submitted successfully, we have not received it.**

2. What if I can't get the contract to submit online?

Then you will have to print the contract and submit it either by fax, email, or mail. It is the Defendant's responsibility to ensure that our Office receives all documents on time. The fax, email, and mailing address are listed at the bottom of the Diversion page.

3. How do I sign the contract online?

If you are submitting a contract online, we ask that you sign the contract electronically using the last 4 digits of your Social Security Number. If you do not have a Social Security Number, you may use the 4 digit year of your birth. If you are submitting a paper contract, just sign with your actual signature.

4. Will I have to complete the program requirements before I turn in the contract?

No. We only need your contract prior to your court date. You will have 90 days from the acceptance of your contract to complete all other requirements of the program.

5. If the contract comes in after my court date and a warrant is issued, will the warrant be recalled?

No. The contract and all documents are available on the Diversion page. There should be no delay in getting your contract in prior to your court date.

6. What do I do if I have already missed my court date?

You may still participate in the program by turning in a completed Missed Court Date Contract. However, we will neither ensure that a warrant/capias has not been issued for your arrest, nor will we take steps to recall any warrant/capiases issued until the program has been successfully completed.

7. What is the case number?

You can find your case number by searching the Bay County Clerk of Court's records at <http://www.baycoclerk.com/courts/case-search/>. When viewing your case on this website it may show that your case is "Closed" per entry of this Program. This is a preventative measure taken by the Clerk's Office to avoid errors. However, your case is still "Open" until you complete the Program and a "No Information" form is submitted to the Clerk to dismiss the charge(s). This website will only show the record of your case filed at the Clerk's Office, it will not show fee's due or your current status in the Program. You will have to contact our office for your current case status in the Program.

8. What is the best way to send my contract to you?

The fastest method is to submit a contract online, or scan and email the contract to divprogram@sa14.fl.gov. You may also fax it to (850)872-4461, or mail it to Misdemeanor Diversion Program, P.O. Box 1040, Panama City, Florida 32402. Remember, we must receive the contract 2 business days prior to your court date.

9. Have we received your contract, proof of hours, proof of payment, or test score?

We will not notify you when we receive your contract or any other document, unless you provided a legible email address on your contract. If you provided a legible email address, our system will automatically email you as we enter the items we receive. We receive an email automatically once you have successfully completed the online test and if you make a payment online; there is no need to let us know that you have taken the test or made an online payment.

10. Can I put my current address on my contract?

Yes, we will update your case with the address listed on the contract.

11. Can we make payments on the Diversion program?

No. However, if you cannot afford the \$200 fee, you can perform 20 community service hours (in addition to the 8 hours required by the program terms).

12. Paying the \$200 fee will cause me financial hardship, will you waive the fee?

No. However, you may complete 20 hours of community service work (in addition to the 8 hours required by the program terms) in lieu of paying the \$200 fee.

13. Can I write a personal check or send cash for the \$200 fee?

No. You can pay your fee on our website with a credit/debit card at <http://sa14.fl.gov>, click Misdemeanor Diversion Program, and then click "Pay Fees Online". We also accept money orders or Cashier's Checks through the mail.

14. Can I buy the community service hours out instead of performing them?

Yes. You can buy your hours for a total of \$80 (\$10/hour).

15. Can the hours that I've worked prior to my charge be counted?

No, Community Service Hours must be worked after the date of charge received. Hours worked prior will not be credited to your case.

16. Will this charge be on my criminal history or "record"?

Your arrest/written arrest will show on a criminal history check, and if the case is dismissed, the criminal history will reflect that information as well; so it should show both that you were arrested and that the case was dismissed upon completion of this Program. See the next question on how to expunge (remove) a charge from your record.

17. How can I seal and expunge my record so that nothing will appear on my criminal history?

Visit the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's website dedicated to sealing and expunging records: <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/content/getdoc/c83dd888-ef7a-448e-9a96-ba69fc4181f7/Seal-and-Expunge-Home.aspx>