

Red-light Safety Program FAQs

Why has the Village of Skokie introduced a red-light camera?

According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, nearly 2 million crashes annually occur in intersections. In 2007, red-light running resulted in almost 900 fatalities and 153,000 injuries.

Red-light running is a problem. It is believed that an automated red-light camera program will reduce the number of red-light collisions and injuries associated with these crashes. The purpose of this program is to increase traffic safety in the Village of Skokie. The goal of the program is to reduce red-light running violations, crashes, and injuries without impacting village funds.



Red-light Running is a Dangerous and Costly Problem.

- Red-light running is the leading cause of urban crashes according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.
- In 2006, 144,000 injuries and nearly 900 fatalities in the U.S. were attributed to red-light running. There were more than 1.8 million accidents at intersections.

A Crash Caused by a Driver who Runs a Red Light is More Likely to Result in Serious Injury or Death.

- Deaths caused by red-light running are increasing at more than three times the rate of increase for all other fatal crashes.
- More people are injured in crashes involving red-light running than in any other crash type.
- Reduction in red-light running through a comprehensive red-light camera program will promote and protect the public health, safety and welfare of Skokie's citizens.

What is a red-light running violation?

A red-light running violation occurs when a motorist enters an intersection after the traffic signal has turned red. Motorists already in the intersection when the signal changes to red, waiting to turn for example, are not considered red-light violators.

Where are the red-light cameras located?

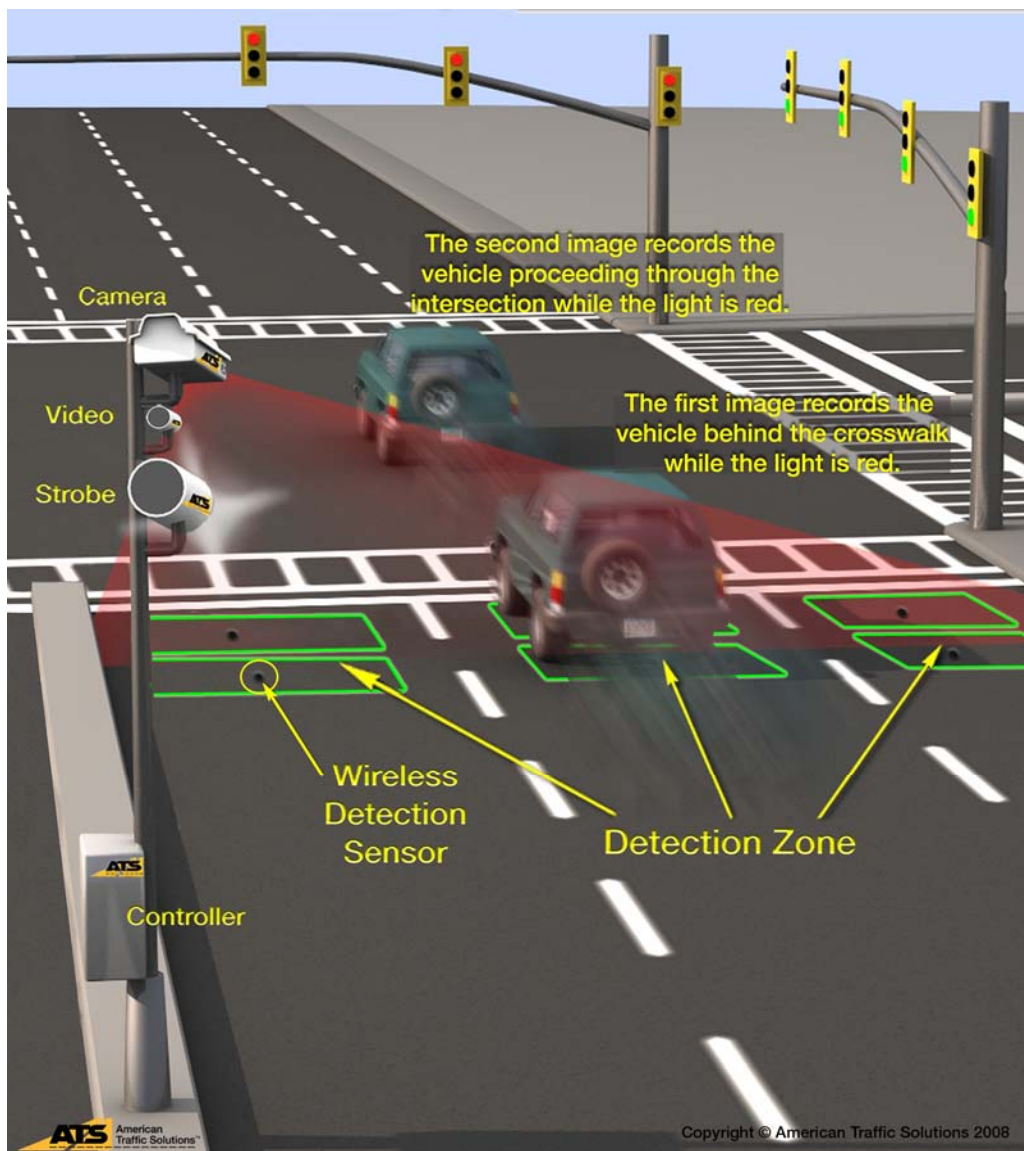
The intersection with camera installations is listed below. The intersection is marked clearly with signs.

- McCormick Boulevard at Dempster Street

When will the red-light cameras be activated?

The red-light camera began capturing warning violations on May 31st. Violations will begin to be issued on July 8th. The camera will run 24 hours a day, seven days a week. During the first 30 days of operation, no tickets will be issued, only warnings.

How does the red-light camera work?



- The system activates when motion is detected just prior to the stop bar AFTER the traffic signal has turned red. The cameras capture two images of an alleged violation, taken from the rear of the vehicle.
- The first image shows the vehicle at the white stop bar and the illuminated red light.
- The second image shows the violator in the middle of the intersection with the red light illuminated.
- The license plate image is a close-up from one of the images captured.
- Data, including the time, date, and duration of the yellow and red lights, also is recorded.
- Cameras also record a 12-second digital video of the violation, including six seconds prior to and six seconds after running the red light.

Why does the camera flash when no one actually runs the red light?

The red-light camera system is designed to take two rear photographs of a vehicle that may be committing a violation. The first rear image captures the vehicle prior to entering the intersection with the traffic signal red, and the second image shows the vehicle continuing through the intersection during the red signal phase.

On occasion, a vehicle approaching an intersection with a red light may come to a stop before entering the intersection yet trigger the red-light camera system, causing the flash to discharge. In addition, a vehicle approaching the intersection and making a right turn may not come to a complete stop but only slow before continuing to turn, triggering the red-light camera system and causing the flash to discharge.

The Police Department reviews each violation event captured by the red-light camera system and makes the final decision to issue a citation. All flash incidents do not equate to a citation; however, the imaging results in better than 80% accuracy in identifying excessive speed approaches.

What to do if you receive a Violation Notice

Why did I receive this violation?

Based upon images captured by the automated system, your vehicle was determined to have committed a red-light violation. As the vehicle owner, the violation notice is mailed to you.

How much is the fine?

The fine is \$100 for each offense.

How much time do I have to pay my violation?

You must pay the civil penalty on or before the due date on your violation notice. The due date for payment is located on the top and bottom right of your violation notice.

What are my options?

1. Pay the fine.

Payments can be made in person paid by cash or check at Village Hall, by mail, phone or online at violationinfo.com.

- Pay **Online**. Log on to www.ViolationInfo.com by entering your violation number and PIN number shown in the red box on the front right of your violation notice. Click the Pay button. There is a convenience fee of \$4.00 that will be assessed at the time of payment.
- Pay by **Mail**. Mail your check or money order, payable to Village of Skokie, in the enclosed envelope along with the coupon printed at the bottom of the notice. Write the violation number and the license plate number on your check or money order. Do not mail cash. The mailing address is:
Village of Skokie
Automated Traffic Law Enforcement
P.O. Box 284
Skokie, IL 60076-0284
- Pay by **Credit Card**. Call toll free 1-866-790-4111 between the hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday. There is a convenience fee of \$4.00 that will be assessed at the time of payment.
- Pay **in Person**. You may drop off your payment in person, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 5127 Oakton Street, Finance Department, Skokie, Illinois 60077.

The image shows a screenshot of the ViolationInfo.com website. At the top, the site name 'ViolationInfo.com' is displayed in blue. Below it is a blue header bar with the text 'Enter your Notice # and Pin #, then press Login:'. The main content area features two input fields: 'Notice #' and 'PIN #'. Below these fields is a 'Login' button and a 'help' link. At the bottom right of the page, there is a 'Privacy Policy' link and the 'Axis VPS VIOLATION PROCESSING SYSTEM' logo.

2. Request a hearing.

You may request a hearing in writing. A Hearing Request Form will be included with the violation notice. The form can be found at www.ViolationInfo.com. Complete the form and mail it to the Village of Skokie, Automated Traffic Law Enforcement, P.O. Box 286, Skokie, IL 60076-0286. Hearing options include a mitigation hearing by mail to explain the circumstances. At this time a hearing can only be requested by mail. The option to request a hearing in person at Village Hall is pending approval.

3. Submit an Affidavit of Non-Responsibility.

You may submit an Affidavit of Non-Responsibility. Submit it if your vehicle was sold or stolen. If the vehicle was in the care, custody or control of another person, the Affidavit must be notarized. You may obtain an Affidavit of Non-Responsibility by visiting www.ViolationInfo.com. This Affidavit must be filled out accurately and in its entirety and presented to the court at the time of your hearing.

Visit www.ViolationInfo.com to view information about your violation. You will be asked to enter your violation number and PIN number, found on the front of your Warning or violation in the upper right corner, inside the red box. By clicking on the graphic at left you will leave the Village of Skokie site.

What if I was not the driver/owner of the vehicle at the time of the violation?

Per the Village of Skokie, you may request a hearing and submit an Affidavit of Non-Responsibility by mail. The Affidavit must be filled out accurately and in its entirety. You may obtain this form either by downloading and printing the form from www.ViolationInfo.com or visiting the Court in person. Bring the completed form to the Court in person on your hearing date.

What happens if I ignore the violation notice?

Failure to pay the civil penalty or to contest liability prior to the due date on the violation notice is an admission of liability, and failure to appear at an administrative adjudication hearing after having requested a hearing is an admission of liability and constitutes a waiver of the right to appeal. Failure to pay the civil penalty by the due date on the violation notice shall result in the imposition of a late-payment fee of \$25. If the second notice remains unpaid, collections and entry of a judgment against you may proceed.

Will I receive any points on my driving record for this violation?

No. This is a civil infraction that is not reported to the Illinois Department of Motor Vehicles.

Will my insurance rates be affected?

No. This is a civil infraction and is not reported to any insurance agencies.

Will the red-light cameras take a picture of the driver of the vehicle?

No. A violation of the Skokie Ordinance is a civil violation assessed against the owner of the vehicle; it is not a criminal violation. Similar to a parking ticket, there is no need to identify the driver and therefore, no need to capture an image of the driver.

What if I was issued a citation from an officer for the same offense?

The citation issued by a police officer takes precedence over the violation. You must request an adjudication hearing and bring both the citation and the violation with you to the hearing. The adjudication hearing officer will take the appropriate actions.

I have received multiple violations. Do I have to send in a separate payment for each?

No. You may send one check in one envelope – but you must include payment coupons for each violation you received. If you received three violation notices, you may send in one check and three coupons with each violation number written on your check.

What if my check bounces?

You will be responsible for a returned check fee of \$25.00 in addition to any late fees and the original fine amount. You will receive a letter from the Village of Skokie detailing the new amount due.

What is the refund policy?

A refund check may be issued under the following circumstances:

- Duplicate and/or overpayment of a violation notice; or
- Overpayment of the violation notice as a result of a hearing.

If you are entitled to a refund, please submit your request on the Red-Light Refund Form and send to the address specified at the top of the form.

Can I make payments in installments or set up a payment plan?

No. Payment plans are not available.

I paid the violation; why did I receive another notice?

The notice you just received could be for additional violations or it could be a second notice which is now a Delinquent Notice. If it is a Delinquent Notice, chances are that your payment and the notice crossed in the mail. It can take as many as 10 business days to show in the system once it has reached our office. Call 866/790-4111 to confirm that your payment was received.

My payment has already been sent; will I still be charged late fees?

Late fees will NOT be assessed if your payment is postmarked on or before the due date located on the front of your violation notice.

Do I have to pay my fine the day of the hearing?

You must pay the full fine amount within 60 days of a liable judgment.

What happens if I do not pay the violation?

The Village of Skokie is contracted with ATS (American Traffic Solutions) to do collections, which will be handled by an ATS collections agency in Arizona.

I do not believe I ran a red light. Where can I go to view my images and video?

To view video and images, logon to www.ViolationInfo.com and enter the violation number and the PIN number located at the top right of your violation notice. If you do not have Internet access, you may visit any public library for Internet access to view your images.

I do not believe I ran a red light and want to discuss my case with someone.

You must request a hearing in writing on or before the due date listed on the top and bottom right of your notice in order to request a review of your violation before a hearing officer as detailed in the Village of Skokie Ordinance.

How do I schedule a hearing?

To request a hearing, you must fill out the coupon which is on the violation notice. The hearing options include the following:

A mitigation hearing in person. By requesting a mitigation hearing in person, you agree to appear at your scheduled hearing and will be deemed to have committed the infraction. You may not subpoena witnesses for this hearing. You would request a mitigation hearing if you agree that you have committed the infraction but believe the circumstances may be such that the court could reduce or waive the penalty.

A mitigation hearing by mail. You will not be required to appear in court. Instead, you must write a Defendant's Statement and Declaration and mail it with the coupon to the address shown on the coupon. The court will review your declaration, the photos/video of the incident and the police officer's sworn statement and render a decision.

A hearing to contest the violation. At a contested hearing The Village of Skokie has the burden of proving by a preponderance of evidence that the violation was committed. You may subpoena witnesses including the officer who issued the violation.

I am Handicapped and unable to appear in court for my hearing. What do I do?

You must respond to violation notice on or before your due date. If you wish to contest the violation, you do not need to appear before a hearing officer. You must submit in writing, on or before your due date, a copy of your disabled placard and a written explanation of your actions or concerns. This written explanation will be reviewed and a decision will be issued by mail.

Can I make a hearing request over the phone?

No, all requests must be in writing.

Can someone other than me attend the hearing?

Only you may appear at an adjudication hearing.

Is there more than one place that I can attend my hearing?

Pending approval, the only location for hearings is held at Village Hall, 5127 Oakton Street, Skokie, Illinois and will be a part of Administrative Hearings.

Can I bring a lawyer to the hearing with me?

Yes.

How do I know that these violations are valid?

Images of your vehicle were captured and recorded by an Automated Intersection Safety System. You can review your images and video of the actual occurrence online. The images and video were reviewed by several qualified technicians and finally by the Skokie Police Department before the alleged civil infraction was affirmed and mailed to you as the registered owner or identified driver. You have the option of contesting the violation by requesting a hearing in writing.

What company provides the red-light camera program in Skokie?

The Village of Skokie has contracted with American Traffic Solutions Inc. (ATS) which provides red-light and speed camera enforcement programs for more than 200 communities across North America.