MINISTRY OF Works & Transport



MARCH 2022

A guide to understanding the

DEMERIT POINTS SYSTEM

Better drivers. Safer roads.

WHAT IS THE DEMERIT POINTS SYSTEM?

The Demerit Points System is utilised to track the behaviour of drivers by the allocation of points to their driving records, for the commission of certain traffic violations and offences.

Under the **Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Act, Ch. 48:50,** the introduction of a Demerit Points System in Trinidad and Tobago seeks to:

1. Encourage and promote safety on the nation's road network;
2. Improve the standard of driving in Trinidad and Tobago by reducing incidents of road traffic accidents and fatalities;
3. Detect repeat traffic offenders; and
4. Reform delinquent drivers through enrolment into rehabilitative driving programmes.



WHAT IS THE DEMERIT POINTS SYSTEM?

(Continued)

A person can accumulate demerit points on their driving permit record for the breach of **certain** traffic violations and offences, which carry demerit points. Everyone starts with **zero (0) demerit points** on their driving permit record.

The more traffic violations or offences that are committed, such as:

- Speeding,
- Unauthorised use of the Priority Bus Route,
- Driving Under the Influence of alcohol (DUI)

the more demerit points are accumulated on a person's driving permit record.

Depending on the total amount of demerit points accumulated within a specified period, this could result in the suspension of a person's driver's permit, as well as other consequences.

The System is securely and confidentially managed through an Electronic Demerit Points Register on the U-Turn Software Management System. The U-Turn System is maintained and monitored for efficiency and effective operation by highly trained personnel in the Traffic Enforcement Centre (TEC).



HOW DOES THE DEMERIT POINTS SYSTEM WORK?

Every driver starts with zero (0) demerit points on his/her driving permit record. Under the Demerit Points System, certain traffic offences and violations carry a prescribed number of demerit points (see the listing of demerit points for traffic offences and violations at the end of this booklet).

The vast majority of the traffic offences and violations form part of the Traffic Ticketing System and the Demerit Points System. Demerit points are placed on a person's driving permit record, only after payment of a traffic ticket.

In the event of failure to pay the traffic ticket and/or contest the traffic ticket within the prescribed time frame or conviction before a court for a traffic violation or offence that carries Demerit Points, Demerit Points will still be placed on a person's driving permit record.



HOW DOES THE DEMERIT POINTS SYSTEM WORK?

(Continued)

Demerit Points will stay on your record for a maximum of two (2) years. **Once two (2) consecutive years have passed without the driver accumulating additional demerit points, these points will automatically be removed from his/her driving permit record.**

If a driver reaches their maximum threshold of demerit points according to the law, he or she can be disqualified from driving for a specified period. For the purpose of administering demerit points and disqualification periods, there is a distinction between:

- **A newly licensed driver or provisional permit holder** (an individual who holds their driving permit for a period of twelve (12) months or less from the date of issue).

- An **experienced driver** (an individual who holds their driving permit for a period of more than twelve (12) months from the date of issue).



HOW ARE DEMERIT POINTS CALCULATED FOR EXPERIENCED DRIVERS?

The Demerit Points for an experienced driver are calculated as follows:

DEMERIT POINTS ACCUMULATED WITHIN THREE (3) YEARS	SUSPENSION PERIOD
Ten (10) or more, but less than fourteen (14)	Six (6) months
Fourteen (14) or more, but less than twenty (20)	One (1) year
Twenty (20) or more	Two (2) years

HOW ARE DEMERIT POINTS CALCULATED FOR NEWLY LICENSED DRIVERS OR PROVISIONAL PERMIT HOLDERS?

DEMERIT POINTS ACCUMULATED WITHIN TWELVE (12) MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF ISSUE	SUSPENSION PERIOD
Seven (7) or more demerit points	One (1) year

Note: There are no demerit points for traffic violations detected by automated cameras e.g. red-light and spot speed cameras.



DOUBLE DEMERIT POINTS

Statistics show an increase in road fatalities and serious accidents during certain periods e.g. long weekends, Easter, Carnival, Christmas and New Year's Day Holiday Season.

To ensure safer roads, **demerit points may be doubled for specified traffic violations** during these periods. For example, driving while holding or using a handheld mobile device carries **three (3) demerit points**. During the double demerit points period, this traffic violation will carry **six (6) demerit points.**

The public will be notified of the implementation of double demerit points by way of publication in the daily newspapers, at least five (5) days prior to its commencement. The period allocated to double demerit points will not exceed ten (10) consecutive days.



RECORDING SIMULTANEOUS DEMERIT POINTS

If a motorist has committed multiple traffic violations in one incident, he or she will be issued a traffic ticket for each traffic violation. The motorist will be responsible for paying ALL the stipulated fines on each ticket. However, only the traffic violation that carries the highest number of demerit points will be applied on the driving permit record of the driver.

For example, if a driver receives a ticket for the unauthorized use of the Priority Bus Route which carries six (6) demerit points, and also receives a ticket for an overcrowded vehicle which carries three (3) demerit points – in the same instance, the driver of the vehicle will be required to pay both fines. However, **only six (6) demerit points** will be applied to the driving permit record of the driver, which represents the highest of the both violations.

Only in the instance where a driver breaks the red light (without being captured by the camera enforcement technology) AND exceeds the speed limit, the demerit points for both violations will be recorded, AS WELL AS the highest number of demerit points for any other violation arising out of the same incident.



DISQUALIFICATION PROCESS FOR DRIVING PERMITS

Step 1

If you accumulate or exceed the threshold of demerit points and are subject to disqualification, the Licensing Authority will notify you in writing prior to disqualification.

Step 2

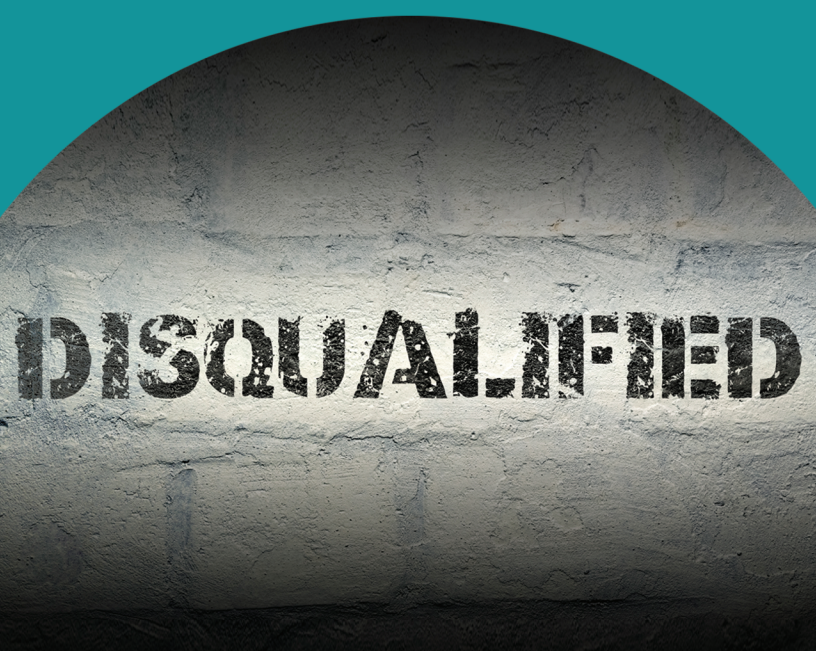
Once you receive this notification of impending disqualification, you can explain in writing to the Licensing Authority, why your driving permit should not be suspended.

Step 3

Where you fail to show good reasons, the Licensing Authority will inform you of the disqualification. The disqualification will take effect fourteen (14) days after the date of the notice.

Step 4

You will then be required to surrender your driving permit to the Licensing Authority, according to the instructions given in the notification letter (step 1).



DISQUALIFICATION PROCESS FOR DRIVING PERMITS

(Continued)

Step 5

Failure to surrender your driving permit to the Licensing Authority is an offence that carries a fine of Five Thousand Dollars ($5,000.00) **and** further disqualification for an additional period of one (1) year.

Step 6

A driving permit disqualified by the Licensing Authority, during the period of suspension will be invalid. You are committing an offence if you drive while your driving permit has been suspended.

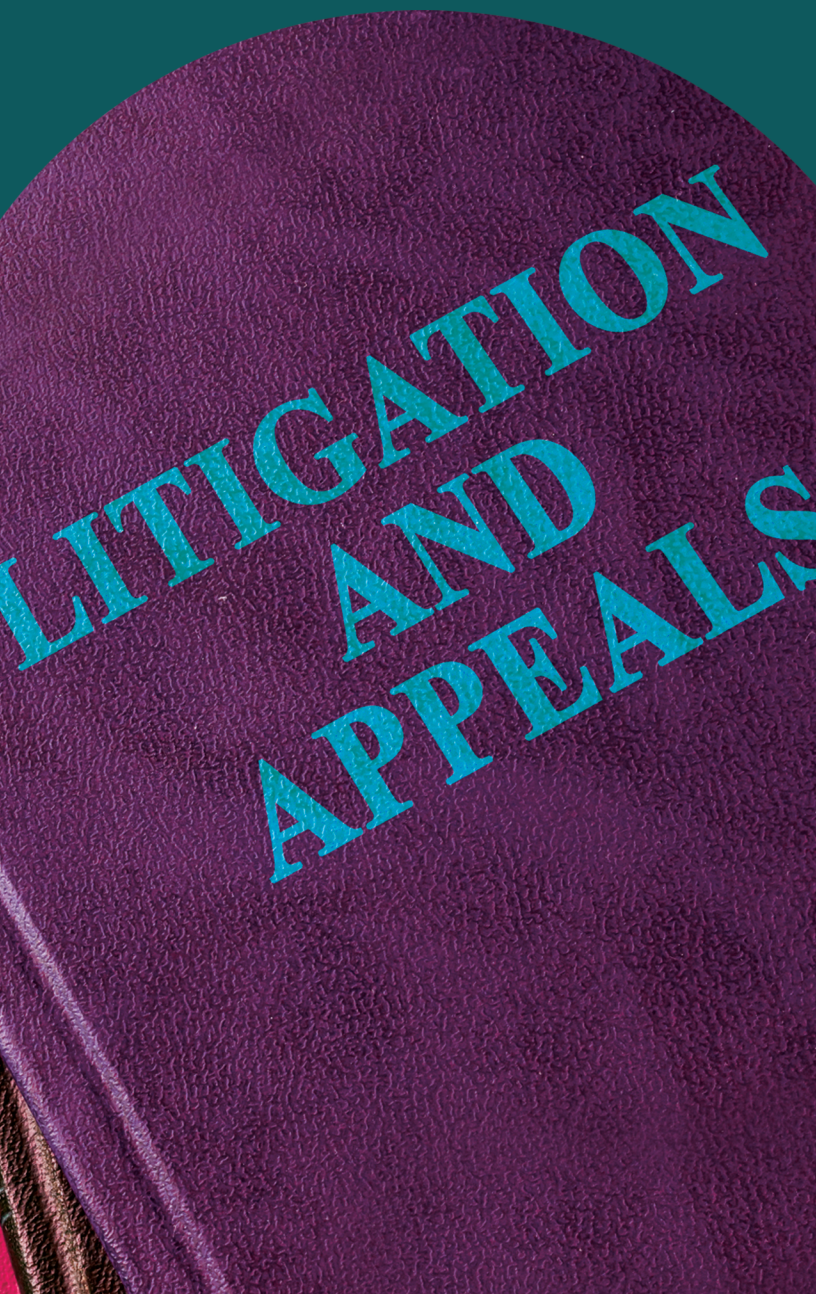
Step 7

When the disqualification period expires, all demerit points recorded against your driving permit record will be expunged or removed.



CONTESTING YOUR DISQUALIFICATION

The Licensing Authority is required to specify when suspension will occur, not less than fourteen (14) days after the date of the notice. A person who is disqualified from holding or obtaining a driving permit may appeal to a court within fourteen (14) days of the receipt of the notice.



REGAINING YOUR DRIVING PERMIT AFTER DISQUALIFICATION

To regain their permission to drive, drivers must undertake the following actions:

Step 1

Participate in a driver's rehabilitation programme approved by the Licensing Authority.

Step 2

Re-sit and pass a driving test and regulation examination.

Step 3

Pay the prescribed fee for the re-issue of the driving permit.



EXPUNGED DEMERIT POINTS

Demerit Points will remain on the record of a driver for a maximum of two (2) years. After two (2) consecutive years have passed without the driver accumulating additional points, the existing number of demerit points will automatically be expunged or removed from his/her driving permit record, therefore returning the driver's record to zero.

Demerit points are expunged from a driver's driving permit record under two conditions:

- The expiration of the disqualification period; or
- Maintaining good driving behaviour for a period of two (2) consecutive years.

DEMERIT POINTS FOR TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS AND OFFENCES

Please see the table below for a listing of traffic violations and offences that carry Demerit Points under the Ninth Schedule of the amended Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Act, Chap. 48:50.

Description of Traffic Violation or Offence	Fixed Penalty (TTD$)	DemeritPoints
Using or altering a motor vehicle or trailer for a purpose not authorised by the registration or Licensing Authority	1,000.00	3
Public Service Vehicle carrying excess passengers	750.00	3
Goods vehicle carrying excess weight	750.00	3
Use of motor vehicle with the windscreen or any other window fitted with glass so tinted, treated or darkened as to obscure the view of the inside of the vehicle from outside	2,000.00	-
Use of motor vehicle under dealer's licence by a person other than a dealer	1,000.00	-
Driving while disqualified from holding or obtaining a driving permit		14
Riding Motor Cycle without safety helmet	1,000.00	4
Failure of a driver and any passenger seventeen years and over to wear a seat belt while the vehicle is in motion	1,000.00	4
Driving a vehicle with a person in the front seat who is not wearing a seat belt	1,000.00	4
Driving a vehicle with a child in the front seat who is five years and under	1,000.00	4
Failing to place a child who is five years and under in a child restraint or booster seat in the vehicle while driving the vehicle	1,000.00	4
Offences of driving instructor	2,000.00	9
Exceeding the specified speed limit -		
by 1 to 9 km per hour	1,000.00	0
by 10 to 20 km per hour	1,500.00	2
by 21 to 30 km per hour	2,000.00	4
by 31 km or more per hour	3,000.00	6
Motor racing and speed trials between motor vehicles without permission	1,000.00	6
Traffic Signs	1,000.00	3
Breach of Traffic Order made by the Minister	1,000.00	3
Failing to comply with directive of a police constable	1,000.00	3

DEMERIT POINTS FOR TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS AND OFFENCES

(Continued)

Description of Traffic Violation or Offence	Fixed Penalty (TTD$)	DemeritPoints
Failing to comply with a traffic sign or notice authorised by the Licensing Authority or Commissioner of Police, respectively.	1,000.00	3
Failing to comply with a traffic light signal	1,000.00	3
Failing to comply with a traffic light signal captured under Part VA	1,000.00	-
Contravention of Traffic Order made by the Commissioner of Police	1,000.00	3
Breach of parking restriction made by the Minister	1,000.00	3
Driving when under the influence of drug	-	9
Driving or being in charge of a vehicle while blood alcohol levels exceed prescribed limit	-	9
Failure to provide a specimen of breath or blood	-	14
Failure to submit breath analysis or wilful alternation of concentration of alcohol in his breath or blood	-	14
Careless Driving	-	6
Motor Cyclist holding onto another moving vehicle	750.00	2
Motor Cyclist riding with no hands on the handle bar	750.00	2
Throwing or distributing advertisements or handbills from a vehicle	300.00	-
Standing for hire at a place not appointed for the purpose	750.00	3
Unauthorised parking on grounds of a public building	750.00	2
Defaced or defective identification plate	450.00	3
No identification plate fixed to the front or back of the vehicle	750.00	3
No identification lights for the illumination of identification marks on vehicle at night	300.00	0
Failing to observe restrictions on pedestrian crossings	1,200.00	-
Number of passengers to be carried not printed on right front door of taxi	300.00	-
Failure to produce a vehicle for inspection/Driving a vehicle without a valid inspection sticker and certificate	1,000.00	6
No Tare and M.G.W. painted on vehicles	1,000.00	

DEMERIT POINTS FOR TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS AND OFFENCES

(Continued)

Description of Traffic Violation or Offence	Fixed Penalty (TTD$)	DemeritPoints
Vehicle with defective fittings	450.00	0
Vehicle without silencers or fitted with cut outs	300.00	3
Unauthorised lights to front or rear of vehicle	750.00	3
Unauthorised letters and figures on vehicle	750.00	-
Vehicle without two head lamps	1,000.00	0
Vehicle without park lights	1,000.00	0
Vehicle without tail lights	1,000.00	0
Vehicle with unauthorised spot or swivel lights	1,000.00	4
No "left hand drive" notice affixed to appropriate vehicle	300.00	-
Reversing on roads for an unreasonable distance	750.00	3
Reversing at the junction of roads or around corner in the City of Port-of-Spain or San Fernando	1,000.00	2
Quitting vehicle before applying brakes and switching off engine	1,000.00	-
Failing to keep vehicle to left on road	1,000.00	-
Improper overtaking on the left side of the road	1,000.00	3
Obstructing overtaking traffic	1,000.00	3
Improper overtaking on the right, cutting in	1,000.00	3
Overtaking traffic at a place dangerous to do so	1,000.00	3
Parking within nine metres of a corner	500.00	-
Drawing up alongside another vehicle; backing motor vehicle to kerb or roadside	500.00	-
Parking within three metres of a fire hydrant	500.00	2
Parking within three metres of the front of a fire station	1,000.00	2
Negligently or wilfully interrupting the free passage or causing an unnecessary obstruction	600.00	3
Failing to draw up as close as possible to the side of the road	300.00	-

DEMERIT POINTS FOR TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS AND OFFENCES

(Continued)

Description of Traffic Violation or Offence	Fixed Penalty (TTD$)	DemeritPoints
Vehicle without horn	300.00	3
Permitting excess sparks, smoke or visible vapour to come from vehicle	1,000.00	-
Vehicle carrying excessive projection	750.00	2
Overcrowded vehicle	1,000.00	3
Carrying persons in a dangerous manner	1,000.00	3
Leaving broken-down vehicle on road unattended	500.00	-
Failing to draw up vehicle for passage of any engine or other apparatus of the Fire Service, Police Vehicles, Defence Force Vehicles or Ambulances	1,000.00	3
Towing other than a motor vehicle without written permission of the Licensing Authority	600.00	2
Length of tow rope exceeding five metres	450.00	
Vehicle without reflecting mirror	750.00	0
Vehicle carrying unsecured load	750.00	2
Use of noisy vehicle	300.00	2
Use of vehicle with defective tyres	1,000.00	3
Use of vehicle with no windshield wiper or defective wiper	300.00	0
Playing a musical or noisy instrument in a vehicle without permission of the Licensing Authority	1,000.00	-
Driving vehicle on footpath or pavement	1,000.00	3
Public Service vehicle without spare tyre	750.00	-
Public Service vehicle importuning of passenger	750.00	-
Taxi Driver unsuitably attired	750.00	-
Placing of advertisement on side of window of taxi	300.00	-
Taxi unattended at head of taxi stand	600.00	-
Failing to occupy vacant space in taxi stand	750.00	-

DEMERIT POINTS FOR TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS AND OFFENCES

(Continued)

Description of Traffic Violation or Offence	Fixed Penalty (TTD$)	DemeritPoints
Parking in a public stand appointed for taxi	750.00	3
Stopping or parking or driving a motor vehicle on a surveillance bay	1,000.00	3
Failing to preserve taxi driver's badge against loss, destruction or defacement	300.00	-
Failing to produce taxi driver's badge and licence on demand	450.00	2
Use of Priority Bus Route by unauthorised vehicle	2000.00	6
Using or causing to be used or permitting a person to use a motor vehicle or licenced trailer on a public road without a valid policy of insurance	1,000.00	3
Unauthorised driving or parking within Queen's Park Savannah	1,000.00	-
Operation of maxi-taxis outside specified route	1,000.00	3
Vehicle painted in such a manner as to be mistaken for a maxi-taxi	1,000.00	3
Driving while holding or using a hand held mobile device	1,000.00	3
Holding or using a hand held mobile device while supervising the holder of a provisional permit	1,000.00	3
Using a wireless communication device to view, send or compose an electronic message while driving or having charge of a vehicle	1,000.00	3

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further information about
the new Demerit Points System,
please visit **drivingtt.com**
or contact us at **info@drivingtt.com.**

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