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January 2011

Driver Responsibility Program Amnesty begins this month

Texans whose driver licenses have been suspended for failing to pay state-mandated surcharges are urged to take advantage of a one-time payment amnesty from Jan. 17 to April 17, 2011.

The Texas Department of Public Safety will offer lower payments to individuals who have been suspended and are in default on their surcharges. The goal of the amnesty period is to bring drivers into compliance with the surcharge law, and allow them to become

licensed and insured drivers. The amnesty reduction does not apply to any other fees that you may owe the Department.

Those eligible for the Amnesty Program are anyone who had a surcharge assessed between Sept. 30, 2004, and Dec. 31, 2008, and were delinquent on those payments. The surcharges meeting the above criteria must be in default before the amnesty period.

Those who qualify for the Amnesty Program will pay 10

percent of the original amount owed for all surcharges combined, for a maximum amount of \$250. Service fees will still apply. Any payments already made will be applied to the reduced amount, and if prior payments are more than the reduced amount due, no payment will be required. Prior payments more than the reduced amount due will not be refunded.

To apply for the Amnesty Program beginning January 17, 2011,
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The Texas Legislature convenes on Jan. 11. Get ready!

The 82nd Legislative Session will begin on Tuesday, January 11, and runs through May 30th.

During the 81st Legislative Session, there were a total of 12,238 bills filed. 1,085 were tracked by DPS and 166 of those ultimately passed.

The Office of Government Relations will coordinate bills to be analyzed, and schedule persons to attend hearings to represent the Department.

If you are a subject matter expert for bill analysis and a legislative office calls with questions, please promptly provide them

with neutral, factual answers to their questions.

Occasionally, you may be contacted by a legislator or staffer on a topic on which you are not a subject matter expert. Those calls should be referred immediately to the Government Relations office.

The Office of Government Relations is available at any time to assist DPS staff with legislative issues.

Contact info for the Government Relations Office:

Main Office: 512-424-7272

Amanda Arriaga, Chief:
512-424-7275;

Rhonda Trumble, Assistant Chief: 512-424-2037;

Sarah Hendricks, Legislative Coordinator: 512-424-7328; and

Gretchen Essell, Legislative Coordinator: 512-424-2933.



Mile Markers

Promotions**Director's Staff**

Raul Vargas, Capt., HP Austin to Major, Capitol Complex Austin.

Highway Patrol

Richard L. Jankovsky, III, Sgt., HP Laredo to Lt., HP Laredo; **Jerome A. Johnson**, Sgt., HP Pearsall to Lt., HP Del Rio; **Brad C. Gibson**, Tr. II, CVE Big Spring to Sgt., CVE Midland;

Roberto Aguirre, Cpl. II, CVE Laredo to Sgt., CVE Laredo-World Trade POE; **Sergio Ramirez, Jr.**, Sen. Tr., HP Raymondville to Sgt., HP Brownsville; **Rafael G. Gonzalez, Jr.**, Cpl. II, HP Mission to Sgt., HP Mission;

Anthony E. Rodriguez, Tr. II, HP New Braunfels to Sgt., HP Eagle Pass; **Robert E. Russell**, Tr. II, HP Devine to Sgt., HP Van Horn.

Criminal Investigations

Antonio R. Gonzalez, Capt., CID Austin to Major, CID McAllen; **Elgen W. Mansion**, Tr. II, CVE El Paso to Agent, CID El Paso.

Aircraft

Higinio Ibarra, Agent, CID Laredo to Pilot Investigator I, Aircraft Laredo; **Enoi J. Phouthavong**, Tr., HP Amarillo to Pilot Investigator I, Aircraft El Paso.

Driver License

Lisa J. Daughtry, Program Supv., DL Austin to Asst. Man-

ager, Processing & Routing, Austin.

Law Enforcement Support

Shartlotte H. Castro, Communications Supv., LES Houston to Communications Area Manager, LES McAllen; **Thomas G. Cavazos**, Operator III, LES San Antonio to Communications Supv., LES Harlingen;

Kimberly R. Reese, Operator III, LES Amarillo to Communications Supv., LES Amarillo.

Regulatory Services

Jay Alexander, Lt., OIG Austin to Capt., Regulatory Services Austin; **Charles A. Pinkerton**, Inspector IV, Compliance and Enforcement Irving, to Investigator V, Compliance and Enforcement Garland.

Retirements

Diana Lynn Robinson, Clerk IV, DL Austin, 31 yrs., 1 mo., 29 days; **Amy Vacula**, Tech. II, Crime Records Austin, 24 yrs., 29 days; **Patricia Ann Gebauer**, Analyst, Regulatory Licensing Austin, 31 yrs., 4 mos., 20 days; **Barry Allen Wind**, Lt., Aviation and Operation Support Garland, 26 yrs., 5 mos., 17 days;

Rex Alan Walker, Sen. Tr., HP Hallettsville, 25 yrs., 10 mos., 21 days; **Anna Higley Peter**, Secretary, HP Pierce, 25 yrs., 10 mos., 2 days; **Bonnie Gail Fisher**, Manager II, Safety Communications McAllen, 23 yrs., 7 mos., 14 days; **Elizabeth M. Magallanes**, Field Admin. Asst., CID Lubbock, 18 yrs., 6 mos., 29 days;

William Lawrence Johnson, Custodian, HP Garland, 11 yrs., 3 mos., 14 days; **Alfred Sabino**, Examiner, DL Conroe, 10 yrs., 29 days; **David Joseph Taylor**, Custodian, HP Sulphur Springs, 33 yrs., 5 mos., 24 days.

Briefs

Fitness Stars continue to shine

The Fitness Star program recognizes commissioned personnel for meeting certain standards on the physical readiness test.

Officers who score 300 points based on their sit up, push up and 1.5 mile run totals are rewarded with 32 hours of administrative leave and can wear the Fitness Star on their uniform.

The following individuals met the Fitness Star standards:

Major Randy Prince, Texas Rangers Lubbock

Sgt. Todd Snyder, Rangers Lubbock

Sgt. Tony Arnold, Rangers Lubbock

Sgt. Philip Vandygriff, Rangers Synder

Agent Oscar Holguin, CID El Paso

Agent Fred E. Riojas, CID San Antonio

Commander Jose Ortiz, Capitol Region Austin

Capt. Paul D. Schulze, Capitol Region Austin

Lt. Micki S. Scheffler, Capitol Region Austin

Tr. Aaron Ard, Capitol Region Austin

Tr. John Riojas Jr., Capitol Region Austin

DPS Equal Employment Opportunity policy

It is the policy of the Texas Department of Public Safety to foster an environment of equal employment opportunity by recruiting, hiring, and retaining highly qualified individuals to protect and serve Texas without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability or veteran status. This policy extends to every facet of employment.

DISCRIMINATION – HARASSMENT - SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT:

The EEO is also responsible

Driver Responsibility Program Amnesty, contd. from p. 1

see our surcharge website at www.txsurchargeonline.com or call 1-800-688-6882. No requests will be accepted by mail, email or fax.

Once the online or telephone application is approved, the surcharge suspensions will be cleared on the applicant's driving record within three business days. Applicants will be provided the reduced amount to pay, and they can begin making payments after three business days.

Applicants for the Amnesty Program can pay in full or make payments, but the full amount must be paid by April 17, 2011. If payment in full is not received by April 17, 2011, the reduction is voided and the suspensions are put back on the driving record.

The Department does not have plans to offer another amnesty period.

An Indigency program will be offered after the amnesty period ends in April. The Indigency program will apply to individuals at or below 125 percent of poverty level, using a sworn affidavit; will reduce the amount to 10 percent of total surcharges owed, not to exceed \$250; and will rescind

for the implementation of the Department's Chapter on Sexual Harassment & Discrimination (Section 18.25) policy which involves the education, prevention and investigation of claims of discrimination and/or sexual harassment and unprofessional conduct. Inappropriate conduct of a discriminatory or sexual nature that interferes with an individual's work or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment will not be tolerated or condoned by the Department. The Department has zero tolerance towards inappropriate comments, gestures,

suspension for those who receive indigency while payments are being made. Anyone assessed a surcharge since September 30, 2004 will be eligible for the Indigency program.

The Driver Responsibility Program, which assesses fees for a variety of driving-related offenses, was passed by the Legislature in 2003 and directed the Department to administer the program. Traffic offenses that carry an automatic surcharge for three years, include DWI-related offenses, no insurance, driving while license suspended, driving without a license and point accumulation. (For example, the fee for a first-time DWI offender is \$1,000 per year for three years.) The revenue generated by DRP goes to trauma centers, emergency medical services and the general revenue Fund.

Surcharges are in addition to all other reinstatement fees required for other administrative actions and do not replace any administrative suspension, revocation, disqualification or cancellation action that results from these same convictions.

jokes and behavior regarding a person's or class of persons' sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age or disability. The intent behind the words or action is irrelevant; such behavior will not be tolerated.

Even if you tell your supervisor or a co-worker, you **MUST STILL** report the suspected violation to the EEO. If you don't, you are in violation of DPS policy! You can report suspected violations via email, phone or in person to:

Rhonda Fleming, 512-424-5062 or 5213 or by e-mail at Rhonda.Fleming@txdps.state.tx.us or through her administrative assistant at Debbie.Gilmore@txdps.state.tx.us.



On the mend...

Tr. **Roberto Madrid-Gonzalez**, HP Brownsville, injured in a traffic crash.

Tr. **Chadrick A. Walker**, HP Cedar Hill, injured in a traffic crash.

Tr. **Dave Walker**, HP El Paso, injured in a traffic crash.

Tr. **Manuel Gonzales**, HP Weslaco, injured in a traffic crash.

Tr. **Andrew Peavy**, CVE Houston, injured in a traffic crash.

Good news!

Tr. **Manuel Guerra**, HP El Paso, and Tr. **Billy Wallace**, HP Carthage, have returned to work.