

Norfolk Parking Citations: An Open-Data Analysis

A full-census analysis of the City of Norfolk’s published parking-citation dataset: payment outcomes, dollar flows, penalty escalation, and where the unpaid balance concentrates.

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Source: City of Norfolk Open Data Portal, dataset `ei2q-6g8n` · Data window: **January 2022 – March 2024** (most recent published window) · Queried July 19, 2026

Executive summary

Norfolk publishes its parking-citation records as open data. Across the most recent published window — 45,404 citations issued from January 2022 through March 2024 — the dataset shows a persistent payment gap: nearly half of citations carry a “Not Paid” status, and unpaid citations carry a higher average dollar value than paid ones, consistent with penalties accruing as citations age.

45,404 citations issued, totaling \$5,940,644 in recorded citation value (Jan 2022–Mar 2024)	44.8% of citations unpaid — 20,346 with “Not Paid” status as of the dataset’s last update	\$2,883,049 outstanding on unpaid citations — 48.5% of all citation dollars in the window
\$142 vs \$126 average unpaid citation vs. average paid citation — a 12% per-citation penalty gap	\$42,710 already written off as bad debt (167 citations, averaging \$256 each — double the paid average)	14,859 distinct plates carry at least one unpaid citation — 46% of the 32,043 plates observed

Key findings

- **The payment split is nearly even.** 23,449 citations were paid (\$2.95M); 20,346 remained unpaid (\$2.88M). By dollar value the unpaid share is slightly larger than its count share — 48.5% of dollars vs. 44.8% of citations.
- **Unpaid citations cost more per citation.** The average unpaid citation is **\$142** against **\$126** for paid citations. Recorded value climbs with escalation stage: Court Hold averages \$219 and Write-Off/Bad Debt averages \$256.
- **Nonpayment is durable, not just recent.** Citations issued in 2022 had more than two years of collection time before the dataset’s last update — and 35% of them were still unpaid.
- **The unpaid balance is broad-based but has a concentrated core.** 12,118 plates owe on a single citation, while 2,741 repeat plates (18% of unpaid plates) account for roughly 40% of unpaid citations and dollars.
- **High-value violations go unpaid at high rates.** Handicapped-parking citations (averaging \$372 each) show a 49% nonpayment rate; no-stopping-zone citations show 62%.

Data & methodology

Source

All figures in this report are computed directly from the City of Norfolk's published **Parking Citations** dataset on the city's official open-data portal (data.norfolk.gov), Socrata resource ID `ei2q-6g8n`. No private, scraped, or third-party data was used.

Method: full-census server-side aggregation

Rather than sampling, every figure is a **full census** of the dataset, computed by the portal's own query engine via SoQL aggregate queries executed on July 19, 2026 (17:09 UTC). Nine query families were run:

- Citation counts, dollar sums (`sum(violation_amount)`), and averages grouped by `citation_status`, and overall totals.
- Distinct-plate counts, overall and for unpaid citations (`count(distinct vehicle_plate_number)`).
- Minimum/maximum issue dates, and counts × status grouped by issue year.
- Counts and dollars by violation type and by location (case-normalized via `upper()`), for all citations and for unpaid citations.
- Unpaid citations grouped per plate (all 14,859 groups returned), then bucketed by citations-per-plate.

The data window — stated plainly

The dataset's most recent record was issued **March 31, 2024**, and the feed has not been updated since; a re-query on July 19, 2026 confirmed it unchanged. This report therefore describes **the most recent published window (January 2022 – March 2024)**, not current balances. Because citation *statuses* froze with the feed, recently issued cohorts had little time to be marked paid: no citation issued in 2024 shows a "Paid" status at all. Year-level nonpayment comparisons in this report carry that caveat explicitly.

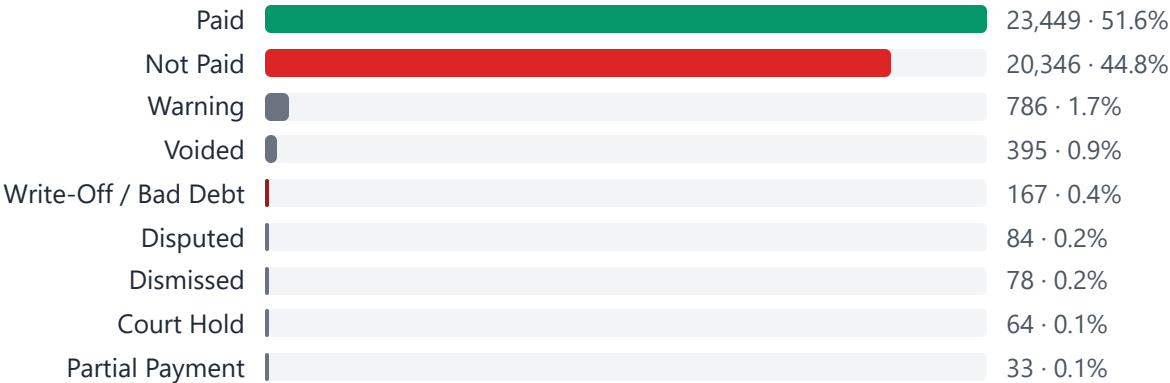
Limitations

- **Frozen feed.** Figures are as of the dataset's last update (March 2024). Some citations counted unpaid here will have since been paid, dismissed, or written off; new citations issued after March 2024 are absent entirely.
- **Recorded amounts, not live balances.** Dollar figures use the dataset's `violation_amount` field as published. Current amounts owed (with subsequent penalties or payments) may differ.
- **Label duplication.** The city's data labels some violation types and locations in two casings/spellings (e.g. "Overtime Parking-Time Zone" vs. "Overtime Parking - Time Zone"), suggesting a mid-period system change. Obvious pairs are merged and noted where shown.
- **Missing values.** 78 Dismissed citations and towed-vehicle records carry no dollar amount; 68 unpaid citations (\$9,730) have no plate value and are excluded from per-plate analysis.
- **Date encoding.** The raw date field stores two-digit years (e.g. `0022-01-01`); they are interpreted as 2022–2024, consistent with the dataset's documentation and contents.
- **Privacy.** Although the city publishes full plate numbers, this report masks all example plates (e.g. `TW•••92`) and presents no personal information.

Where every citation ends up

Of 45,404 citations, just over half were paid. A nearly equal share sits unpaid. Every other outcome — warnings, voids, disputes, dismissals, court holds — accounts for less than 4% combined.

Citations by payment status — count (Jan 2022–Mar 2024, as of last dataset update)



Two single-record statuses (Reverse, Reduced) omitted from the chart, included in totals. Bars scaled to the largest category. Source: Norfolk dataset `ei2q-6g8n`, queried Jul 19, 2026.

Status	Citations	Dollar value	Avg / citation	Share of \$
Paid	23,449	\$2,948,465	\$126	49.6%
Not Paid	20,346	\$2,883,049	\$142	48.5%
Warning	786	\$28,470	\$67	0.5%
Voided	395	\$15,005	\$53	0.3%
Write-Off / Bad Debt	167	\$42,710	\$256	0.7%
Disputed	84	\$3,940	\$47	0.1%
Dismissed	78	—	—	—
Court Hold	64	\$13,990	\$219	0.2%
Partial Payment	33	\$4,655	\$141	0.1%
Reverse / Reduced	2	\$360	\$180	<0.1%
Total	45,404	\$5,940,644	\$131	100%

Dismissed citations carry no dollar amount in the source data. Window: Jan 2022–Mar 2024; as of last dataset update, queried Jul 19, 2026.

\$2.88M is the outstanding balance in the published window

Unpaid citations are 44.8% of the count but 48.5% of the dollars — the unpaid pool skews toward higher-value citations. Most unpaid citations were never disputed, dismissed, or voided; they simply went unpaid.

The penalty gap: unpaid citations cost more

Average recorded value rises steadily along the escalation path — from \$126 for paid citations, to \$142 for unpaid, to \$219 under court hold, to \$256 by the time a citation is formally written off.

Average recorded value per citation, by status (Jan 2022–Mar 2024)



Bars scaled to the largest value. Source: Norfolk dataset `ei2q-6g8n` , queried Jul 19, 2026.

Two forces plausibly drive the gap, and the data is consistent with both: **late penalties added to citations as they age**, and **higher-fine violations going unpaid at higher rates** (handicapped-parking citations, for example, average \$372 and show a 49% nonpayment rate). Either way, the arithmetic is simple: if the 20,346 unpaid citations carried the same average value as the paid pool, the outstanding balance would total about \$2.57M — the observed \$2.88M is roughly **\$310,000 (12%) higher**.

Write-offs mark the end of the escalation path

167 citations totaling **\$42,710** were formally classified “Write-Off | Bad Debt” within the window — at an average of \$256, roughly double the average paid citation. These are dollars the escalation process itself did not recover.

Nonpayment by issue year

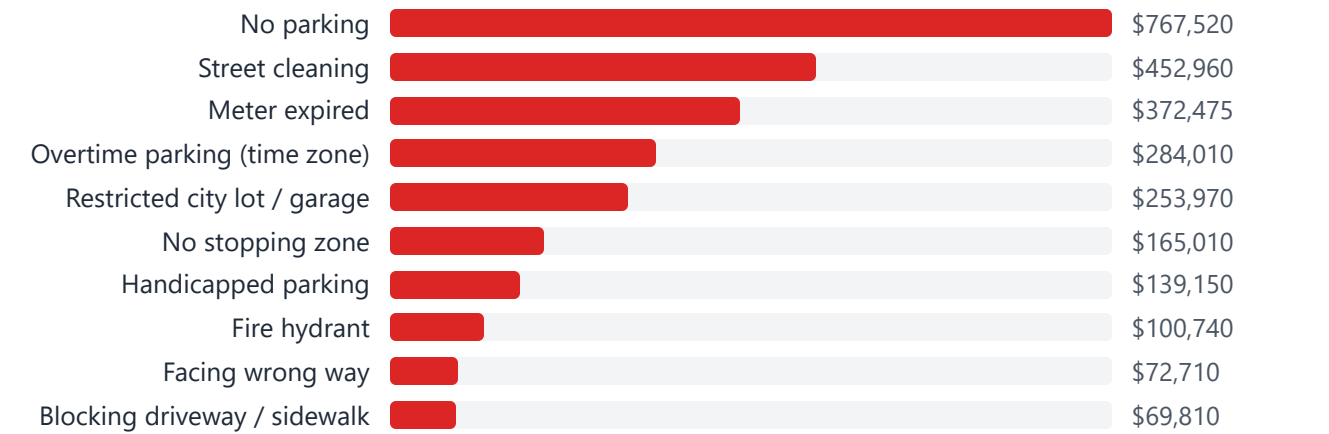
Issue year	Citations issued	Unpaid (count)	Unpaid rate	Unpaid (\$)
2022	23,053	8,101	35.1%	\$1,188,268
2023	19,911	9,837	49.4%	\$1,438,566
2024 (Jan–Mar)	2,440	2,408	*	\$256,215

* 2024 statuses are not meaningful: the feed froze in March 2024, before most of those citations could be paid and re-published — no 2024 citation shows a “Paid” status. The 2023 rate is partially inflated by the same effect. The most reliable signal is 2022: those citations had two-plus years before the freeze, **and 35% were still unpaid** — durable delinquency, not merely slow payment.

What goes unpaid — violation types and places

The unpaid balance is dominated by routine, high-frequency violations — the kind drivers overlook rather than contest.

Unpaid dollars by violation type — top 10 (Jan 2022–Mar 2024)



Duplicate labels merged (e.g. “Street Cleaning” + “No Parking - Street Cleaning”, the two “Overtime Parking” spellings, lot/garage variants, hydrant variants). Bars scaled to the largest value. Source: Norfolk dataset `ei2q-6g8n`, queried Jul 19, 2026.

Nonpayment rate by violation type

Violation type (merged)	Total citations	Unpaid	Nonpayment rate
No stopping zone	1,953	1,220	62.5%
Fire hydrant	855	427	49.9%
Handicapped parking	735	359	48.8%
No parking	11,771	5,634	47.9%
Facing wrong way	1,127	538	47.7%
Restricted city lot / garage	4,230	1,921	45.4%
Meter expired	7,079	3,101	43.8%
Street cleaning	7,465	3,178	42.6%
Blocking driveway / sidewalk	1,208	504	41.7%
Overtime parking (time zone)	5,158	2,068	40.1%

Dataset-wide rate: 44.8%. Window: Jan 2022–Mar 2024, as of last dataset update. Handicapped-parking citations are the highest-value common violation (avg \$372) yet nearly half go unpaid — \$139,150 outstanding on 359 citations.

Where unpaid citations concentrate

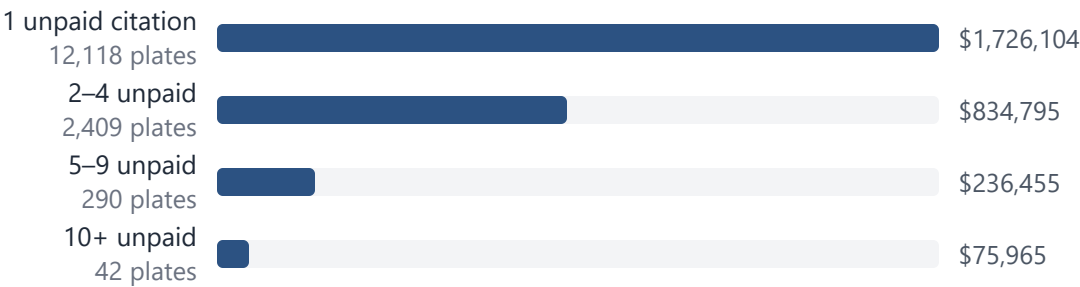
Location (as published)	Unpaid citations	Unpaid \$
Plume Street Lot	1,821	\$244,465
Granby Street	1,489	\$197,195
E Main Street	969	\$122,740
Melrose Parkway	537	\$69,920
Ligon Street	507	\$66,140
W Olney Road	393	\$55,350
W 39th Street	363	\$51,210
E Brambleton Avenue	302	\$42,980

Top 8 locations by unpaid count; location strings case-normalized. The top three — one municipal lot and two downtown corridors — hold \$564,400 of the unpaid balance between them.

Who owes: broad base, concentrated core

14,859 distinct plates carry at least one unpaid citation. Most owe on exactly one — but a repeat cohort of 2,741 plates accounts for about 40% of the unpaid balance.

Unpaid dollars by citations-per-plate (Jan 2022–Mar 2024)



Excludes 68 unpaid citations (\$9,730) published without a plate value. Bars scaled to the largest bucket. Source: Norfolk dataset `ei2q-6g8n`, queried Jul 19, 2026.

Cohort	Plates	Unpaid citations	Unpaid \$	Share of unpaid \$
Single-citation plates	12,118	12,118	\$1,726,104	60.1%
Repeat plates (2+)	2,741	8,160	\$1,147,215	39.9%

Shares computed on the \$2,873,319 of unpaid citations with plate values. The most-cited unpaid plate (masked: `TW•••92`) carries 32 unpaid citations totaling \$4,060; the next (`KM•••33`) carries 25 totaling \$3,300.

Two different problems, two different fixes

The 12,118 single-citation plates look like ordinary residents and visitors who missed one ticket — a *reachability* problem. The 42 plates with ten or more unpaid citations are an *enforcement* problem. The data separates them cleanly, which matters because the remedies differ.

What this means for Norfolk

A ~45% nonpayment rate is, at its core, a reachability problem. The composition of the unpaid pool points away from willful refusal: 60% of unpaid plates owe on exactly one citation, the dominant unpaid categories are routine violations (no-parking, street cleaning, expired meters), and dismissals and disputes are statistically rare. These are the signatures of citations that were mailed, mislaid, or never noticed — not contested.

The \$126–\$142 gap is the measurable cost of late contact. Every escalation stage in Norfolk’s own data carries a higher average value than the last, ending in write-offs at \$256 — double the paid average. The earlier a driver learns about a citation, the closer their payment lands to the base fine, the likelier it is voluntary, and the less the city spends on notices, holds, and collections. Timely notification is the lever that shrinks the unpaid-vs-paid average gap from both ends: fewer citations aging into penalties, and fewer aging out into bad debt.

The concentration data supports a two-track approach. Broad, low-cost reminders address the 12,118 one-citation plates (\$1.73M); targeted follow-up addresses the small repeat cohort that holds the other \$1.15M. The published data already provides the segmentation.

For context: TheTrafficApp’s consumer monitoring service already supports Norfolk citation lookups, built on this same public dataset; in a July 2026 verification batch, 40 of 40 sampled Norfolk plates returned complete, correctly priced citation records through the production lookup pipeline. This report, however, is offered as a standalone analysis of the city’s published data.

About TheTrafficApp

TheTrafficApp (thetrafficapp.app) is a Maryland-based traffic-violation monitoring service founded by Keya Gemechu and headquartered in Gaithersburg, MD. The service monitors public citation and violation records across multiple jurisdictions — including Washington, DC, Montgomery County (MD), New York City, San Francisco, and Norfolk — and notifies enrolled drivers of new citations before late penalties accrue, with payment made directly through each jurisdiction’s official channel. All monitoring is consent-based: drivers enroll their own plates. TheTrafficApp publishes open-data analyses like this one as part of its Municipal Data Series.

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Disclaimers

- This report is derived entirely from public open data published by the City of Norfolk (data.norfolk.gov, dataset [ei2q-6g8n](#)), queried July 19, 2026. The dataset’s most recent record is dated March 31, 2024; all figures describe that published window and its last-recorded statuses, not current balances.
- TheTrafficApp is **not affiliated with, endorsed by, or acting on behalf of the City of Norfolk** or any government agency. This document is an independent analysis.

- Figures should be verified against the city's official open-data portal and citation-payment system before operational or financial use. Aggregations (label merges, year interpretation of two-digit dates) are described in the methodology section.
- No personal information is presented. License plates shown as examples are masked, and no plate is associated with any individual. This report makes no claim about any specific driver or vehicle.
- This document is informational only and is not legal, financial, or audit advice.