

ENFORCEMENT OF PAYMENT OF FINES

For the majority of offences heard in the Sheriff and District courts the imposition of a fine is an option available to the judiciary, and it is used in about 60% of all court disposals. Fines are imposed for a wide range of offences such as motor vehicle offences, breach of the peace and drunkenness.

How can I pay a fine?

You can pay at the Sheriff Clerk's office in the Sheriff Court building, by cash, cheque or credit card. You can pay by standing order from your bank. At some courts you can also pay online.

Who is responsible for collecting fines?

The Scottish Court service is responsible for collection all Sheriff Court fines, Justice of the Peace Court fines, fiscal fines and police fixed penalty notices. There are Fines Enforcement Officers who manage the enforcement of fines. Their job is to advise offenders who are genuinely having difficulties in paying their fines. But they have enforcement powers to tackle those who can pay but refuse to do so.

What can the Fines Enforcement Officer do?

He or she has administrative powers to collect fines from offenders. Active enforcement of payment of fines is used in order to reduce the number of people sent to prison for defaulting on their fines.

The fines Enforcement Officer can make arrangements for payments to be deducted from earnings, bank accounts or benefits. A seizure order can be made over a vehicle belonging to an offender. The Fines Enforcement Officer can also send the case back to court for further action if payment is still not made.

The actions of a fines Enforcement Officer may be reviewed by the court on application by the offender.