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Parking Fines and Procedures

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Parking Fines and Procedures

Submitted by: Robert Costomiris

10/1/2015

Question:

Why, if a car is parked legally but simply lacks a hang tag, does the owner receive a 35 dollar ticket rather than simply a warning or reminder?

Why, upon receiving a ticket, is one allowed only 7 days to appeal said ticket?

Why, if one goes to the parking office to appeal a ticket in person, are we turned away and directed to the Parking and Transportation website in order to submit an appeal?

Any why does the Parking and Transportation Office persist in fining a person even when it knows that the person has a valid pass and was not parked illegally??

Rationale:

Parking on campus costs \$100/year, a sum which we all pay if we want to drive to work. Hang tags are an imperfect way to indicate parking privileges; sometimes they fall off a mirror. Penalties for not having a hang tag should not be monetary because it is not the same as parking illegally. Once the Parking and Transportation Office realizes that a fine has been given to a person with a valid permit but who simply lacks a hang tag, the fine should be waived as a matter of course, rather than through a cumbersome and time sensitive appeal process...

Response:

Minutes: 11/16/2015:

Request for Information: Parking Fines and Procedures

Re: an RFI from Robert Costomiris about parking violations, specifically tickets that are valued initially at \$35 for failure to correctly display a hang tag and the time period to appeal such tickets, Humphrey met with Costomiris and Kristy Bryant from Parking. One

of Costomiris's questions was about checking license plates to determine authorized parking; the handheld unit used by ticket writers cannot identify license plates, so if you don't have your hang tag you will get a ticket. However, if you do not have your tag with you, you can get a freebie temporary if you go to the Parking office. Furthermore, if you get a ticket for not having your hang tag, if you appeal it within 7 days it will be waived at least for the first two. If you get a third or more ticket, as long as you appeal it within 7 days that \$35 goes down to \$5. Parking is trying to move to a new system where they can read license plates, and we can eliminate hang tags. The problem is upgrading our gates; they are extremely expensive to replace.

Why, if a car is parked legally but simply lacks a hang tag, does the owner receive a 35 dollar ticket rather than simply a warning or reminder?

Our ticket writers do not have access to permit information. Their handheld ticket units are very simple. If an officer sees a vehicle that is not displaying a permit, they write a citation for "No Valid Permit Displayed". We have a policy that we waive two of those citations per academic year if you fail to display your permit, for whatever reason (left it in another vehicle, fell off the mirror, etc.) as long as they are appealed within 7 days. Beyond the first two, at least one more will have the fine reduced to \$5, again if it is appealed within 7 days.

Why, upon receiving a ticket, is one allowed only 7 days to appeal said ticket?

We give 7 days to appeal a ticket in case we have to get officer input. With an officer averaging 25-30 tickets per shift, we need to be able to get the appeal to them, in a timely manner, so they can recall the information.

Why, if one goes to the parking office to appeal a ticket in person, are we turned away and directed to the Parking and Transportation website in order to submit an appeal?

All appeals must be done in writing. (It states this on the back of the citation envelope: "Faculty, Staff and Students may appeal this citation by submitting an appeal online (shown below) within seven (7) days from the date of issue." This is for auditing and reporting purposes. In a case of the user having a valid reason for not being able to log into our web portal (documentable), I will allow them to send me an email to appeal the ticket and forward the email to my appeal committee on their behalf. We copy and paste the email into our appeal portal for them so that we still have an audit and reporting trail. Citation appeal is actually a part of the university's accreditation

re-certification process, so we have to remain very consistent and be able to produce reports for those re-accreditation processes.

Photo of the back of the envelope can be seen here:

<https://goo.gl/photos/6yV17K8vuSbLoHLn9>

Any why does the Parking and Transportation Office persist in fining a person even when it knows that the person has a valid pass and was not parked illegally?

Again, the students and staff that are issuing those citations do not know when a person has a permit or not. They are not given that information. We do this for a reason. They have to enter each piece of information on a ticket, by hand. If the permit number, tag number, vehicle description all match our records, we can easily surmise the vehicle was parked on campus.

Rationale:

Parking on campus costs \$100/year, a sum which we all pay if we want to drive to work. Hang tags are an imperfect way to indicate parking privileges; sometimes they fall off a mirror. Penalties for not having a hang tag should not be monetary because it is not the same as parking illegally. Once the Parking and Transportation Office realizes that a fine has been given to a person with a valid permit but who simply lacks a hang tag, the fine should be waived as a matter of course, rather than through a cumbersome and time sensitive appeal process.

This is why we waive two of those citations per year. If a person exceeds the two per year, we reduce the ticket down from a \$35 fine to a \$5 fine for improperly displaying a permit. This policy is also extended to students that have hanging permits. I understand the need/desire to walk into our office and have the fine waived, but I had to produce a lot of documentation to the re-accreditation committee. Most of those requests were hand written citation appeals (from before we had the ability to appeal them online). I had to get someone to scan in the documents (packets are between 4-8 pages each) and submit them. If all of them are done online, we can easily process reporting and produce an electronic copy to any committee that requests information.

Lastly, I would like to discuss a project that we are hoping to implement in the Fall of 2016. It is called License Plate Recognition (LPR) and it will consist of two cameras mounted on a vehicle that will ride down each aisle and "ping" if a vehicle does not meet a set of standards that we set for each location. If it does not have a permit or parked

illegally, it will notify the parking staff member driving the vehicle who will stop and issue a citation. We will implement this in phases and eventually go to a permitless environment. If you were to drive a different vehicle for the day, you would be able to open a mobile app or through a web portal and enter the information for the vehicle you are driving. There will be no need to visit the Parking Office, other than to tell us hello. Once fully implemented, LPR will be used to open gates and allow your license plate to become your "permit" and allow us to operate in a more efficient manner. As we move forward with implementation, I will provide more information to your Faculty Senate representative, who can present it to the Senate.

Please let me know if you have any questions,

Kristi

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