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## 5 - Breaches of the traffic regulations and other petty offences

### How are minor breaches of the traffic regulations handled?

Breaches of the traffic regulations are handled directly by the officer noting the particulars of an offence, e.g. a police officer or gendarme. If there has been an offence, you will be told immediately what the applicable penalty is. The reasons for the penalty will first be explained to you and you can make comments. You will be given a statement recording your offence and the penalty imposed. You must discharge the penalty as soon as it is imposed.

Penalties consist of a fine of a fixed amount and sometimes the immobilisation of your vehicle.

As a national of another Member State, if you do not comply with the traffic regulations, you will be penalised in France. If you do not discharge the penalty before returning to your own country, it is possible that legal action will be taken against you.

If you do not agree with the decision, you may dispute it within two months. You may be assured that the penalty imposed on you cannot be increased during the appeal proceedings.

Disputes are handled directly by the Administration, without any trial. The appeal is lodged with the authority that initially imposed the penalty (application for review) and, if it is rejected, you may take your dispute to the next echelon of that authority (appeal to a higher authority).

The procedure to follow will be explained to you directly on the statement given to you.

You must first exhaust these avenues of appeal before you can approach the administrative court.

### How are other petty offences handled?

Other offences handled under administrative law are more serious, relating to regulation of the financial markets, the law on competition or tax or immigration regulations.

### Will these offences appear on my criminal record?

Offences handled under administrative law in France, especially as regards breaches of the traffic regulations, will not be entered in your criminal record.

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