

ALTERNATIVES TO PAYMENT OF FINES AND COSTS

A defendant who is convicted of a criminal offense punishable by fine only is entitled to alternative methods of satisfying the judgment if the defendant is unable to pay the fine or costs, in whole or in part. *The Court in which the conviction is entered should be contacted for details on how to pursue these available alternatives, including arranging for a hearing or other inquiry before the judge to make the determination of inability to pay.* **The alternative methods available to the defendant include:**

- 1) **A payment plan.** A defendant may be permitted to make payments toward the fine and costs in designated intervals over time. *NOTE: If any amount is paid more than 30 days after the judgment assessing the fine or costs, then a \$25 time payment fee must be assessed.*
- 2) **Disposition of the amount assessed by performing community service.** There are many options that meet the requirements of the law for performing community service as a means to satisfy the judgment in whole or in part. *See Art. 45.049 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.*
- 3) **Possible waiver of the fine and costs.** If performing community service imposes an undue hardship, a defendant who is indigent or who lacks sufficient resources to pay may be granted a waiver of the fine and costs, in whole or in part.