WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §62-1-5a

§62-1-5a. Citation in lieu of arrest; failure to appear.

A law-enforcement officer may issue a citation instead of making an arrest for the following offenses, if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the person being cited will appear to answer the charge:

(1) Any misdemeanor, not involving injury to the person, committed in a law-enforcement officer's presence: Provided, That the officer may arrest the person if he has reasonable grounds to believe that the person is likely to cause serious harm to himself or others; and

(2) When any person is being detained for the purpose of investigating whether such person has committed or attempted to commit shoplifting, pursuant to section four, article three-a, chapter sixty-one of this code.

The citation shall provide that the defendant shall appear within a designated time.

If the defendant fails to appear in response to the citation or if there are reasonable grounds to believe that he will not appear, a complaint may be made and a warrant shall issue. When a physical arrest is made and a citation is issued in relation to the same offense the officer shall mark on the citation, in the place specified for court appearance date, the word "arrested" in lieu of the date of court appearance.

WV Legislature