

NOTICE OF PROPOSED GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Misleading Car Ads

Pursuant to Wis. Stat. s. 227.112, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation is hereby seeking comment Misleading Car Ads s. 218, a proposed guidance document.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Comments may be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for 21 days by:

1. Department's website: <https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/dmv/cons-protect/buy-sell-veh/misleadingcarads.aspx>

2. Mailing written comments to:
Division of Motor Vehicles
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
4822 Madison Yards Way
PO Box 7336
Madison, WI 53707-7336

WEBSITE LOCATION OF FINAL GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

The final version of this guidance document will be posted at wisconsindot.gov to allow for ongoing comment.

AGENCY CONTACT

DOTDMVGuidanceDocs@DOT.WI.GOV



State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation

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Misleading car ads

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Ads must be truthful

Wisconsin law requires car advertisements to be truthful. It requires dealerships to honor their ads. Read the entire ad for all of the details, qualifications, and exclusions. Some ads include a disclaimer (usually at the bottom of the ad) that explains any limitations on the offer. A disclaimer should provide all of the details, but should not be used to make a false statement into a truthful one. For example, the following offer is false and misleading: "Get \$2,000 off any car or truck."

Disclaimer: Discount does not apply to new vehicles."

Other common advertising problems occur when a dealership:

- Refuses to honor its advertisement, or tries to change the details of the offer when you contact the dealership
- Compares the price of a used car to the price when the car was new in order to suggest it's a great buy
- Omits or "buries" the name of the dealership in an advertisement, so you don't know who you're buying from

Dealer & Agent Section can help

If you have a problem with a dealership advertisement, Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Dealer & Agent Section may be able to help. We can require a dealer to correct or cancel a misleading ad, and may be able to help you get what you were promised in a false or misleading advertisement. For information about vehicle advertising or about filing a dealership complaint, contact WisDOT Dealer & Agent Section at (608) 266-1425 or by email at DealerLicensingUnit@dot.wi.gov

To file a complaint against a dealership

Complete and mail in the Dealer Complaint form [MV2338](#). Attach readable copies or originals of documentation related to your vehicle purchase or lease, including a copy of the advertisement. WisDOT will use the information you provide to resolve your complaint and enforce the laws. It may share the information with the dealer you name in your complaint. Under Wisconsin's Open Records Law, your complaint will be available for public review upon request.

About the WisDOT Dealer & Agent Section

WisDOT Dealer & Agent Section licenses, regulates and educates the motor vehicle industry, and resolves disputes about dealership sales and warranty repairs. Dealer & Agent Section also investigates complaints about odometer tampering involving dealerships and private sellers.

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Related information:

- [Dealer complaints](#)
- [Dealer field investigation offices](#)

If you have questions:

Email [Wisconsin DMV email service](#)

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