

NOTICE OF PROPOSED GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Vehicle Registration General Info

Pursuant to Wis. Stat. s. 227.112, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation is hereby seeking comment on Vehicle Registration General Info, ch. 341, 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://appengine.egov.com/apps/wi/dot/guidance-docs?guidDocId=DMV506>

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 wisconsin.gov to allow for ongoing comment.

AGENCY CONTACT

DOTDMVGuidanceDocs@DOT.WI.GOV



State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation

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Vehicle registration

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License plates are evidence that registration fees have been paid and are a means of identifying a vehicle and tracing ownership. Most license plates receive one or more [validation stickers](#) to identify the expiration, the maximum gross weight at which the vehicle can be operated and other information for law enforcement.

Wisconsin issues a variety of license plates and registration stickers, depending on the design and use of the vehicle or the owner's special interest, such as [automobile](#) for regular passenger vehicles, [Disabled parking](#) for vehicles owned or used by persons with disabilities, and [Collector](#) for vintage vehicle enthusiasts. Vehicles registered under the [International Registration Plan \(IRP\)](#) are issued apportioned plates. See [special license plates](#) or the [Wisconsin license plate guide](#) for more information.

Most license plates expire on an annual basis. There are other valid registration periods available

for some license plates.

Annual registration

Automobile registration expires one full year from the day the registration first began and can expire on any day of the month. Any operation within a registration period requires the full registration period fee. No prorated fees or refunds are given to partial registration periods.

Annual registration for trucks and trailers pay registration fees calculated from the first day of the month in which operation begins and are prorated on a one-twelfth basis until the end of the next annual, biennial or quarterly period. Annual registration for:

- light trucks (up to 8,000 lbs. gross weight) can expire in any month, depending on the first month of operation.
- heavy trucks registered over 8,000 lbs. and trailers expire on December 31.
- motor homes expired on March 31.

Biennial registration

Registrations for motorcycles, mopeds, low speed vehicles and light farm trucks (up to 12,000 lbs. gross weight) expire in even years; farm plates expire at the end of February and motorcycles, mopeds and low speed vehicles expire at the end of April.

Registrations for motorcycles, mopeds, low speed vehicles and light farms trucks registered for the first time within the two-year registration cycle will be registered on a prorated fee. See charts for prorated fees:

- [Motorcycle, moped and low speed vehicle](#)
- [Light farms trucks](#)

Quarterly registration

Registration is available on a quarterly basis (January - March, April - June, July - September, October - December) for vehicles registered with a gross weight over 8,000 lbs. (vehicles with light farm truck plates are not eligible). An extra fee of \$5 is charged per application.

Consecutive monthly registration

Consecutive monthly registration (with a minimum registration period of three months) is also available for registration of several special use vehicles. The fee is 1/12 the annual fee, times the number of months of registration, plus a fee of \$15 per vehicle. Vehicles that qualify for consecutively monthly registration include:

- A motor truck or a trailer or a truck tractor used exclusively to transport recycled metal salvage materials, logs or pulpwood, dirt, fill or aggregates or fresh milk, or to transport perishable fresh fruits or vegetables for canning, freezing, dehydrating or storage prior to processing, including return of waste, or to transport petroleum products
- A motor truck or a trailer or a truck tractor equipped with a dump, box or other container used exclusively to transport gravel, concrete or cement and bituminous road construction materials or agricultural lime, feed, grain or fertilizer, or equipped with a mechanical mixer used exclusively to mix and deliver concrete
- A motor truck or truck tractor which is owned or leased by a retail lumberyard used exclusively to transport building construction materials from that lumberyard to a building construction site
- Any motor vehicle used exclusively for towing operations of stalled or disabled vehicles

Telephone authorization

Telephone Authorization (TA) is a call-in procedure only for intra-state operation of motor carriers that allows them to operate on Wisconsin highways without displaying evidence of registration. The program allows for immediate operation of an unregistered or newly acquired vehicle. Vehicles

registered quarterly or consecutive monthly may obtain Telephone Authorization for a \$7.50 fee by calling (608) 267-5103.

Miscellaneous requirements

School buses

Prior to issuing an original title for a new school bus, or a Wisconsin title for a used school bus purchased out-of-state, the bus must be inspected by the [Wisconsin State Patrol](#). Contact the local State Patrol Regional Headquarters nearest you for inspection information. There is a \$5 issuance fee for five-year school bus plates. To use a school bus for a charter operation, you need to register as a charter bus and pay regular gross weight registration fees. Quarterly or annual charter registration is available as well as a 72-hour trip permit.

SUVs and vans

If seating capacity of the sport utility vehicle or van is greater than 50% of the total space available, you may license it with automobile registration. If cargo space comprises more than 50% of available floor space, you must register it as a truck at the appropriate gross weight.

Note: If the vehicle has an open truck bed, it is considered a pickup and does **not** qualify for an auto plate.

Homemade trailers

Registration are not required in Wisconsin for homemade trailers less than 3,000 lbs. gross vehicle weight. However, if you want to title and register a homemade trailer, complete Wisconsin Title & License Plate Application form [MV1](#) indicating the weight at which you wish to register the trailer. Attach information on the type of trailer, width, length, axles, year built and the builder. Enclose any receipts/bills of sale you have for the parts used to build the trailer. DMV will issue a Vehicle Identification Number (VIN). You then need to permanently attach this VIN to the trailer and have it inspected by either a licensed motor vehicle dealer or police officer. After you have returned the inspection form, DMV will issue a title and registration.

Farm trucks

Trucks registered as a farm truck may not be used for any non-farm occupation, trade or employment. If you use your truck for a non-farm job or other commercial purpose, you need to register it as a dual-purpose farm truck or as a regular truck. You may use a farm truck registered at less than 38,000 lbs. for personal or family purposes, but not for commuting to another job. A farm truck registered at 38,000 lbs. or more may not be used for personal or family purposes.

Dual-purpose farm and dual-purpose vehicle registration

Trucks used both for farm and non-farm occupation may register at 4,500, 6,000 or 8,000 lbs. gross weight when used for non-farm occupation and may operate up to 12,000 lbs. when used for farm work.

A truck used as a motor home with a slide-in camper unit may register as a dual-purpose vehicle. The registration fee is based on the vehicle's use as a motor truck and the weight of the camper is not included in the truck's gross weight.

Manufactured homes, mobile homes, recreational vehicle trailers and camping trailers

Some mobile homes are processed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) while others are processed by the [Department of Safety and Professional Services](#). See [manufactured homes, mobile homes, recreational vehicle trailers and camping trailers](#) for additional information.

Additional information

- [Wisconsin license plate guide](#)
- [Special license plates](#)
- [License plate renewal options](#)
- [Transfer license plates](#)
- [Vehicle license plate fees](#)

Questions?

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