
HOUSE BILL 1664

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Representatives G. Hunt, Jinkins, DeBolt, Shea, Harmsworth, Rodne, Muri, Buys, Gregerson, Taylor, Holy, Magendanz, Stokesbary, Vick, Zeiger, Condotta, Kirby, Chandler, Goodman, Kochmar, Walkinshaw, McCabe, Moeller, Pike, Pettigrew, Riccelli, Harris, McCaslin, MacEwen, Lytton, Fagan, Sawyer, Senn, Parker, Griffey, Scott, Tharinger, Haler, Wilcox, and McBride

Read first time 01/26/15. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to authorizing the issuance of one license plate
2 for certain vehicles while maintaining existing license plate fees;
3 amending RCW 46.17.200; reenacting and amending RCW 46.16A.200; and
4 providing an effective date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 46.16A.200 and 2014 c 181 s 2 and 2014 c 80 s 1 are
7 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

8 (1) **Design.** All license plates may be obtained by the director
9 from the metal working plant of a state correctional facility or from
10 any source in accordance with existing state of Washington purchasing
11 procedures. License plates:

12 (a) May vary in background, color, and design;

13 (b) Must be legible and clearly identifiable as a Washington
14 state license plate;

15 (c) Must designate the name of the state of Washington without
16 abbreviation;

17 (d) Must be treated with fully reflectorized materials designed
18 to increase visibility and legibility at night;

19 (e) Must be of a size and color and show the registration period
20 as determined by the director; and

1 (f) Before July 1, 2010, may display a symbol or artwork approved
2 by the former special license plate review board and the legislature.
3 Beginning July 1, 2010, special license plate series approved by the
4 department and enacted into law by the legislature may display a
5 symbol or artwork approved by the department.

6 (2) **Exceptions to reflectorized materials.** License plates issued
7 before January 1, 1968, are not required to be treated with
8 reflectorized materials.

9 (3) **Dealer license plates.** License plates issued to a dealer must
10 contain an indication that the license plates have been issued to a
11 vehicle dealer.

12 (4)(a) **Furnished.** The director shall furnish to all persons
13 making satisfactory application for a vehicle registration:

14 (i) Two identical license plates each containing the license
15 plate number; ((~~or~~))

16 (ii) One license plate, by option of the applicant, if the
17 vehicle is a vehicle registered under RCW 46.17.350(1) (j) or (n) or
18 a vehicle registered under RCW 46.17.355 that is twelve thousand
19 pounds or less gross vehicle weight; or

20 (iii) One license plate if the vehicle is a trailer, semitrailer,
21 camper, moped, collector vehicle, horseless carriage, or motorcycle.

22 (b) The director may adopt types of license plates to be used as
23 long as the license plates are legible.

24 (5)(a) **Display.** License plates must be:

25 (i) Attached conspicuously at the front and rear of each vehicle
26 if two license plates have been issued;

27 (ii) Attached to the rear of the vehicle if one license plate has
28 been issued;

29 (iii) Kept clean and be able to be plainly seen and read at all
30 times; and

31 (iv) Attached in a horizontal position at a distance of not more
32 than four feet from the ground.

33 (b) The Washington state patrol may grant exceptions to this
34 subsection if the body construction of the vehicle makes compliance
35 with this section impossible.

36 (6) **Change of license classification.** A person who has altered a
37 vehicle that makes the current license plate or plates invalid for
38 the vehicle's use shall:

1 (a) Surrender the current license plate or plates to the
2 department, county auditor or other agent, or subagent appointed by
3 the director;

4 (b) Apply for a new license plate or plates; and

5 (c) Pay a change of classification fee required under RCW
6 46.17.310.

7 (7) **Unlawful acts.** It is unlawful to:

8 (a) Display a license plate or plates on the front or rear of any
9 vehicle that were not issued by the director for the vehicle;

10 (b) Display a license plate or plates on any vehicle that have
11 been changed, altered, or disfigured, or have become illegible;

12 (c) Use holders, frames, or other materials that change, alter,
13 or make a license plate or plates illegible. License plate frames may
14 be used on license plates only if the frames do not obscure license
15 tabs or identifying letters or numbers on the plates and the license
16 plates can be plainly seen and read at all times;

17 (d) Operate a vehicle unless a valid license plate or plates are
18 attached as required under this section;

19 (e) Transfer a license plate or plates issued under this chapter
20 between two or more vehicles without first making application to
21 transfer the license plates. A violation of this subsection (7)(e) is
22 a traffic infraction subject to a fine not to exceed five hundred
23 dollars. Any law enforcement agency that determines that a license
24 plate or plates have been transferred between two or more vehicles
25 shall confiscate the license plate or plates and return them to the
26 department for nullification along with full details of the reasons
27 for confiscation. Each vehicle identified in the transfer will be
28 issued a new license plate or plates upon application by the owner or
29 owners and the payment of full fees and taxes; or

30 (f) Fail, neglect, or refuse to endorse the registration
31 certificate, except as authorized under this section.

32 (8) **Transfer.** (a) Standard issue license plates must be replaced
33 when ownership of the vehicle changes, pursuant to subsection
34 (9)(a)(i) of this section, but the registered owner may retain the
35 license plates and transfer them to a replacement vehicle of the same
36 use. In addition to all other taxes and fees due upon change in
37 ownership, a registered owner wishing to keep standard issue license
38 plates shall pay the license plate transfer fee required under RCW
39 46.17.200(1)(c) when applying for license plate transfer.

1 (b) Special license plates and personalized license plates may be
2 treated in the same manner as described in (a) of this subsection
3 unless otherwise limited by law.

4 (c) License plates issued to the state or any county, city, town,
5 school district, or other political subdivision entitled to exemption
6 as provided by law may be treated in the same manner as described in
7 (a) of this subsection.

8 (d) License plate replacement is not required when a change in
9 vehicle ownership is the result of one or more of the following
10 circumstances:

11 (i) When adding a lien holder to the certificate of title or
12 removing a lien holder from the certificate of title;

13 (ii) When a vehicle is transferred from one spouse or registered
14 domestic partner to another;

15 (iii) When removing a deceased spouse or registered domestic
16 partner from the certificate of title;

17 (iv) When a vehicle is transferred by gift or inheritance to one
18 or more members of the registered owner's immediate family;

19 (v) When a vehicle is transferred into or out of a trust in which
20 the registered owner or one or more immediate family members of the
21 registered owner is the beneficiary;

22 (vi) When a leaseholder buys out the leased vehicle; or

23 (vii) When a person changes his or her name.

24 (9) **Replacement.** (a) Except as provided in subsection (8)(a) of
25 this section, an owner or the owner's authorized representative must
26 apply for a replacement license plate or plates: (i) When taking
27 ownership of the vehicle; (ii) if the current license plate or plates
28 assigned to the vehicle have been lost, defaced, or destroyed; or
29 (iii) if one or both plates have become so illegible or are in such a
30 condition as to be difficult to distinguish. An owner or the owner's
31 authorized representative may apply for a replacement license plate
32 or plates at any time the owner chooses. The department shall offer
33 to owners the option of retaining the current license plate number
34 when obtaining replacement license plates for the fee required in RCW
35 46.17.200(1)(b).

36 (b) The application for a replacement license plate or plates
37 must:

38 (i) Be on a form furnished or approved by the director; and

39 (ii) Be accompanied by the fee required under RCW
40 46.17.200(1)(a).

1 (c) When a vehicle is sold to a vehicle dealer for resale, the
2 application for a replacement plate or plates need not be made until
3 the vehicle is sold by the vehicle dealer.

4 (d) The department shall not require the payment of any fee to
5 replace a license plate or plates for vehicles owned, rented, or
6 leased by foreign countries or international bodies to which the
7 United States government is a signatory by treaty.

8 (10) **Replacement—Exceptions.** The following license plates are not
9 required to be replaced as required in subsection (9) of this
10 section:

11 (a) Horseless carriage license plates issued under RCW 46.18.255
12 before January 1, 1987;

13 (b) Medal of Honor license plates issued under RCW 46.18.230;

14 (c) License plates for commercial motor vehicles with a gross
15 weight greater than twenty-six thousand pounds.

16 (11) **Rules.** The department may adopt rules to implement this
17 section.

18 (12) **Tabs or emblems.** The director may issue tabs or emblems to
19 be attached to license plates or elsewhere on the vehicle to signify
20 initial registration and renewals. Renewals become effective when
21 tabs or emblems have been issued and properly displayed.

22 **Sec. 2.** RCW 46.17.200 and 2014 c 80 s 4 are each amended to read
23 as follows:

24 (1) In addition to all other fees and taxes required by law, the
25 department, county auditor or other agent, or subagent appointed by
26 the director shall charge:

27 (a) The following license plate fees for each license plate,
28 unless the owner or type of vehicle is exempt from payment:

FEE TYPE	FEE	DISTRIBUTION
Original issue	\$10.00	RCW 46.68.070
<u>Original issue</u>	<u>\$20.00</u>	<u>RCW 46.68.070</u>
<u>(One plate option)</u>		
Reflectivity	\$2.00	RCW 46.68.070
<u>Reflectivity</u>	<u>\$4.00</u>	<u>RCW 46.68.070</u>
<u>(One plate option)</u>		
Replacement	\$10.00	RCW 46.68.070

1	<u>Replacement</u>	<u>\$20.00</u>	<u>RCW 46.68.070</u>
2	<u>(One plate option)</u>		
3	Original issue,	\$4.00	RCW 46.68.070
4	motorcycle		
5	Replacement,	\$4.00	RCW 46.68.070
6	motorcycle		
7	Original issue,	\$1.50	RCW 46.68.070
8	moped		

9 (b) A license plate retention fee, as required under RCW
10 46.16A.200(9)(a), of twenty dollars if the owner wishes to retain the
11 current license plate number upon license plate replacement, unless
12 the owner or type of vehicle is exempt from payment. The twenty
13 dollar fee must be deposited in the multimodal transportation account
14 created in RCW 47.66.070.

15 (c) A ten dollar license plate transfer fee, as required under
16 RCW 46.16A.200(8)(a), when transferring standard issue license plates
17 from one vehicle to another, unless the owner or type of vehicle is
18 exempt from payment. The ten dollar license plate transfer fee must
19 be deposited in the motor vehicle fund created in RCW 46.68.070.

20 (d) Former prisoner of war license plates, as described in RCW
21 46.18.235, may be transferred to a replacement vehicle upon payment
22 of a five dollar license plate fee, in addition to any other fee
23 required by law.

24 (2) The department may, upon request, provide license plates that
25 have been used and returned to the department to individuals for
26 nonvehicular use. The department may charge a fee of up to five
27 dollars per license plate to cover costs or recovery for postage and
28 handling. The department may waive the fee for license plates used in
29 educational projects and may, by rule, provide standards for the fee
30 waiver and restrictions on the number of license plates provided to
31 any one person. The fee must be deposited in the motor vehicle fund
32 created in RCW 46.68.070.

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act takes effect January 1, 2016.

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