

RCW 46.16A.180 Registration certificates—Formats—Requirements—Penalty—Exception—Manual removal of registrant's address. (1) A registration certificate must be:

(a) Signed by the registered owner, or if a firm or corporation, the signature of one of its officers or other authorized agent, to be valid;

(b) Carried in the vehicle for which it is issued; and

(c) Provided to law enforcement and the department by the operator of the vehicle upon demand.

(d) The registration certificate required by this section may be provided in either paper or electronic format. Acceptable electronic formats include the display of electronic images on a cellular phone or any other type of portable electronic device.

(2) It is unlawful for any person to operate or be in possession of a vehicle without carrying a registration certificate for the vehicle. Any person in charge of a vehicle shall, upon demand of any of the local authorities or of any police officer or of any representative of the department, permit an inspection of the vehicle registration certificate. This section does not apply to a vehicle for which registration is not required to be renewed annually and is a publicly owned vehicle marked as required under RCW 46.08.065.

(3) Beginning January 1, 2023, paper issued registrations [registration] certificates for vehicles or trailers must be printed to allow for the manual removal of a registrant's address, by the named registered owner, without compromising any required information on the certificate. [2022 c 36 § 2; 2013 c 157 § 3; 2010 c 161 § 432; 2010 c 8 § 9014; 1986 c 18 § 16; 1979 ex.s. c 113 § 3; 1969 ex.s. c 170 § 11; 1967 c 32 § 19; 1961 c 12 § 46.16.260. Prior: 1955 c 384 § 18; 1937 c 188 § 8; RRS § 6312-8. Formerly RCW 46.16.260.]

Finding—2022 c 36: "(1) The legislature finds that printing addresses on vehicle registrations provides an opportunity for thieves that break into vehicles to use the information for nefarious purposes that can be avoided if the address is not printed on the vehicle registration certificate.

(2) Furthermore, law enforcement agencies have access to databases that include the vehicle registrant's address so such information does not need to be printed on paper vehicle registration certificates.

(3) In order to reduce criminal opportunities, the legislature directs the department of licensing to print addresses on vehicle, trailer, and vessel registration certificates in a location that facilitates the removal of the address." [2022 c 36 § 1.]

Effective date—Intent—Legislation to reconcile chapter 161, Laws of 2010 and other amendments made during the 2010 legislative session—2010 c 161: See notes following RCW 46.04.013.