

# Welcome to Virginia



[www.dmvNow.com](http://www.dmvNow.com)

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***Information you need  
to title and register your vehicle  
in Virginia.***

Please recycle. 

# Welcome to Virginia!

Here at the Department of Motor Vehicles, we're excited to help you get on the road. This brochure will give you the information you need to title and register your vehicle. For information on receiving your Virginia driver's license, refer to the *Virginia Driver's Manual* (DMV 39), and *Obtaining a Driver's License or Identification Card* (DMV 141). These publications are available at DMV customer service centers (CSCs) and online at [www.dmvNOW.com](http://www.dmvNOW.com).



## Meet Virginia's vehicle insurance requirements

*(your vehicle must be insured when you register it)*

To protect our citizens, Virginia law requires the following minimum insurance coverage for all registered vehicles.

- ▶ Bodily injury/death of one person \$25,000
- ▶ Bodily injury/death of two or more persons \$50,000
- ▶ Property damage \$20,000

If you register your vehicle in Virginia and it's not covered by liability insurance, you face a \$500 penalty and suspension of your driver's license and vehicle registration(s), plus higher insurance premiums for the next three years.

From the moment you register your vehicle to the day the registration period expires, your vehicle must be covered by a liability policy issued by an insurance company licensed to do business in Virginia – even if the vehicle is not working or not being used.

Whenever a motorist obtains or cancels a liability policy or adds or removes a vehicle from a policy, insurance companies notify DMV immediately. Why take chances? Get insurance on your vehicle before you register it.

Or, if insurance is not an option, pay the \$500 uninsured motor vehicle fee. Paying this fee does not provide insurance coverage, but it does allow you to register and operate your vehicle in Virginia for one year.

Remember, if you sell, trade or dispose of your vehicle, be sure to notify DMV if you want to transfer the license plates to another insured vehicle. If you do not want to transfer your license plates, please return them to any DMV customer service center or mail them to DMV before you cancel your insurance.

Failure to comply with Virginia's insurance law will result in fines, suspension of your driver's license, and cancellation of the registrations on all vehicles that you own or co-own.



## Obtain a vehicle safety inspection sticker

Before operating a vehicle in Virginia, it must pass an annual safety inspection and display a valid safety inspection sticker. Trailers with separate braking systems must also be inspected. Be warned: if you drive your vehicle without an inspection sticker, you may be ticketed by law enforcement. A conviction for violating Virginia inspection laws could result in a fine and be posted to your driving record. For information about safety inspections, or to find safety inspection stations near you, contact the Virginia State Police at [www.vsp.virginia.gov](http://www.vsp.virginia.gov) or (804) 674-6774.



## Meet Virginia's emissions inspection standards

*(your vehicle must meet Virginia's emissions standards when you register it)*

Your vehicle must pass an emissions inspection if garaged in the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William or Stafford, or the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas or Manassas Park and the vehicle is more than two years old.

If your vehicle is being registered for the first time in Virginia and has a current valid emissions certificate (performed in the last 12 months) from one of the following states, it may be titled and registered without a Virginia emissions inspection: Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Washington, or Wisconsin.

Emissions inspections in Virginia are valid for two years and may be obtained by having your vehicle inspected at a certified emissions inspection station.

When you have your vehicle inspected in Virginia, the emissions station will update your vehicle record at DMV. Your emissions inspection should not cost more than \$28. For vehicles subject to the emissions program, an additional \$2 per year will be charged by DMV at the time of vehicle registration. This fee is used to cover the cost of the emissions inspection program.

For more information about emissions inspections and the location of inspection stations, contact the Department of Environmental Quality at (703) 583-3900 or (800) 275-3844. Or, visit their website at [www.deq.virginia.gov](http://www.deq.virginia.gov).



## Title your vehicle in Virginia

*(do this within 30 days of moving to Virginia)*

To register your vehicle in Virginia and obtain Virginia license plates, you must first title your vehicle within 30 days of moving to Virginia. To receive a Virginia title, you must furnish your title from the state in which your

vehicle was last titled. If the vehicle is new, you must provide the manufacturer's certificate or statement of origin. If the state you moved from did not issue a title, you must present a bill of sale and the current registration issued in your name.

If you are a non-Virginia resident active duty military service member, activated reserve or national guard member, or mobilized reserve or national guard member living in Virginia and the sole owner of a vehicle that is titled and registered in another state, you are not required to title or register your vehicle in Virginia.

## Step 1

Present the following:

- ▶ a completed Application for Title and Registration (form VSA 17A)
- ▶ proof of address
- ▶ the manufacturer's statement of origin if the vehicle is new, or
- ▶ the previous owner's title signed over to you if the vehicle is used. If you are titling a vehicle from out of state, bring your title from your previous state of residence. Your name must appear on the out-of-state title as owner. Or, you may have the previous owner of the out-of-state title assign the title to you.
- ▶ your social security number, if you have one

## Step 2

Pay:

- ▶ the \$10 titling fee, and
- ▶ the three percent sales and use tax based on the vehicle's sale price. There is a \$35 minimum tax.

If you are titling your vehicle in Virginia for the first time and hold a valid assignable title or registration issued in your name by another state or branch of the United States Armed Forces, you will not have to pay the vehicle sales and use tax. However, if you purchased the vehicle within the preceding 12 months, you must provide proof that the sales and use tax was paid elsewhere in order to be exempt from sales and use tax in Virginia.

## Step 3

Record the odometer reading on the VSA 17A. If the odometer reading is not actual, the seller must inform the buyer that it is incorrect by checking the appropriate odometer brand code ("exceeds actual limits" or "odometer reading is not the actual mileage"). The seller must provide the vehicle's actual mileage.

If you are titling a vehicle with a model year that is at least 10 years or older than the current calendar year and the out-of-state title shows that the vehicle was exempt from odometer disclosure, then no odometer disclosure is required for a Virginia title. You must present the out-of-state title showing the exemption when titling the vehicle in Virginia; otherwise, an odometer reading is required.



## Register your vehicle and acquire license plates *(do this within 30 days of moving to Virginia)*

### Application and fees

After you have insured and titled your vehicle, register it at any Virginia DMV customer service center within 30 days of moving to Virginia. Present a completed Application for Registration (VSA 14) and pay the registration fee.

Your registration fee is determined by the empty weight or gross weight of your vehicle, the type of license plate you purchase (see special license plates section) and the number of years for which you register your vehicle. You may choose to register your vehicle for one or two years. You can save \$2 by registering your vehicle for two years.

As a courtesy, DMV will mail renewal reminders to you prior to the expiration date of your registration. To receive reminders on time, be sure to update your address with DMV. Renew your vehicle registration at [www.dmvNOW.com](http://www.dmvNOW.com), via telephone or mail. A \$5 statutory fee is added to registration renewals conducted in a DMV customer service center.

Vehicle registration*	Fee
Passenger – 4,000 lbs or less	\$40.75
Passenger – 4,001 lbs or more	\$45.75
Motorcycle	\$28.75

\* Add \$2 emissions inspection fee if the vehicle is garaged in Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William, or Stafford counties or the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas or Manassas Park (see the emissions inspection section) and the vehicle is more than two years old.

### Sun-shading Requirements

If you are titling and registering a vehicle that has sun-shading, you need to be aware of Virginia law. Virginia's sun-shading requirements for the minimum percent of light allowed are as follows for any motor vehicle operated on Virginia highways:

- ▶ front side windows – 50%
- ▶ rear side and rear windows – 35%
- ▶ windshield – no sun-shading allowed

Contact the Virginia State Police if you have questions about whether the sun-shading on your vehicle meets these requirements. State law authorizes DMV to issue waivers to individuals who have medical conditions requiring restriction from sunlight or bright artificial light.

## Your License Plates

DMV will issue you two license plates, decals showing the expiration date and a registration card. Place the decals as indicated on the plates. Place the plates on the front and rear of your vehicle so that they are securely fastened and clearly visible. If your vehicle is a motorcycle, DMV will issue you one license plate for the vehicle. It is illegal to mount license plate frames, colored glass, plastic, or any other type of cover on your license plates if it alters or obscures the letters, numbers, decals or the state where the vehicle is registered and when the registration expires. Keep the registration card with you whenever you operate the vehicle.



In addition to displaying special plates, motorists can add a personalized character combination to their plates using up to seven characters. Personalized plates cost \$10 a year in addition to vehicle registration and special plate fees.

You may purchase a special license plate, with or without a personalized character combination, through the DMV web site ([www.dmvNOW.com](http://www.dmvNOW.com)) or at any of our customer service centers. However, your vehicle must be titled before you can purchase a special or personalized plate through the DMV web site.



## Purchase a vehicle decal or sticker from your locality

*(do this within 30 days of moving to Virginia)*

The locality in which you live may require you to register the vehicle with the locality. Use the DMV web site, [www.dmvNOW.com](http://www.dmvNOW.com), to find contact information for your local commissioner of the revenue, treasurer or director of finance.



## Special and Personalized License Plates

Virginia offers more than 200 special license plate designs that enable people with a common interest to identify or promote themselves or their cause. Many of our special plates represent the military, emergency personnel, fraternal orders and civic or community organizations.

Special plates also represent a variety of other groups such as colleges and universities, conservationists and hobbyists. Special plate fees range from \$10 to \$25 and are charged in addition to the vehicle registration fee. Most special plate fees are annual fees, although some are one-time fees.



## Questions?

Contact us and we'll be happy to help! Online at [www.dmvNOW.com](http://www.dmvNOW.com), DMV is open day and night. Use our web site to learn about our services and products, conduct transactions, reserve and purchase personalized license plates and download DMV forms. Our web site will also help you find your local DMV customer service center.

Or, call (804) 497-7100. A representative or our automated voice response system will give you the information you need.



[www.dmvNow.com](http://www.dmvNow.com)

That's DMV now — or later — whatever suits your busy schedule!