

**2200 Division of Motor Vehicles
Vehicle Services**

2285 Vanity Tag Regulation

Delaware Title 21, Sections 2121(h) and (i), are the laws regarding vanity license plates. This regulation covers the requirements for vanity license plates under Delaware law and Division regulations on what letters and numbers can be issued. Specialists taking orders for vanity plates must be familiar with this law and regulation.

The law allows any single letter or combination of letters or combination of letters and numerals, not to exceed seven (7) in number except for motorcycle license plates that are restricted to five (5) in number. If the combination includes numerals, the numerals shall be displayed to the right of all letters on the plate. A hyphen, ampersand or space shall be permitted and shall be counted as one letter. The Division is granted the authority by law to refuse any combination of letters or letters and numerals.

1.0 Special Note

- 1.1 Motor vehicle specialists must be extremely careful when issuing vanity license plates to ensure obscene plates are not issued. Plates that make unflattering statements about any particular group or raise politically sensitive issues should be referred to the Dover Administrative Office for approval or denial. Motor vehicle specialists in the facilities should allow another specialist to review a vanity license plate request before approving the order. The Dover Administrative Office will ensure two specialists review the order before ordering a license plate.
- 1.2 Final approval or denial on any sensitive plates will be made by a committee consisting of the Dover Registration Supervisor, Dover Senior Support Supervisor, and the Clean Air Administrator/Chief of Vehicles Services or Chief of Operations.
- 1.3 Motor vehicle specialists may disapprove obscene license plates without referral to the Dover Administrative Office. Customers who wish to appeal a plate denial will be referred to the Dover Registration Supervisor (302 744 2539).
- 1.4 The following combinations of letters/numerals shall not be issued due to potential conflicts with existing license plates: Any special license plate prefix...

"A"	FOLLOWED BY A NUMBER OR NUMBERS
"C"	"
"CT"	"
"CY"	"
"D"	"
DAV"	"
"DX"	"
"F"	"
"FD"	"
"FT"	"
"HA"	"
"I"	"
"I"	FOLLOWED BY "I", "O" OR ANY OTHER NUMBERS (ALSO ANY COMBINATION OF "I" AND "1" OR "I" AND "0") NO ROMAN NUMERALS EXCEPT WHEN USED AS A SUFFIX TO A CUSTOMER'S INITIALS
"MC"	FOLLOWED BY A NUMBER OR NUMBERS
"MCB"	"
"MCE"	"

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"MCJ"	"
"MH"	"
"MIA"	"
"MP"	"
"NO 1"	OR "NO-1"
"NO 2"	OR" NO-2"
"NO 3"	OR "NO-3"
"O"	OR "O's"
"O"	FOLLOWED BY "I", "1" OR "0" (ALSO ANY COMBINATION OF "O", "I", "1" OR "0". ALL "O's" ARE ACCEPTABLE TO BE ISSUED)
"PC"	FOLLOWED BY A NUMBER OR NUMBERS
"POW"	"
"R"	"
"RT"	"
"RV"	"
"S"	"
"SR"	"
"T"	"
"TC"	"
"TX"	"

- 1.5 No vanity plate shall be issued that would be a duplicate of a Delaware license plate already issued.
- 1.6 The same combination of letters or letters and numerals shall not be issued for more than one motor vehicle.
- 1.7 No vanity plate shall be issued that is considered to be obscene by the Division of Motor Vehicles.
- 1.8 Vanity plates that are not blue & gold are illegal and cannot be displayed on any vehicle.
- 1.9 The Division shall issue vanity plates with smaller than normal letters only when such smaller letters are used as a suffix to a customer's initials. Examples of this are: "SR", "JR", "II" or "III". Under no conditions is the Division to issue smaller letters as a prefix or in the middle of a set of initials, except to elected officials.
- 1.10 A space may be inserted between any given letter or numeral on a vanity plate. However, the space will count as one letter. A maximum of two (2) will be allotted. Examples of this are: "HV TV", "TRS MS", "XY TMY", "J S R" or "JS R".
- 1.11 Commas, periods or other punctuation marks are not permitted on vanity plates with the following exception: A maximum of two (2) hyphens may be used between letters and numerals. A maximum of two (2) ampersands (&) may be used between letters and numerals. The hyphen and ampersand will count as one letter for each. The hyphen and ampersand will not be loaded into the computer. Examples: Vanity plate "JS BS" or "JS&BS" will be loaded into the computer as "JSBS"; vanity plate "J B S", "J B S" or "J&B&S" will be loaded as "JBS". A vanity plate cannot be issued for "JS&BS" if a vanity plate has already been issued for "JS BS" or "JS BS".

2.0 Reissue Of Vanity Plates

- 2.1 A vanity plate may be reissued to a new applicant after such plate has been expired for six (6) months. (See Regulation 2285) or
- 2.2 Upon written or verbal permission from the owner, a vanity plate may be reissued to a new applicant at any time. Upon transfer of a valid vanity plate to another person, the remaining registration expiration period is canceled.
- 2.3 All applications for vanity plates that are being reissued shall first be checked with the Dover Administrative Office, Vanity Plate Section.

3.0 Vehicle Eligibility For Vanity Plates

- 3.1 Vanity plates may be issued on any passenger car, station wagon, motorcycle, commercial motor vehicle (except vehicle registered under IRP), farm truck, or motor vehicle bearing an "RV" plate that has a valid Delaware license plate.
- 3.2 Vanity plates cannot be issued on trailers, farm tractors, stock cars or mopeds.

4.0 Prorating of fees to accomodate vanity plates.

- 4.1 Annual Fee
 - 4.1.1 The annual fee for a vanity license plate is \$40.00 in addition to the annual fee for the regular registration plate assigned to the vehicle.
- 4.2 New Application
 - 4.2.1 At the time that the application for a vanity plate is submitted, if the vehicle is already registered with a valid Delaware license plate, the vanity plate fee shall be prorated at \$3.50 per month so as to have the expiration of the vanity plate the same as the expiration date of the regular assigned plate.
- 4.3 Transfer Of Vanity Plate By Same Owner To Another Vehicle:
 - 4.3.1 When an applicant purchases a different vehicle in his/her name and the expiration date is greater on the vanity plate than it is on the regular plate, the expiration date on the vanity plate will be set back to the same expiration date as the vehicle. The customer will lose the extra time on the vanity plate. No refunds are authorized.
 - 4.3.2 If the registration expiration date on the regular plate of the newly acquired vehicle is greater than the registration expiration date on the vanity plate being transferred, the vanity plate will be updated at the prorated fee of \$3.50 per month to correspond with the regular plate unless the owner no longer wants the vanity plate

5.0 Display Of Vanity Plates

- 5.1 The owner of a vanity plate that is valid can display a duplicate of the vanity plate on the front of the vehicle for as long as such vanity plate remains valid and is renewed by such owner. An expired vanity plate may not be displayed on the front of a vehicle. This is pursuant to Title 21, Section 2126(a).
- 5.2 No owner of a vehicle may display an expired vanity plate on the front of a vehicle when he/she is displaying a properly assigned license plate number on the rear of his/her vehicle. However, an owner may display a valid vanity plate on the front of his/her vehicle and his/her regularly assigned license plate number on the rear of the vehicle.
- 5.3 Any vehicle actively registered with a vanity plate may have displayed on the front of such vehicle its regularly assigned license plate if the owner so wishes.
- 5.4 The vanity plate is issued by the Division for a fee and is used as an "identifier" of the vehicle just like all registration plates.

6.0 Ownership Of Vanity Plates

- 6.1 A vanity plate shall be the property of the owner as long as the owner pays the renewal fee for such plate.
- 6.2 The issuing specialist shall provide customers with the vanity plate handout when a plate is ordered or renewed.
- 6.3 Specialists should advise the owner to keep his/her numbered license plate in the vehicle.

7.0 Application For Vanity Plate

- 7.1 Vanity Plate Specialist Must:
 - 7.1.1 Indicate on the vanity plate application whether it is a new application, a transfer, or a tag retention. This is important.

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- 7.1.2 Inform the applicant that delivery of a new vanity plate takes about 3 4 weeks. The application will be validated.
- 7.1.3 Be sure to make it very clear when ordering vanity plates with the letter "L" or the number "1 ". We must be able to distinguish between a "1" and an "L" and Roman numeral "I" or "i". Roman numerals will be connected.
- 7.1.4 Have the applicant verify the combination of letters or letters and numerals on the application and then sign the application. This is done to eliminate errors and misunderstandings regarding what is being requested. Please provide the customer a vanity plate display handout.
- 7.1.5 A vanity plate that is available can be held for a customer for a maximum of 30 days without payment. After 30 days, the plate is available to the next requester. This hold is a one time hold per plate per customer.
- 7.1.6 The customer's telephone number and signature must appear on the vanity plate application unless the application is in a dealer folder. Please emphasize the importance of using the correct address. Many vanity plates are returned to our office by the post office. We will not remail the license plates. If they are returned, they must be picked up by the customer. After 30 days, they will be destroyed. (Specialists may wish to verify the address by checking the driver's license if the applicant appears in person.)
- 7.1.7 The maximum letters or letters and numerals for a motorcycle vanity plate is 5.
- 7.1.8 Once a vanity plate has been paid for and ordered, there are no refunds or changes.