# CHAPTER 1

## GENERAL REGISTRATION INFORMATION

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL REGISTRATION INFORMATION

1.000 Addresses on Documents (CVC §§4150, 4150.2, and 4453)

Registration applications must include the registered owner’s residence or business address and mailing address, if different, and the legal owner/lienholder’s business, residence, or mailing address.

- **Residence addresses** must include the house number, street name, and apartment or mobilehome park space number, when applicable.
- **Business addresses** may be an office building or a street address.

Address Changes (CVC §§4159, 4160, and 9865)—Registered and legal owners are required to notify the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for a change of address within 10 days by submitting a completed Notice of Change of Address (DMV 14) form to the address shown on the form (registered owners may complete the change of address on the DMV website).

New registration documents are not issued. The owner should line through the old address on the registration document and print or type the new address on it and initial.

**Note:** A lienholder may submit a change of address on its business letterhead. The letter must clearly state “This is a request of legal owner change of address” and include the same information required on the DMV 14.

Legal owner/lienholder change of address requests submitted on a DMV 14 or the legal owner’s/lienholder’s business letterhead must be mailed to the address shown on the DMV 14:

DMV Change of Address
PO Box 942859
Sacramento, CA 94259-0001

**In Care of (c/o) Addresses**—May be accepted when an owner does not have an established residence or place of business or requests certificates be mailed to a temporary address. Enter the owner’s name(s)/address as follows:

John Doe
 c/o James Smith (key “c/o” and the name on the first address line)
 124 Anyplace
 Hometown, CA 12345
1.000 **Addresses on Documents, continued**

**Residence and Mailing Addresses in Different Cities**—When a vehicle owner’s residence is in one city and the mailing address is in another city, only the owner’s mailing address will be on certificates. Although both addresses are shown on the application:

- A DMV 14 showing the residence or business address and mailing address must be completed.
- Paper-clip the DMV 14 to the front of the application.

**Example:** The customer lives in San Geronimo, but has his mail delivered to a Woodacre Post Office (PO) Box. In this case, list both the mailing address in Woodacre and the residence address in San Geronimo on the application and on the DMV 14, but only the Woodacre PO Box will show on certificates.

**Mail Delivered Through a Post Office in a Different City**—When a vehicle owner’s residence is in one city but mail is delivered via a post office in another city, the name of the city with the post office will be keyed as the owner’s mailing address. Although both addresses are shown on the application:

- A DMV 14 showing the residence or business address and mailing address must be completed.
- Paper-clip the DMV 14 to the front of the application.

**Example:** The customer lives in Muir Beach, a town without a post office or mail delivery, so mail is delivered to the Sausalito Post Office. The addresses are listed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mailing Address:</th>
<th>Residence Address:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Star Route 5 Palm Dr. Muir Beach</td>
<td>5 Palm Dr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sausalito, CA 94965</td>
<td>Muir Beach, CA 94965</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this case, the customer would list the mailing address in Sausalito and the residence address in Muir Beach on the application and on the DMV 14.

**APO or FPO Military Addresses**—Overseas military mail must include the appropriate alpha designation with the APO or FPO address, as shown below:

- **AE**—Europe, Africa, Canada, or the Middle East (the first three digits of a zip code following the military mail codes are 090–098) **Example:** APO AE 090.
- **AP**—Pacific (962–966) **Example:** FPO AP 962.
- **AA**—Americas other than Canada (340) **Example:** APO AA 340.
1.000  **Addresses on Documents, continued**

**Mailing Address on Registration Documents**—Vehicle registration applications must include both the registered owner’s residence or business and mailing address, if different, but registration documents will be issued showing the registered owner’s mailing address only.

If an application indicates a mailing address only on the registration documents, the application must include:

- A Statement of Facts (REG 256) form completed by the customer requesting only the mailing address be shown on the registration documents.
- A DMV 14 completed by the customer showing both the residence or business address and the mailing address.

**Note:** Although the registration document contains both addresses, only the mailing address is keyed. Therefore, the DMV 14 is necessary to subsequently update the DMV database with the complete address information.

**PO Box or General Delivery Addresses**—If an application contains only a PO Box or General Delivery address:

- No other residence, business, or mailing address is available for the registered owner.
- A REG 256 explaining that they have no other address must be completed. If another address is available, complete the full address on the application.

**Note:** If a customer indicates a mailing address is a commercial mail receiving business such as The UPS Store, in the address field enter “PMB” and the box number next to the street address of the business.

**Leased Vehicles**
The vehicle must be located in California to be registered in this state. The lessor may show the lessor’s out-of-state address, if applicable. However, the application must include the lessee’s name and California address.

A Statement to Record Ownership/Statement of Error or Erasure (REG 101) form with the lessee’s address is required if the application does not contain a space for a designated lessee address.

1.005  **Adhesive Labels on Documents (CVC §§1653, 4150, and 4150.2)**

Do not submit registration documents that contain any kind of adhesive label.

- Remove the label or complete a new document.
- Submit a Statement to Record Ownership/Statement of Error or Erasure (REG 101) form or Application for Duplicate or Paperless Title (REG 227) form, as appropriate, depending on the condition of the title after the label is removed.
1.010 Assignment of Registration Expiration Date (CVC §506)

The expiration year on original registration applications is programmatically-calculated 12 months from the month fees became due, and the day is determined by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Fees Due</th>
<th>Expiration Date</th>
<th>Date Fees Due</th>
<th>Expiration Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st–7th</td>
<td>8th</td>
<td>18–19</td>
<td>20th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th–9th</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>20–21</td>
<td>22nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th–11th</td>
<td>12th</td>
<td>22–23</td>
<td>24th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th–13th</td>
<td>14th</td>
<td>24–25</td>
<td>26th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th–15th</td>
<td>16th</td>
<td>26–27</td>
<td>28th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th–17th</td>
<td>18th</td>
<td>Feb. 26–27</td>
<td>March 2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28–31</td>
<td>2nd of the next month</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Vehicles with a “Date Fees Due” date of December 28–31, are assigned the current asterisk (*) year for proper calculation of subsequent renewal fees.

**Exceptions:**
- Permanent exempt vehicles are assigned an expiration date of 12/31/2099.
- Annual exempt vehicles and IRP vehicles expire on 12/31 of each year.
- Partial-year registered (PYR) vehicles show only the expiration month/year.
- Partial-year registered (PYR) vehicles show the expiration month/day/00.
- Commercial vehicles expire on the last day of the expiration month.

**California fees become due on the:**
- Date of first operation shown on the Application for Registration of New Vehicle (REG 397) form or Application for Title or Registration (REG 343) form.
- Date the vehicle owner/operator becomes a California resident or accepts gainful employment here.
- Purchase date listed on the REG 343 for an original vehicle registration when the vehicle was purchased in California.
- Date the California registration expires.*
- First day a vehicle on planned nonoperation (PNO) status is operated.*

* The expiration date does not change as the result of renewal on a different date.

1.015 Authority to Grant or Refuse Applications (CVC §1653)

The department examines all documents and applications submitted and may require additional information or reject any document/application if not satisfied as to its authenticity or the truth of any statement contained therein.
### 1.020 Bill of Sale (CVC §1652)

A bill of sale, as referenced in this manual generally refers to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) form, but any bill of sale that identifies the vehicle/vessel is acceptable. For convenience, a bill of sale section was included on the Vehicle/Vessel Transfer and Reassignment Form (REG 262) available from the supply warehouse and not online. This does not prevent use of the Bill of Sale (REG 135) form, available on the DMV website only and not from the supply warehouse. A bill of sale must accurately establish the chain of ownership and is:

- **Not** required to be notarized or witnessed.
- **Not** required for sales between California-licensed dealers.
- **Not** required for dealer sales to a retail purchaser when the title is properly endorsed.
- **Acceptable** in lieu of the registered owner’s release signature on the title. Print “B/S” on the registered owner release line.
- **Acceptable** on multiple transfers in lieu of an in-between buyer’s signature on the title. The printed name of the in-between buyer must appear on the title.

**Note:** A photo or fax copy of the REG 262 form is not acceptable, even when used solely for assigning power of attorney.

### 1.025 Branded Titles (CVC §§4453, 9255.1)

Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) records and documents issued for a California or nonresident vehicle previously classified as a junk, salvage, police, grey market, taxi, warranty return, or currently classified as a park trailer must be marked with one of the following brands:

- **Grey Market (Non-USA)**—Vehicles manufactured for use and sale outside the United States which have been converted to meet federal and California safety and emissions standards.
- **Original Police or Prior Police**—Vehicles formerly used by law enforcement and which usually have high mileage.
- **Original Taxi or Prior Taxi**—Vehicles formerly used “for hire” which usually have high mileage.
- **Park Trailer**—Vehicles classified as park trailers, as defined in the California Health & Safety Code §18009.3.
- **Remanufactured**—Vehicles constructed by a licensed remanufacturer and consisting of used or reconditioned parts. These vehicles may be sold under a distinctive trade name.
- **Salvaged**—Vehicles marked with a “Salvaged” brand were involved in an accident or incurred considerable damage from another source, such as a flood or vandalism. This brand also includes previously dismantled (junk) vehicles.
- **Warranty Return (Lemon Law Buyback)**—Vehicles which have been returned to the manufacturer under California’s Lemon Law.

A prior history service fee is collected only for initial issuance of branded documents. Refer to Appendix 1F for fees.
1.030 Confidentiality of Home Address (CVC §§1808.2, 1808.4, 1808.6, and PC §830)

California statutes authorize home address confidentiality, when requested, for designated persons, their spouses, and children on any vehicle, vessel, off-highway vehicle, driver license, or identification card (DL/ID) for Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) records reflecting the qualified person’s name.

- The requester must submit a properly completed Request for Confidentiality of Home Address (INV 32) form to the employing agencies, for the DL/ID and each vehicle/vessel (newly purchased or transferred to) that contains the qualified person’s name as the registered or legal owner.

- A new INV 32 is required every time a qualified person’s name is added to or deleted from a registration record.

The employing agency is responsible for submitting the INV 32 to DMV and for notifying the DMV when an employee retires, resigns, is dismissed, leaves the agency’s employment. Retired peace officers’ home addresses are permanently withheld, upon request, at the time when the confidential status would otherwise be removed.

1.035 Co-Owners (CVC §§4150.5 and 9852.5)

A vehicle or vessel may be owned by two or more co-owners. Co-owner names may be joined by “and,” “and/or,” or “or.” All owners must endorse the title or registration application to register the vehicle/vessel, but the requirements for releasing ownership vary. Refer to Chapter 11.

**Note:** Certificates issued for applications not indicating “and” or “or” between the names will show “and” as represented by a slash (/) between the names.

- The signatures of all owners are required to transfer ownership when the co-owner names are joined by “and.” Ownership passes to the surviving co-owner upon the death of a co-owner or, with the surviving co-owner’s release, to a new owner. A deceased co-owner’s interest may only be released by one of the following:
  - Heir of the deceased with an Affidavit for Transfer Without Probate California Titled Vehicle or Vessels Only (REG 5) form.
  - Administrator with Letters of Administration.
  - Executor with Letters Testamentary.

- The signature of only one owner is required to transfer ownership when the co-owner names are joined by “and/or” or “or.” A surviving co-owner’s signature on the title releases all owners’ interest unless “Tenants in Common” or “COMPRO” follows the co-owner’s names.

- A REG 5 cannot be used to circumvent the interest of a surviving owner when the vehicles is jointly owned by two or more persons and one of the owners is deceased. However, the surviving owner (if they are the heir) may complete a REG 5 to release the interest of the deceased owner. The California Certificate
1.035 Co-Owners, continued

of Title must be signed twice, once by surviving owner and once for the deceased owner countersigned by the heir. If owned jointly by two or more deceased owners, a REG 5 for the most recently deceased owner and a death certificate for each owner is required.

Tenants in Common—When “Tenants in Common” follows the names of co-owners, the interest of a deceased co-owner reverts to the deceased co-owner’s estate, not to the surviving co-owner. Ownership may be transferred with Letters Testamentary, Letters of Administration, or an Affidavit for Transfer Without Probate California Titled Vehicle or Vessels Only (REG 5) form.

COMPRO—When “COMPRO” (community property) follows the names of co-owners, ownership passes to the surviving owner after the deceased co-owner’s interest is executed by the:

- Heir of the deceased with a REG 5, if the estate was not probated.
- Administrator of the estate with Letters of Administration.
- Executor of the estate with Letters Testamentary.

Ownership may be transferred to a new owner with the surviving co-owner’s release.

JTRS—When “JTRS” (joint tenants with right of survivorship) follows the names of co-owners:

- All owners must release interest during the lifetime of the co-owners.
- Upon the death of an owner, interest is released by the surviving co-owner.
- A copy of the deceased owner’s death certificate must accompany the application.
- The signature of the surviving co-owner(s) on the title releases all owner interests.

TOD (Transfer on Death)—Refer to Chapter 11.

1.040 Definitions for Clearing, Suspense, and Incomplete Applications (RDF)

Clearing Item—an application that contains all required documents and fees and can be processed without further handling or verification by DMV headquarters.

Suspense Item—an application that needs further processing in DMV headquarters, such as issuance of special interest license plates or verification against the DMV headquarters record.

If submitting an application that requires further processing, include a screen print or Statement of Facts (REG 256) form explaining why.
1.040 **Definitions for Clearing, Suspense, and Incomplete Applications (RDF), continued**

Incomplete Application, also known as report of deposit of fees (RDF) (CVC §1651)–transaction used by DMV to collect fees on an incomplete application. The requirements are:

- All the documents and the receipt for the fees paid (RDF) are returned to the applicant, except:
  - Dealer and registration service transactions, which are returned to the dealer or registration service.
  - Applications submitted by a financial institution, which are returned to the financial institution.
- Full registration/renewal fees must be deposited on an incomplete application to avoid penalties; however, use tax may be paid when the application is cleared.
- If an applicant chooses to pay the use tax due when the application is cleared rather than when the registration fees are paid, no additional penalties accrue on the tax.
- License plates and stickers are never issued on an RDF.
- A Temporary Operating Permit (REG 19) is not issued, except as shown in Chapter 25.

1.045 **Designating Legal Ownership (CVC §§4150, 4150.2, and 4450)**

The name of the legal owner/lienholder or the word “none” and the initials of the person making the entry should be shown in the legal owner/lienholder information section on all registration applications.

Dealer Transactions– Dealer transactions must show the legal owner’s name or “none” with the initials of the person making the entry or the application will be returned to the dealer.

1.050 **Electronic Lien and Title (ELT) Program**

The ELT program provides an electronic ownership record on the DMV database in lieu of a paper title to the ELT lienholder and a (paper) registration card is issued to the registered owner.

ELT program lienholders are assigned specific name and address abbreviations which must be used to generate a paperless title.

Enter the ELT lienholder information exactly as shown in the latest DMV ELT listing. If the ELT information is entered incorrectly:

- A paper title will be issued when an ELT lienholder’s name and address do not exactly match.
1.050 **Electronic Lien and Title (ELT) Program, continued**

- The paper title *must* be returned to DMV for correction, which delays issuance of a title record to the lienholder and may delay subsequent title transfers.

New ELT participants are added to the program quarterly. The current ELT listing is available on DMV website at [www.dmv.ca.gov](http://www.dmv.ca.gov) by clicking *Vehicle Registration*, then click on the *Industry Tools*.

Changes are transmitted electronically to DMV headquarters by the ELT lienholder and the information is processed as explained below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When the</th>
<th>Then the DMV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lien is satisfied by a dealer (upon trade-in for example)</td>
<td>Issues and mails a paper title to the dealer showing the dealer as the “legal owner.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lien/contract is purchased by a non-participating lienholder</td>
<td>Issues and mails a paper title to the new lienholder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lien/contract is purchased by another ELT lienholder</td>
<td>Creates and transmits a new ELT record to the new ELT lienholder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lien satisfied by the registered owner or record.</td>
<td>Issues and mails a sole-owner paper title to the registered owner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELT lienholder requires a paper title.</td>
<td>Issues and mails a paper title to the ELT lienholder upon completion of an Application for Duplicate or Paperless Title (REG 227) form.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average time to receive a paper title from an electronic transaction is eight days. An existing record status such as a pending report of deposit of fees (RDF) or suspense transactions prevents issuance of the title in the automated process. These are processed manually by the department.

The department’s ELT automated system allows ELT lienholders, also known as legal owners (LO), to:

- Obtain a paper title and/or release interest when there is a RDF on a vehicle’s record.
- Change a registered owner’s (RO) address when releasing interest in a vehicle to the RO.

ELT transactions generate a title and/or registration card and update the vehicle’s record with the new information. It will not clear the pending RDF from the system.
1.055 Highlighters on Documents

Highlighters may be used on documents, however, they should be used sparingly:

• If it is necessary to mark a document or form to clarify to the customer where a signature or information is required, highlight the “X” beside the signature line or the area underneath or above, not the entire space.

1.060 Junk or Salvage Vehicle VIN Inspections (CVC §§5505 and 11519)

Prior to being registered for on-highway use, a vehicle previously junked or salvaged in California or another state (nonresident vehicle) must be inspected by an authorized DMV employee or referred to the California Highway Patrol (CHP) for inspection.

• All revived junk or salvage applications are subject to the CHP Inspection Fee.
• CHP normally issues a Certificate of Inspection (CHP 97C) after the inspection is completed, which must be submitted with the vehicle registration application.
  — Additional verification is not required.
  — If appropriate, the CHP may complete a Verification of Vehicle (REG 31) form or an Application for Assigned VIN Plate (REG 124) form in lieu of the CHP 97C.

1.065 Leased Vehicles (CVC §4453.5)

Leased vehicle registration application requirements are:

• The names of both the lessor and the lessee must be shown. The lessor is required to provide the lessee name and address.
• The vehicle must be located in California to be registered here. The lessee’s address must be in California if the lessor’s address is not. An application with a lessee address in another state or country is not acceptable.
• The lessor’s name is followed by LSR and the lessee’s name is followed by LSE. The names are not joined by “and” or “or.”

  Example: Jay Street Leasing, LSR
  John Doe, LSE

• The lessor is the registered owner and must sign the application as such. The lessee’s signature is optional.

  Note: A repossession fee is not due for a leased vehicle repossessed by the lessor and then leased to another lessee.
1.070 Legibility of Writing or Lettering

The quality of the certificate issued depends primarily on the legibility and accuracy of the information entered on the application.

- Information on most documents may be typewritten, computer-generated, or hand-printed.

- If hand-printed, the department prefers that only upper case block letters are used except for the following letters which should be handwritten in script or cursive to avoid confusion/error.

1.075 License Plates (CVC §§4850 and 4850.5)

License plates serve as registration indicia, identify the type of registration (passenger, commercial, trailer, etc.), and provide a means of locating the vehicle owner through DMV files. For information regarding California automobile, motorcycle, and trailer license plates issued from 1914 through 1969 and commercial license plates issued from 1914 through 1972, see Appendix 1E.

Trailers, motorcycles, special equipment (SE), tow dollies, and commercial truck tractors with a TR, DR, or DS body type model are issued one license plate. All other vehicle types registered in California are issued two license plates except apportioned vehicles base-plated in another state, which are issued only a sticker.

Truck tractors must have the license plate attached to the front of the vehicle. Truck tractors assigned special interest license plates, the license plate with the stickers must be attached to the front of the vehicle and the other license plate destroyed.

**Exception:** Truck tractors defined as cotton module movers (CVC §§36012, 36101) and issued an SE identification plate are exempt from the vehicle license and weight fees, but are subject to the registration and CHP fees on an annual basis. See Chapter 16 for special equipment and Appendix 1F for fees.

**Undesirable License Plate Configurations**—Vehicle owners who request issuance of substitute license plates to replace an undesirable license plate configuration may be issued replacement license plates for no fee. Refer to Chapter 20 for substitute license plates.

**Surrender of License Plates**

Any license plate(s) currently assigned to a vehicle must be surrendered to DMV when new license plates are issued for the vehicle.

**Exception:** Retention of special interest license plates (plate-with-owner) by the license plate owner as authorized by statute for that license plate type.
1.075 **License Plates, continued**

Central License Plate Issuance (CLPI) Program—A central issuance facility in Sacramento issues and mails the majority of license plates, stickers, and registration cards submitted by mail and as bundle items. The central inventory file is transmitted electronically every night to DMV headquarters and the registration cards are printed.

**Exception:** License plates for vehicles being registered to rental companies that request immediate license plate issuance, leasing companies at the lessor’s address when the lessor requests issuance of the license plates for personal delivery to the lessee, and hardship cases may be issued in the field office.

1.080 **Lost Mail Applications**

DMV may process an application mailed during a penalty-free period and lost in the mail without penalties using replacement documents.

The applicant must submit:

- A Statement of Facts (REG 256) form regarding mailing of the application.
- Any registration fees due.

1.085 **Mail Applications (CVC §9557)**

The post office cancellation date (postmark) is considered the “mailed date” for an application addressed to DMV or authorized motor club and placed in the U.S. mail or any U.S. Postal Service maintained postal box.

1.090 **Name and/or Address Too Long**

The registered or legal owner name or address will be abbreviated when the information exceeds the space limitations of the DMV automated system. If there is insufficient room:

- “Doing business as” (DBA) will not be recorded on the document.
- Only the name of the trust will appear on the printed document.
- Only the appropriate abbreviations are being used.
- Three lines for individual and/or company names or addresses will be used.
- The name or address of an individual and/or company will be split.
- Two names will be placed on one line.
1.095 Name Statement Requirement (CVC §1652)

The Name Statement section of a Statement of Facts (REG 256) form must be completed when an applicant’s printed name and signature are so different that it appears to be two different people. A name statement is not required for signatures containing less than the printed name.

Signature examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If the Printed Name Is</th>
<th>And the Signature Is</th>
<th>Then a Name Statement Is</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Donald Smith</td>
<td>• Joe D. Smith</td>
<td>Not required. It is DMV’s policy to accept an individual’s usual signature. Only question an applicant if the signature does not resemble the printed name in any manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Joseph Smith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• J. Donald Smith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Another variation of the first and middle name(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Includes a suffix such as Jr. or Sr.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.J. Doe Metal Co.</td>
<td>James Metal Co.</td>
<td>Required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia D. Smith</td>
<td>Denise Smith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.100 Notary—Expiration Date of Commission on Documents

A California notary’s commission expiration date is required for notarized signatures on the Application for Duplicate or Paperless Title (REG 227) form, including an Electronic Lien and Title (ELT) transfer. Accept an out-of-state notary’s stamp as submitted. Refer to Chapter 20 for additional information. California notaries public must use a notary acknowledgement statement on which the notary public verifies only the identity of the individual who signed the document and not the truthfulness, accuracy, or validity of the document.

1.105 Photocopy/Fax Copy of Documents (CVC §1651)

A photocopy and fax copy are considered the same by DMV. If DMV procedures authorize acceptance of a photocopy, a fax copy is also acceptable. Photocopies or fax copies of documents and/or signatures other than those authorized are not acceptable.

Court Document—The original, certified copy, or photocopy of a certified copy of a court document is acceptable.

Manufacturer’s Certificate/Statement of Origin (MCO/MSO)—The original or a duplicate Certificate/Statement of Origin issued by the manufacturer is acceptable (not a photocopy).
**1.105 Photocopy/Fax Copy of Documents, continued**

**Power of Attorney**—A photocopy of a general power of attorney, including the Power of Attorney (REG 260) form, is acceptable. However, a copy of the Vehicle/Vessel Transfer and Reassignment Form (REG 262) is not acceptable, even if the form has only the Power of Attorney section completed.

**Registration Card**—A legible photocopy of the last-issued California registration is acceptable on all transactions except unavailable records.

**Title**—A photocopy of the title document is not acceptable.

**Vehicle/Vessel Transfer and Reassignment Form (REG 262)**—A photocopy of a REG 262 is not acceptable, even if used only as a power of attorney.

**Other Documents**—A photocopy or fax copy of a form may be accepted in lieu of the original, provided the information and signature on the form are original. Repetitive information, such as the same year model, make, and model, may be a copy when multiple applications are submitted.

A document altered from its original context and then copied is never acceptable.

Critical information such as the last digits of the vehicle identification number and signatures must be original.

**NOTE:** A copy of a signature is acceptable when an application must be reconstructed because it was lost within DMV or a dealer is out-of-business (DOB).

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**1.110 Q Series License Plate Numbers (CVC §4452)**

Q Series control numbers, similar to license plate numbers, are assigned and printed on the certificates issued for title only vehicles not previously registered in California, transfer only of previously exempt vehicles, and vehicles last assigned a plate-with-owner series license plate, such as an Environmental License Plate.

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**1.115 Registration by Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) (CVC §671)**

Vehicles are primarily registered by the manufacturer-assigned VIN which is die-stamped into the vehicle frame or stamped on a plate attached to the vehicle body. The certificate of title and registration card contain the VIN.

**Second Stage Manufactured Vehicles**

When a vehicle is completed by adding a structure/equipment (second stage) to an incomplete vehicle (first stage), the VIN of the first stage is used for registration purposes; however, the year model, make, and body type are determined by the second stage.

**EXAMPLE:** A 2009 Ford chassis has a 2010 Fleetwood motorhome body attached. The registration would correctly show 2010 Fleetwood motorhome with the 2009 Ford VIN.
1.120  **Rush Title Processing (CVC §9270)**

A “rush title” is the expedited issuance of a California Certificate of Title for an additional fee.

An application will be processed within 72 hours (three business days, not including Saturday, Sunday, and holidays) when:

- A “rush title” is requested.
- A properly completed application for initial registration, transfer of ownership, or duplicate title is received in the Special Processing Unit in DMV headquarters.
- All fees due are paid.
- There are no stops or conditions which will prevent issuance of the title.
- A nonrefundable fee is paid for this service, in addition to all other fees due. Refer to Appendix 1F for fees.

Mail “rush titles” to:

Department of Motor Vehicles
Rush Title Processing, MS H825
2570 24th St.
Sacramento, CA 95818

1.125  **Signature by Power of Attorney (POA) (CVC §1652)**

A POA is a written document whereby one person (the principal) conveys to another the right to act for that person as attorney-in-fact. A POA may be used to release ownership on a title or bill of sale.

As referenced in this manual, a POA generally refers to a DMV form which is limited to vehicle/vessel transactions. However, the DMV also accepts a restricted POA (limited to a specific type of transaction, such as transfer of ownership) or a general POA (conveys the right to transact unlimited types of transactions).

For convenience, a Power of Attorney section was included on the Vehicle/Vessel Transfer and Reassignment Form (REG 262), but this does not prevent the use of the Power of Attorney (REG 260) form, which is available on the DMV website only.

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**Note:** A photocopy or fax copy of a general POA, including the REG 260 is acceptable. However, copies of the REG 262, a secure document that includes a Power of Attorney section, are not acceptable.

A POA **must:**

- Contain the vehicle/vessel identification number (VIN/HIN).
  
  **Exception:** A general POA will not contain a VIN/HIN.

- Contain the name of the designated attorney-in-fact.
- Be signed by the principal.
- Accompany applications signed by the attorney-in-fact.

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**Note:** When a business entity is the attorney-in-fact, the business name **must** be included in the countersignature. **Example:** Jim Smith by Uome Loan Company by John Brown as POA.
1.125 Signature by Power of Attorney POA, continued

Unacceptable Use of a POA—A POA cannot be used to:

- Sign a certification or Statement of Facts (REG 256) form attesting to the knowledge of the principal, except when the certification is regarding disposition of the original California Certificate of Title on an Application for Duplicate or Paperless Title (REG 227) form.
- Disclose odometer mileage.
- Reassign the right conveyed to the attorney-in-fact by the principal.
- Appoint an attorney-in-fact pursuant to a POA by executors or administrators.
- Assign the duties of a trust to an attorney-in-fact by a trustee. A trustee may assign specific duties to an attorney-in-fact, such as transferring a vehicle or retaining agents to advise and assist in the administration of the trust. A trustee cannot delegate all administrative duties. Therefore, accept only a restricted POA from a trustee, limited to a particular asset of the trust, or to a particular transaction.

1.130 Signature by Relative of a Military Owner (CVC §1651)

The registration application for a nonresident vehicle being registered to an owner who is in the U.S. Armed Forces may be signed by the owner’s spouse or other close relative. The procedure in such cases is:

- The individual’s signature must be countersigned by the relative and must indicate the relationship to the individual. Example: Mark Johnson by Mary Johnson, wife.
- Mark the application “Owner Member of Armed Forces.”

This procedure is applicable for the signature on the Non Resident Military Exemption Statement (REG 5045) form.

1.135 Signatures and Endorsements (CVC §§ 17, 19, 5751)

DMV Policy on Signatures

- Accept the usual signature of the registered or legal owner with omissions or additions to the printed name. See signature examples in the Name Statement Requirement section of this chapter.

- Individual’s usual signature with omissions or additions to the printed name is on documents. Signatures can be:
  - Handwritten.
  - A form of script or printing by hand unique to that individual. A REG 256 may be required stating this is the person’s usual signature.
  - A stamped signature of the individual’s usual signature. A stamped signature does not have to be countersigned. Acceptance of a stamped signature applies only to DMV documents; other documents may still require an actual signature.
1.135 **Signatures and Endorsements, continued**

**Individuals Doing Business As (DBA)**—The endorsement for an individual doing business as a company/business **must** include the individual’s signature. **Example:** If John Jones dba Jones Cooler Service is shown on the title, the signature as: John Jones, John Jones dba Jones Cooler Service, or John Jones dba Jones Cooler Service by John Jones are all acceptable.

**Company and/or Business Names**—The endorsement for a company or business name, including a leasing company, **must** include the company/business name and an authorized representative’s countersignature or initials. The DMV does **not** require proof that the person is an authorized representative of the company/business.

**Countersignatures**—A signature or initials only as the countersignature for a company or business on any document is acceptable. DMV does **not** require proof that the person is an authorized representative of the company/business.

**Signature by Mark**—A witnessed “signature by mark” is acceptable on a certificate of title from an applicant who cannot write. The witness must print the applicant’s name and sign his/her name next to the applicant’s mark. For release of ownership, the signatures of **two** witnesses **are required** next to the mark or on a sworn statement, such as a REG 256.

When an individual **cannot** place a mark due to the loss or loss of the use of his/her hands, verify the person’s identity (identification [ID] card, passport, etc.) and make the certification on the application.

Include a REG 256 with the application explaining why the individual’s mark is not present and the form of ID verified.

**Trusts**—Endorsements must show the name of the trust and be countersigned by:
- One trustee, if the vehicle is being put into the name of the trust.
- All trustees shown on the title, if being transferred out of the name of the trust.
- At least one trustee, if no trustees are shown on the title. A REG 256 must accompany the application indicating that the trustee signing was appointed as a trustee.
- At least one trustee for a release of a vehicle not registered in a trust. Ownership is determined by the decedant’s will as contained in the trust. Copies of the trust, a REG 256 and bill(s) of sale may be required.

1.140 **Statement to Record Ownership/Error or Erasure (CVC §1652)**

The Statement to Record Ownership/Statement of Error or Erasure (REG 101) form is a dual purpose form, which is used as shown in this section.
1.140 Statement to Record Ownership/Error or Erasure, continued

Statement to Record Ownership (REG 101) Form—Generally used to clarify the registered owner or legal owner name(s) and/or address. Co-owner names must be shown exactly as shown on the title/application document, including how the names are joined. The certificates for applications that do not show “and” or “or” between the names will be issued with “and” represented by a slash (/) between the names.

A REG 101 is also required on a leased vehicle application which does not have designated spaces for the lessee’s and lessor’s addresses. The REG 101 must accompany the completed application.

**Important:** The REG 101 is used to prepare the new certificates. Incorrect or inaccurate information on the REG 101 results in voided certificates and unnecessary corrections. The omission of legal owner information on the REG 101 is a costly error. Information for accuracy must always be checked.

Statement of Error or Erasure (REG 101) Form—Is completed when an error or erasure is made on the California or nonresident title. It must be completed by the individual who made the error/erasure.

**Note:** A dealer representative can initial a correction or erasure made on an Application for Registration of a New Vehicle (REG 397) and Report of Sale-Used Vehicle (REG 51) form except in the odometer section. Errors made in the odometer section of the REG 397 require a completed Vehicle/Vessel Transfer and Reassignment Form (REG 262). No Alterations or erasures can be made to a REG 262.

1.145 True Full Name (CVC §4150)

The true full name(s) of the registered and legal owner(s) are required on registration applications. The true full name is the complete, exact name used on legal documents, (such as a driver license/identification card [DL/ID]), and includes a person’s first name or initial, middle name or initial, and last name. The name must be sufficient to ensure ID of the owner.

An owner presenting an application in person must show his/her name exactly as it appears on his/her DL/ID.

**Note:** Do not key a title (**For example:** Sister Mary Elizabeth Morris) unless the individual certifies that it is part of his/her full name in the Name Statement section of a Statement of Facts (REG 256) form submitted with the application.
1.145 **True Full Name, continued**

**Company name**—is the complete, exact name used on legal documents, and includes any designation such as Inc., LLC, etc. **Do not** include the name of the person signing for the company.

**Vehicles registered to a trust**—must show both the name of the trust and the name(s) of all trustees.

- The wording of the name of the trust may vary and include dates, etc.
- Abbreviations may be used if approved by the customer.

**Example:** Johnson Family Trust UTD 062598
  Mary Lee Johnson Trustee
  Herman Ray Johnson Trustee

**Note:** The names of the trustees will not be keyed by DMV but must still appear on the titling documents.

1.150 **Unclaimed Certificates, Receipts, License Plates, and Stickers**

Certificates of title, registration certificates, receipts, license plates (other than special license plates), and stickers returned to DMV as “unclaimed” are destroyed. Unclaimed special license plates are retained at DMV headquarters.

1.155 **Vehicles Exempt from Registration**

The following vehicles are exempt from regular registration, but may be required to display special identification (ID), as shown:

**Aircraft Refueling Vehicles (CVC §4021)**

Vehicles designed or altered and used exclusively for the refueling of aircraft at a public airport, and operated upon a highway, under the control of a local authority, for a continuous distance not exceeding one-quarter mile each way to and from a bulk fuel storage facility.

**Cemetery Equipment (CVC §§4012 and 5011)**

A vehicle, implement, or equipment specifically designed or altered for and used exclusively in the maintenance or operation of cemetery grounds, which is only incidentally operated or moved on a highway.

Cemetery equipment must display a special ID plate if moved over a highway. See Chapter 16.

**Disaster Relief Vehicles (CVC §4005)**

A vehicle operated within a disaster area or region, for the purpose of assisting in disaster relief work, under a special permit issued by DMV for that purpose.
1.155 **Vehicles Exempt from Registration, continued**

The special permit is:

- Issued only if the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans), or the responsible local authority, has determined that the vehicle is necessary for such purpose.
- Valid only during a period of a state of emergency, as proclaimed by the Governor under the provisions of the California Emergency Services Act.

**Firefighting Equipment (CVC §4015, CCR §157)**

A privately-owned vehicle designed or capable of being used for fire fighting purposes and only operated upon a highway in responding to, or returning from, emergency fire calls such as firefighting vehicles privately owned and operated by an all-volunteer, nonprofit fire department in an unincorporated area. Vehicles that do not qualify under CVC §4015 must be registered.

The following privately-owned vehicles, when operated upon a highway only in responding to, and returning from, emergency fire calls qualify as fire fighting vehicles and are exempt from registration:

- Fire trucks equipped with hose and ladders.
- Fire engines.
- Other vehicles permanently-equipped with firefighting apparatus and equipment.
- A tank truck operated solely in conjunction with a fire truck, fire engine, or other self-propelled fire fighting apparatus.

Privately-owned vehicles or a combination of vehicles, which are not designed primarily for firefighting do not qualify as firefighting vehicles as defined above, including:

- Hazardous materials response vehicles.
- Dedicated rescue vehicles.
- Command post communications vehicles.
- Passenger vehicles.
- Buses.
- Mobile kitchens.
- Mobile sanitation facilities.
- Heavy equipment transport vehicles.

An Authorized Emergency Vehicle permit issued by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) must be obtained, if Code 3 equipment (red light and siren) is installed on a privately-owned firefighting vehicle.
1.155 Vehicles Exempt from Registration, continued

**Forklift Trucks (CVC §4013)**
A forklift truck, which is designed primarily for loading, unloading, and stacking materials, is:

- Operated upon the highway only for the purpose of transporting products or material across a highway in the loading, unloading, or stacking process.
- Not operated along a highway for a distance greater than one-quarter mile.

See Chapter 13 for additional information.

**Golf Carts (CVC §§345, 4019, 21115)**
A golf cart is a motor vehicle designed to carry golf equipment and not more than two persons, including the driver and:

- With no less than three wheels in contact with the ground, an unladen weight of 1,299 pounds or less, and designed to operate at no more than 15 miles per hour.
- A golf cart operated pursuant to CVC §21115 is exempt from registration.
- Registration requirements for a golf cart that becomes subject to regular registration are the same as the original or nonresident requirements for other motor vehicles.

**Hauled Vehicles (CVC §4009)**
A vehicle transported upon a highway with no part of which is in contact with the highway.

Refer to Chapter 15 for off-highway vehicle registration information.

**Logging Vehicles (CVC §§4018 and 5011)**
A logging vehicle is exempt from registration, but must display a special identification plate if moved over a highway.

Refer to Chapter 16 for information.

**Self-Propelled Wheelchairs, Invalid Tricycles, or Quadricycles (CVC §467)**
A self-propelled wheelchair, invalid tricycle, or quadricycle is a vehicle operated by a person who, by reason of physical disabilities, is otherwise unable to move about as a pedestrian.
1.155 Vehicles Exempt from Registration, continued

**Snowmobiles (CVC §557)**
A snowmobile is a motor vehicle designed to travel over ice or snow in whole or in part on skis, belts, cleats, or low pressure tires.

Refer to Chapter 15 for OHV registration information.

**Special Equipment (CVC §§565, 575, 4010, and 5011)**
Special construction equipment and special mobile equipment are exempt from registration, but must display a special identification plate if moved over a highway.

Refer to Chapter 16 for information regarding special equipment.

**Bicycle Program (CVC §§39000-39012)**
DMV procures and distributes bicycle license indicia and registration forms to cities and counties which have a bicycle licensing ordinance or resolution.

Fees for the indicia and registration forms are as follows:

- Bicycle License Plates—$97 per hundred.
- Bicycle Renewal Stickers—$15 per hundred (indicate expiration year).
- Bicycle Registration forms—$12 per hundred.

Mail a written request on agency (City or County) letterhead with payment to the Special Processing Unit in DMV headquarters at:

Department of Motor Vehicles  
Special Processing Unit, MS D238  
Attn: Bicycle Registration  
PO Box 932345  
Sacramento, CA 94232-3450

**Miniature Motorcycles**
DMV does not register vehicles known as mini choppers, pocket bikes, etc. These vehicles:

- **Do not** meet the definition of a motorized scooter because of their speed (CVC §406) and engine displacement (CVC §405).
- **Do not** meet equipment safety standards.
- **Cannot** be registered pursuant to CVC §4751d.

Advise your customers that these vehicles cannot be registered or operated on a public street.
1.160 Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) Plate Assignments
(CVC §4161)
DMV will assign and affix a VIN plate when required for original registration of the following vehicles:
• Trailers with an unladen weight under 6,000 pounds (except logging and auxiliary dollies).
• Trailer coaches.
• Special mobile equipment.
• Implements of husbandry.
• New motorcycles (except specially constructed [SPCNS] motorcycles).
• Snowmobiles (except when the VIN has been defaced or obliterated).

**Note:** All documents and requirements for the registration application must be complete before a VIN plate is assigned.

DMV refers all requests for assigned VIN plates on the following vehicles to the California Highway Patrol (CHP):
• SPCNS motor vehicles.
• Motorcycles (except new). (Older motorcycles registered by engine number only must be assigned a frame number by CHP before being registered with DMV.)
• Passenger vehicles.
• Commercial motor vehicles.
• Commercial trailers 6,000 pounds or more unladen.
• Logging dollies and auxiliary dollies.
• Snowmobiles (when the VIN has been defaced or obliterated).
• Volkswagen body changes.

CHP must verify a vehicle when:
• Its identity cannot be confirmed or there is a discrepancy between the public and alternate VIN.
• The public or alternate VIN has been altered or tampered in any way.
• The Federal Certification Label is missing or illegible, and an alternate VIN cannot be located.

1.165 Vehicle Verifications
DMV may require a physical inspection of a vehicle (verification of vehicle) prior to completing a vehicle registration application.
1.165 **Vehicle Verifications, continued**

A **verification of vehicle is always required for:**

- Registration of a vehicle last registered out of state. (see exceptions on the next page).

- Reregistration of a previous “junk” or “salvage” vehicle, unless the application contains a CHP Certificate of Inspection (CHP 97C) form.

- Registration of a specially constructed (SPCNS) motor vehicle or trailer.

- A vehicle for which DMV does not have a record, except a new vehicle reported sold by a licensed California dealer on an Application for Registration of a New Vehicle (REG 397) form.

- Recording an engine change, motorcycle engine case change, or change from engine number to vehicle identification number (VIN).

- Assignment of an identifying VIN number by DMV.

- When the VIN shown on certificates is different from the VIN shown on record. (including vehicles being junked).

A **verification of vehicle is not required for:**

- A new trailer purchased in another state and eligible for registration under the permanent trailer identification (PTI) program, provided:
  — The trailer has never been registered.
  — The trailer has not been modified, altered, or assembled from a kit.
  — A secure manufacturer’s certificate/statement of origin (MCO/MSO) is submitted for the complete trailer.

- A new commercial vehicle purchased in another state as a complete vehicle or as an incomplete vehicle to which a new body was added to make a complete vehicle, provided the vehicle:
  — Has never been registered or issued International Registration Plan (IRP) registration in California or was issued IRP registration within the last 60 days only.
  — Has not been modified, altered, or assembled from a kit.
  — Has an unladen weight of 6,001 pounds or more.
  — Meets California emission standards.

**Note:** A verification of vehicle **is required** for a vehicle that does **not** meet California emission standards.
1.165 Vehicle Verifications, continued

Authorized Vehicle Verifiers are:

- DMV employees.
- Peace officers including military police (California Penal Code §830).
- Employees of auto clubs that provide registration services.
  — Auto club verifiers must include the abbreviation of their auto club name with their signature.
- Persons licensed as vehicle verifiers by DMV.
  — Licensed vehicle verifiers cannot do VIN inspections for revived salvage, revived junk, SPCNS vehicles, or motorcycles with an unavailable California record (last registered in California but a record no longer appears on the DMV database).

Form Completion

The verification of a vehicle is always completed on the Verification of Vehicle (REG 31) form unless an Application for Assigned Vehicle Identification Number Plate (REG 124) form is required.

See the Vehicle Verifier License Handbook for instructions and note:

- Verifications of incomplete or unassembled vehicles (parts) are not acceptable. For an electric motorcycle, the serial number on the electric motor will be used as the engine number.
- Emission label verification for nonresident vehicles may be completed by an authorized vehicle verifier or peace officer.
- The federal safety label is used as a second source of public VIN verification. When missing or illegible, an alternate, accessible VIN must be located by a DMV employee.

**Exception:** Off-highway vehicles may not have a federal safety label but may be processed if the VIN has not been altered.

- All descriptive information requested on the form must be physically inspected and completed, except:
  — Axles—completed only for commercial vehicles and trailers other than camp trailers or trailer coaches.
  — Estimated weight—completed only for trailers other than camp trailers or trailer coaches.
  — Length/width—completed only for camp trailers, trailer coaches, and motor homes.
1.170 VIN Check-Digit Requirements

Refusal of Registration

Federal statutes require DMV to refuse registration of a new vehicle (including a trailer) which does not pass check-digit.

- Vehicles not manufactured for on-highway use which do not pass check-digit, and do not meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) are prohibited from on-highway registration in California.

- If the VIN does not pass check digit and the vehicle is:
  - An off-highway vehicle (OHV) or a vehicle incidentally operated on the highway, the check-digit requirement may be bypassed and the application processed.
  - Not an OHV or a vehicle incidentally operated on the highway, the application will be returned. The submitter must verify the VIN on the application with the VIN assigned to the vehicle and:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If the VIN</th>
<th>Then</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Was entered incorrectly on the application</td>
<td>Correct the VIN and resubmit the application.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Agrees with the VIN on the vehicle | • Contact the vehicle manufacturer regarding the VIN. (A manufacturer that incorrectly computes a VIN must notify the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration [NHTSA] with the incorrect VIN and what the VIN should have been and provide the dealer with a copy of the letter sent to NHTSA).
  • Resubmit the application with the copy of the letter sent to NHTSA. |

Caution: Some vehicles with MSOs, such as Diahatsu and Kawasaki, do not pass check-digit because they do not meet EPA or NHTSA standards. These vehicles can only be registered as OHVs.
1.170 VIN Check-Digit Requirements, continued

| NOTE: DMV will waive the administrative service fee (ASF) or registration penalty accrued when the application is cleared, if the original application was received within 20 days of the date of sale. |

NHTSA’s address is:
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Vehicle Safety and Standards
NEF-1, Rm 5321
400 7th St. SW
Washington, DC 20590

1.175 17-Digit VIN on Vehicles (FMVSS Regulations, Part 565)

A 17-digit VIN that passes check digit is required on all 1983 and newer year model motor vehicles and all 1985 and newer year model trailers.

| EXCEPTIONS: Certain motor vehicles incidentally operated on a highway, such as special equipment (SE), off-highway vehicles (OHV), and park trailers, are not required to have a 17-digit VIN. This does not include “yard trucks.” Yard trucks must have a complying 17-digit VIN to be registered, titled, or operated on-highway, off-highway, or as SE. |

Refusal of Registration Required—Federal statutes require DMV to refuse registration of a new vehicle which does not pass check-digit. Most vehicles manufactured for on-road use in the U.S. have a 17-digit VIN. Manufacturers compute the VIN using a mathematical formula obtained from the Society of Automotive Engineers.

Manufacturers of vehicles incidentally operated on the highway may request 17-position VIN assignments from the Society of Automotive Engineers at:
Society of Automotive Engineers
400 Commonwealth Dr.
Warrendale, PA 15096-0001
[www.sae.org](http://www.sae.org)
1-877-606-7323
(724) 776-4841 ext. 427