

CHAPTER 14

PERMANENT TRAILER IDENTIFICATION (PTI)

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CHAPTER 14

PERMANENT TRAILER IDENTIFICATION (PTI)

14.000 Introduction

Under the PTI program, trailers are issued a PTI license plate and a permanent identification card rather than regular trailer plates.

NOTE: During conversion to the PTI program (starting with registrations that expired 12/31/2001), trailer owners were allowed to retain their existing trailer license plate or be issued new PTI plates. Those owners may exchange the retained trailer license plate for a PTI license plate at no charge.

Additional Information

- Partial Year Registration (PYR) is **not** available for trailers.
- Permanent Fleet Registration (PFR) is **not** available for trailers.
- Trailers **cannot** be registered under the International Registration Plan (IRP)
- The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) will issue a (new) PTI license plate, if requested, and/or the PTI identification card (in lieu of a registration card). PTI owners may retain the trailer plate or special interest plate on the PTI trailer **or** place personalized plates on a PTI trailer. (Renewal fees will include any special plate fees due).

14.005 Definitions

The following trailers are registered under the PTI program.

Auxiliary Dolly (CVC §225)—A vehicle, **not** designed for carrying persons or property on its own structure, which is constructed and used in conjunction with a semi-trailer to support a portion of the weight of the semi-trailer and any load. It is **not** permanently attached to the semi-trailer, although part of the weight of the dolly may rest on another vehicle.

B-Train Assembly—A rigid frame extension attached to the rear frame of a semi-trailer which allows a fifth-wheel connection point for a second semi-trailer.

Camp Trailer (CVC §242)—A vehicle, other than a motor vehicle, designed to be towed on the highway, capable of human habitation for camping or recreational purposes, that **does not exceed** 16 feet in overall length from the foremost point of the trailer hitch to the rear extremity of the trailer body and 96 inches in width. Where a trailer telescopes for travel, the size shall apply to the trailer as fully extended.

NOTE: A tent trailer is a camp trailer. A camp trailer is **not** a trailer coach.

14.005 Definitions, *continued*

Fifth-Wheel Travel Trailer (CVC §324)—A vehicle designed for recreational purposes to carry persons or property on its own structure and so constructed as to be drawn by a motor vehicle by means of a kingpin connecting device.

NOTE: Fifth-wheel travel trailers that exceed the maximum length and/or width requirements for a camp trailer (CVC §242) are trailer coaches (CCH) (CVC §635) and **cannot** be registered under the PTI program.

House Dollies—Dollies for moving houses, other than those with drawbars for direct towing, **are not** subject to registration. House dollies equipped with drawbars are subject to registration as trailers.

Jeep Trailer or Converter Gear—A vehicle with one axle, two or four wheels, and a fifth-wheel. It connects onto the fifth-wheel of a truck-tractor and supports and distributes the front end weight of a semi-trailer between the truck-tractor and the jeep. A jeep trailer is registered in the same manner as any other semi-trailer.

Logging Dollies (CVC §378)—A vehicle designed for carrying logs, having one or more axles (multiple axles cannot be more than 54 inches apart), and used in connection with a motor truck solely for the purpose of transporting logs and securely connected with the towing vehicle both by a reach and by the load.

Modular Mobile Equipment Trailers—Trailers and semi-trailers modified by the addition of permanently-attached equipment requiring manual operation by a person, including mobile medical service trailers and television remote studios. Modular mobile equipment trailers are assigned a body type model of “MMETLR.”

Motorized Semi-Trailer—The same as a semi-trailer. The cost of the motor is included in the vehicle value/cost.

Miscellaneous Trailers—Unusual types of trailers, such as collapsible trailers which easily fit in a car trunk when not in use, and boats with wheels on the bow and hitches on the stern to enable them to be used as one-wheel trailers, are subject to registration if they fit the definition of a trailer or semi-trailer when in use.

Manufacturers and sellers of these vehicles (even if sold in kit form) **must** apply for special plates and certificates as required by CVC §11701.

Semi-Trailer (CVC §550)—A vehicle designed for carrying persons or property used in conjunction with a motor vehicle, and constructed so that some part of its weight and of its load rests upon, or is carried by, another vehicle.

14.005 Definitions, *continued*

Tow Dolly (CVC §617)—A vehicle towed by a motor vehicle and designed and used exclusively to transport another motor vehicle upon which the front or rear wheels of the towed motor vehicle are mounted, while the other wheels of the towed motor vehicle remain in contact with the ground.

A tow dolly is **not required** to be registered, but may be registered under the PTI program. Tow dolly operators who plan to operate their tow dollies in other states are encouraged to apply for PTI, as other states may require indicia on these specialized trailers.

NOTE: A tow dolly does **not** include a portable or collapsible dolly used as specified in CVC §4014.

Trailer (CVC §630)—A vehicle designed for carrying persons or property on its own structure and for being drawn by a motor vehicle, and constructed so that no part of its weight rests on any other vehicle.

Travel Trailer—A portable unit mounted on wheels, of a size and weight that does not require special highway movement permits when drawn by a motor vehicle and for human habitation for recreational or emergency occupancy (*California Civil Code §799.24*).

NOTE: Travel trailers that exceed the maximum length and/or width requirements for a camp trailer are trailer coaches (CCH) (CVC §635) and **cannot** be registered under the PTI program.

Utility Trailer (CVC §667)—A trailer or semitrailer used solely for the transportation of the user’s personal property, not in commerce, or designed and used for transportation of livestock, and **does not** exceed a gross weight of 10,000 pounds or a manufacturer’s gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 10,000 pounds.

NOTE: The addition of living quarters to a trailer **does not** permanently alter that vehicle for human habitation. The living quarters are secondary or incidental to the primary function of the vehicle, which is transporting property.

VIN Assigned (CVC §4166)—Some trailers and semi-trailers do not have factory vehicle identification numbers (VIN). Refer to VIN Plate Assignments section in Chapter 1 for procedures.

14.010 Maintenance Service Fee or PNO Every Five Years

Trailers registered under the PTI program are not subject to annual registration. However, the owners of trailers registered under the PTI program are required to either pay a maintenance service fee **or** file a Planned Non-Operation Certification (PNO–REG 102) form every five years, starting with registrations expiring on or after December 31, 2006, to retain the PTI record on file with the department. Refer to Appendix 1F for fee amounts.

14.015 Original Registrations

Document requirements for **original** registration are the same, **except**:

- A weight certificate is **not** required. The vehicle owner, lessee, or the dealer selling the trailer may certify to the trailer's unladen weight on the Application for Registration of New Vehicle (REG 397) form or Statement of Facts (REG 256) form.
- A completed Permanent Trailer Identification (PTI) Certification (REG 4017) form is required.
- The nonresident service fee **is not** collected.

Note: The PTI fee may be posted for any PTI trailer entering this state that is not licensed, registered, titled, or issued identification, and which will be placed into dealer inventory to be sold **or** a Nonresident Commercial Trip Permit (REG 41) may be purchased. This allows the trailer to enter the state without PTI registration in the dealer's name (which prevents sale as a new trailer).

14.020 Permanent Trailer Identification (PTI) Certification (REG 4017) Form

The REG 4017 is a two-sided form used for trailers registered in the PTI program as follows:

- **Side A** is completed and signed by sole owners requesting a paper title.
- **Side B** is an application for:
 - Transfer of ownership of a PTI trailer if a paper title was **not** issued (excluding ELTs). The transfer may be a registered owner transfer or a release of lienholder/legal owner (LO) only.
 - Adding a LO.

NOTE: An Application for Duplicate or Transfer of Title (REG 227) form **cannot** be used if a PTI paper title was **not** issued.

14.025 Title Options

A California Certificate of Title is **not** automatically issued to PTI trailers unless there is a lienholder/legal owner (LO), in which case a title is issued or an Electronic Lien and Title (ELT) record created. The registered owner (RO) (when there is not an LO) of a PTI trailer must request issuance of a paper California Certificate of Title by submitting a completed and signed REG 4017.

<i>If a</i>	<i>Then</i>
RO (when there is no LO) requests issuance of a paper title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The owner must complete and sign side “A” of the REG 4017. (A REG 256 may be used if a REG 4017 is not available.) Fees are due, including the title fee, and inventory is issued.
Title is not requested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees are due and inventory is issued. Do not collect the title fee in this case.
LO participates in the ELT program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees are due, including the title fee. (A PTI paper title will not be printed for the ELT lienholder, but the fee is due because a paper title will eventually be issued.)

14.030 Trailers Excluded

The following trailers are excluded from the PTI program and are subject to annual registration as usual:

- **Coach Boat Trailers** (body type model CCHBT)—A trailer coach with a hull and it may be registered as a vehicle/vessel (dual registration).
- **Park Trailers** California Health and Safety Code (**CH&SC §18009**) (body type model CCHPT)—A trailer designed for human habitation for recreational or seasonal use only; that contains 400 square feet or less of gross floor area; excluding loft area space if that loft area space meets the requirements of CH&SC §§18009.3(b) and 18033; is built on a single chassis; and may only be transported upon the public highways with a permit issued by the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) pursuant to CVC §35780.

14.030 Trailers Excluded, *continued*

Park trailers and manufactured homes should have a label or data plate identifying the construction standards followed as either:

- An American National Standards Institute (ANSI) label for park trailers, which are licensed and titled by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).
- A U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) data plate for manufactured homes, which are licensed and titled by the California Department of Housing Community Development (DHC).

The distinctions between a park trailer registered with DMV and a manufactured home registered with DHC are:

<i>Park Trailer</i>	<i>Manufactured Home</i>
Definition:	
A trailer meeting ANSI requirements is not a manufactured home.	A manufactured home meeting HUD requirements is not a park trailer.
Label/Data Plate Type:	
ANSI Label	HUD Data Plate
Licensed and Titled by:	
DMV	DHC (not DMV , regardless if the unit was previously registered by another out-of-state motor vehicle division).
Trailer Size:	
Less than 400 square feet of gross floor area not counting attached porches. Cannot exceed 14 feet in width at the maximum horizontal projection.	Over 320 square feet of gross floor area; more than eight feet in width and more than 40 feet in length.
Construction Standard:	
ANSI A119.5 Standard for Recreational Park Trailers.	HUD Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards.
<i>Park Trailer</i>	<i>Manufactured Home</i>
Label/Data Plate Issued by:	
Recreational Park Trailer Industry Association (RPTIA)	HUD (on the back of the unit)
Label/Data Plate Size:	
Optional	3" x 4"
Label/Data Plate Material:	
Adhesive	Red aluminum

14.030 Trailers Excluded, *continued*

Label/Data Plate Location:	
Exterior of the trailer, often by the front door.	<p>Manufactured after June 15, 1976. A HUD data plate should be located on the left rear of the unit.</p> <p>Manufactured before June 15, 1976. A California label should be located on the left rear of the unit.</p>
Additional Information:	
Park trailers do have a vehicle identification number (VIN), but no additional serial number (SN) stamped into the front cross member of the chassis.	Manufactured homes do not have a VIN; instead, they have a SN stamped into the front cross member of the chassis. The HUD data plate will verify the: manufacturer’s name, trade/model name, year of manufacture, SN, and HUD construction code label and zone.

Both trailer types have a plate indicating the Manufacturer/Model/Year/VIN or SN as follows:

<i>Type</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Location</i>
Park Trailer	Usually 2” x 4”	Adhesive or metal	Near the electrical panel.
Manufactured Home	8 1/2” x 11” to 8 1/2” x 14”	Adhesive or metal	Inside the home, near the main electrical breaker box, usually in a nearby cabinet.
IMPORTANT: Park trailers do not qualify for PTI registration and are subject to annual registration fees.			

In addition to regular or nonresident park trailer registration requirements, **the applicant must** submit a Statement of Facts (REG 256) form stating:

- “This unit being registered is an ANSI park trailer and contains XX square feet and is XX feet in width at the maximum horizontal projection.” Cannot exceed 400 square feet of gross floor space, not counting attached porches, and cannot exceed 14 feet in width at the maximum horizontal projection.
- How they determined that the trailer is a ANSI park trailer (e.g., the ANSI data plate was present on the trailer at one time, but fell off during transport) if no data plate is identified in the Comments Section of the REG 31 and the gross floor space is less than 400 square feet.

14.030 Trailers Excluded, *continued*

The trailer must be moved by permit, so normally DMV will not be completing the Verification of Vehicle (REG 31) form.

NOTE: Many manufacturers make park trailers just under the 400 square foot size restriction (for example 396 square feet), and a manufactured home can be as little as 320 square feet; therefore, it is important to locate the identifying data.

- **Park Trailer Boats** (body type model CCHPTBT)—A trailer with a hull which may be registered as a vehicle/vessel (dual registration).
- **Trailer Coaches (CVC §635)** (body type model CCH)—A vehicle, other than a motor vehicle, designed for human occupancy or human habitation for industrial, professional, or commercial purposes, for carrying persons and property on its own structure, and for being drawn by a motor vehicle. A trailer coach **cannot** exceed 8 1/2 feet (102 inches) in width **or** 40 feet (480 inches) in length.
- **Travel trailers and/or fifth-wheel travel trailers** (CVC §§242 and 636) that exceed the maximum length and/or width requirements for a camp trailer are trailer coaches (body type model CCH) and cannot be registered under the PTI program .

NOTE: Converter gears and auxiliary dollies may be registered under the PTI program, but it is not required.

The maximum length limitation for **fifth-wheel trailer coaches** is 48 feet (576 inches) and the maximum width is 8 1/2 feet (102 inches).

Fifth-wheel travel trailers that do not exceed any of the following lengths may be registered, regardless of the date first sold or operated:

- All:** 48 feet in length from the kingpin point of the trailer to the rear extremity of the trailer.
- Single-axle:** 38 feet in length from the kingpin to the rearmost axle.
- Two or more axles:** 40 feet in length from the kingpin to the rearmost axle.

NOTE: A kingpin is the main vertical bolt that locks the fifth-wheel to the semi-tractor or pickup truck.

For original registration of a travel trailer that exceeds 40 feet (480 inches), but does not exceed 48 feet (576 inches), **the applicant must submit:**

- All regular registration requirements.
- A Statement of Facts (REG 256) form, which describes the vehicle and lists the length in Section G.

14.035 Transfers

The transfer requirements for PTI trailers are the same as for other vehicles, **except the applicant must submit:**

- If a paper title was **not** issued (excluding electronic lien and title [ELT]), a Permanent Trailer Identification (PTI) Certification (REG 4017) form **with side B** completed for transfer of ownership. A duplicate title fee is **not** due because a title was not issued.
- If a paper title was issued then lost, stolen, or mutilated, an Application for Duplicate or Transfer of Title (REG 227) form and the duplicate title fee (includes ELT records).
- If the new owner wants a paper title, a REG 4017 **with side A** completed and a PTI paper title fee.
- A transfer fee, in addition to any other fees and/or use tax due for the transaction.

Refer to Appendix 1F for fees.