

CHAPTER 7403

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

VEHICLE LICENSE PLATES

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7403.0100 DEFINITIONS.

Subpart 1. **Scope.** For the purpose of this chapter, the following terms have the meanings given them.

Subp. 2. **Division.** "Division" means the Driver and Vehicle Services Division of the Department of Public Safety of the state of Minnesota.

Subp. 2a. **Naval zero.** "Naval zero" means a symbol or character depicted by a zero intersected with a virgule.

Subp. 3. **Plate year.** "Plate year" means the first registration year of a multiyear issue plate.

Subp. 3a. **Plates.** "Plates" means either regular plates or special plates unless otherwise specified.

Subp. 4. **Registrar.** "Registrar" means the registrar of motor vehicles of the state of Minnesota.

Subp. 5. [Repealed, 17 SR 1892]

Subp. 6. **Regular plates.** "Regular plates" means standard issue, sequentially numbered and lettered plates.

Subp. 7. **Special plates.** "Special plates" means plates that are specifically selected by the applicant. Special plates include personalized plate combinations and plates that commemorate, signify membership in, or raise revenue for selected organizations.

Subp. 8. **Validation sticker.** "Validation sticker" means a license plate sticker, with a control number, which designates weight or expiration date.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 14.06; 168.12; 168.123; 168.125; 168A.24; 299A.01*

History: *17 SR 1892; 21 SR 330*

7403.0200 PURPOSE.

The purpose of this chapter is to implement and provide effective administration for issuing and transferring plates as provided by Minnesota Statutes, chapter 168.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 14.06; 168.12; 168.123; 168.125; 299A.01*

History: *17 SR 1892*

7403.0300 SCOPE.

The scope of this chapter is intended to be consistent with the provisions of Minnesota Statutes, chapter 168.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 14.06; 168.12; 168.123; 168.125; 299A.01*

History: *17 SR 1892*

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7403.0400 PLATES; FORMAT AND CONTENT.

Subpart 1. **Characters.** The characters displayed upon a plate may be only:

- A. the following uppercase letters: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, and Z;
- B. the following numbers: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9; and
- C. the naval zero.

Subp. 2. **Statutory specifications.** The plates must be manufactured with the paint color, character size, character type style, reflective material, and other specifications used by the division for vehicles registered under Minnesota Statutes, section 168.017, for the appropriate plate year.

Subp. 3. [Repealed, 17 SR 1892]

Subp. 4. **Characters limited.** Plates must have all of the following character limitations:

- A. Plates must have at least one full-size letter or number.
- B. Stacked characters must count as one full-size character. Stacked characters are two letters or numbers that occupy one space in which one letter or number is placed directly above the second letter or number.
- C. No characters other than those specified in subpart 1, items A and B, will be permitted on a personalized plate. Stacked characters are not permitted on a personalized plate. The naval zero will be restricted for use on amateur radio operator (ARO) special license plates exclusively.

Subp. 5. **Duplication.** No plate may be a duplicate of any current plate or a duplicate of any plate in a numbering system used by the division. The number one (1) and the letter I, or the naval zero, the number zero (0), and the letter O are deemed to be the same character and may not be duplicated to create new combinations. For example, TIM and T1M would be considered duplicates.

Subp. 6. **Division plate combinations.** No plate used or reserved by the division for a specific type of vehicle may be recalled from storage and destroyed in order that the combination may be issued again as a plate for another type of vehicle.

Subp. 7. **Spacing and hyphenation.** An applicant may elect to group characters by spacing or hyphenation on a personalized plate. Hyphens must not be used consecutively. A space or hyphen is not a character. However, hyphens and spaces must count toward the total number of characters allowed on a plate. Combinations of characters, spaces, or hyphens totaling more than seven will be rejected. Motorcycle plates are limited to six characters. If the total of characters, spaces, or hyphens is less than these limits, the division shall have the right to center the characters, spaces, or hyphens on the plate.

Subp. 8. **Unique symbols and weight designation stickers.** Unique symbols, determined by the department, and weight designation stickers may be required on a plate. A unique symbol or weight designation sticker is not a character. Unique symbols or weight designation stickers, when required, must count toward the total number of characters.

Subp. 9. **Multiple owners; special plates.** If the original application for a special plate is for a vehicle owned or leased by more than one person, at least one owner or lessee must sign the application.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 14.06; 168.12; 168.123; 168.125; 168A.24; 299A.01*

History: *17 SR 1892; 21 SR 330*

7403.0500 PERSONALIZED PLATE APPLICATION; CONTENTS, REVIEW.

Subpart 1. **Combination choices.** An applicant may submit up to three character combinations to be designated as a personalized plate. The division will determine if the first combination of characters has not been issued and is not of an obscene, indecent, or immoral nature or such as would offend public morals or decency. If the applicant's first choice

cannot be issued, the division will review, in the same manner, the other choices listed. If no plate can be issued, the application will be canceled and all appropriate fees will be refunded to the applicant.

Subp. 2. [Repealed, 17 SR 1892]

Subp. 3. **Reserved combinations.** Only those combinations of characters approved for manufacture and paid for will be considered reserved.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 14.06; 168.12; 168.123; 168.125; 299A.01*

History: *17 SR 1892*

7403.0600 REPLACING PERSONALIZED PLATES.

Subpart 1. **Loss, theft, destruction, or scheduled replacement.** In the event of the loss, theft, destruction, or scheduled replacement of the personalized plate issued, the registrar, upon receiving a written statement from the owner setting forth the circumstances, may issue a new set of personalized plates with the same combination of characters. The written statement must be on a form prescribed by the division.

Subp. 2. [Repealed, 17 SR 1892]

Statutory Authority: *MS s 14.06; 168.12; 168.123; 168.125; 299A.01*

History: *17 SR 1892*

7403.0700 [Repealed, 17 SR 1892]

7403.0800 REFUNDS FOR SPECIAL PLATES.

Subpart 1. **Conditions.** Prorated refunds of the application fee for special plates may be made if the owner returns the unused special plates to the department, within 45 days of original issuance as indicated on department records.

Subp. 2. **Reserved combinations.** When a refund is made, the combination of characters is no longer reserved.

Subp. 3. [Repealed, 17 SR 1892]

Statutory Authority: *MS s 14.06; 168.12; 168.123; 168.125; 299A.01*

History: *17 SR 1892*

7403.0850 RECALL OF PERSONALIZED PLATES.

If, as a result of a written complaint, the division considers a personalized character combination currently in use to be obscene, indecent, or immoral, the owner of the character combination must be notified, in writing, of the following:

- A. that a complaint has been received regarding the character combination;
- B. the nature of the complaint;
- C. that the division finds the complaint to be valid;
- D. the reason the division finds the complaint to be valid;
- E. that the character combination is no longer valid after 30 days from the date the notice was mailed; and
- F. that the owner of the plate is entitled to:
 - (1) a different personalized character combination for no additional fee; or
 - (2) a replacement regular plate for no additional fee and a prorated refund of the application fee if the personalized plate is returned within the first five years of original issuance, as follows:
 - (a) first year, 100 percent;
 - (b) second year, 80 percent;
 - (c) third year, 60 percent;
 - (d) fourth year, 40 percent;

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- (e) fifth year, 20 percent; or
- (f) sixth and seventh years, zero percent.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 14.06; 168.12; 168.123; 168.125; 299A.01*

History: *17 SR 1892*

7403.0900 SPECIAL PLATES ASSIGNMENT, RETENTION, TRANSFER.

Subpart 1. **In general.** Special plates, as specified in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 168, are assigned by the division to an owner for the exclusive use on the vehicle described in the application.

Subp. 2. **Transfer.** Special plates may be transferred to another vehicle owned by the applicant upon:

- A. written notification, on a form prescribed by the registrar, to the registrar;
- B. payment of the prescribed transfer fee as provided by Minnesota Statutes, chapter 168; and
- C. registration of the vehicle in Minnesota.

Subp. 3. **Election to transfer plates.** If an owner sells a vehicle to which special plates have been issued, the owner may elect to transfer the special plates with the vehicle to an eligible buyer or vehicle. Eligibility is determined by the particular provision in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 168, governing the issuance of the particular special plate. The buyer of the special plates shall submit the necessary information, on a form prescribed by the registrar, to verify eligibility for the special plates.

Upon transferring the special plates to an eligible buyer, the owner automatically assigns to the buyer the right to reserve that combination of characters and the right to any refund of the personalized plate fees.

Special plates are considered assigned to the buyer of the vehicle unless the owner elects to retain the plates according to the procedures in subpart 4.

Subp. 4. **Election to retain plates.** If an owner sells a vehicle to which special plates have been issued and elects to retain the special plates, it is the responsibility of the owner or the owner's agent to apply for regular plates before the vehicle is sold. However, the owner is not required to obtain regular plates before the vehicle is sold if the owner notifies the department, in writing:

- A. of the disposition of the special plates;
 - B. whether the owner will retain the rights to the plate combination; and
 - C. if the vehicle will be sold to:
 - (1) a junk yard, scrap yard, insurance company, or salvage pool because the vehicle was severely damaged or because the vehicle will be dismantled or destroyed;
 - (2) an out-of-state buyer and plates will be secured in the buyer's home state;
- or
- (3) a buyer who holds special plates for the buyer's own use.

Subp. 5. [Repealed, 17 SR 1892]

Statutory Authority: *MS s 14.06; 168.12; 168.123; 168.125; 299A.01*

History: *17 SR 1892*

7403.0950 RIGHTS TO PERSONALIZED PLATE COMBINATION.

An owner retains the rights to the personalized plate combination obtained only if the current registration is maintained. If the registration has lapsed for a period of at least one full 12-month registration year, the division may reissue the combination to any qualified applicant without notifying the previous owner. At any time during this year, the owner may

waive the right to the combination. The division may accept an application at any time, but will not reissue a combination until the full 12-month registration period has lapsed.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 14.06; 168A.24; 299A.01*

History: *21 SR 330*

7403.1000 [Repealed, 17 SR 1892]

7403.1100 [Repealed, 17 SR 1892]

7403.1200 DAILY SEQUENCING OF PERSONALIZED PLATE APPLICATIONS.

Each application for personalized plates will be date-stamped by the receiving office. In the central office, applications bearing the same stamped date will be selected at random and numbered in ascending order. Applications with the same date will then be reviewed and character combinations approved for manufacture pursuant to parts 7403.0400 and 7403.0500 in ascending numerical sequence.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 14.06; 168.12; 168.123; 168.125; 299A.01*

History: *17 SR 1892*

7403.1300 [Repealed, L 2003 1Sp19 art 2 s 79]

7403.1400 [Repealed, L 2009 c 21 s 2]