

Original Date: 05/06/1976

Revision Date: 08/27/2015

[Definitions](#)

[Customer Requirements](#)

[Front Counter CSR](#)

[Fraudulent or Questionable Documents](#)

[Contact](#)

POLICY	
Title: Evidence of Ownership To Title A Motor Vehicle	
Effective Date: May 6, 1976	Revision Date: October 10, 2012
Authority: Code of Virginia §§ 46.2-616 , 46.2-617 , 46.2-618 , 46.2-628 , 46.2-629 , 46.2-631 , 46.2-632 , 46.2-633 , and 46.2-1542	
<p>Policy: In the Commonwealth of Virginia, no person shall purchase, trade, exchange, or barter for a motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer knowing or having reason to believe that its seller has not secured a certificate of title, or knowing or having reason to believe that its seller does not legally possess a certificate of title to the vehicle issued to its owner.</p> <p>It is a misdemeanor offense for any person to sell, trade, exchange, or barter a motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer without first having secured a certificate of title for it or without legally having possession of a certificate of title for the vehicle issued to its owner.</p>	
<p>Exception:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sale of new vehicles by licensed motor vehicle dealers, distributors, and manufacturers. • The sale of a vehicle when the seller has a valid and assignable certificate of title issued by a jurisdiction other than Virginia. • As provided by law, the sale of a vehicle at public auction, by a court of record or local, state or federal law enforcement agency. • The sale of a vehicle by a nonprofit organization, licensed as a dealer, for the purposes of 46.2-1508.1. • When a licensed motor vehicle dealer issues a temporary certificate of ownership in accordance with 46.2-1542. 	

[Return to top of page](#)

DEFINITIONS

Certificate of title-For a motor vehicle, a certificate of title is a legal form, establishing a person or business as the legal owner of a vehicle. Vehicle titles in the U.S. are commonly issued by the state's motor vehicle department. Although not standardized from state to state, the title normally identifies the following information:

- Vehicle identification number (VIN),
- Make, model, and year,
- Odometer reading at the time of transfer of ownership,
- Name and address of the owner,
- Name and address of the lienholder, when applicable,
- Sale price, when applicable.

Fraudulent Document- A fraudulent document is considered to be any document that has been altered, fraudulently obtained, or is false, counterfeit, or otherwise non-genuine or illegitimate.

Manufacturer's Certificate/Statement of Origin (MCO/MSO)-A certificate of origin is a document provided by the manufacturer of a new motor vehicle, or its distributor, and is the first record of the vehicle's existence. The certificate of origin serves as the first ownership document and the link between the vehicle's manufacturer, distributor, franchised motor vehicle dealer, and the first retail purchaser. Although not standardized, the MCO/MSO normally identifies the same vehicle and owner information as listed for Certificate of Title, above. If an

MCO/MSO is misplaced before vehicle ownership is transferred, the manufacturer can issue a duplicate MCO/MSO.

Bill of Sale- A legal document made by a seller to a purchaser, reporting that on a specific date, for a particular sum of money, the seller sold to the purchaser a motor vehicle, identified by vehicle identification number, make and year, of which he had lawful possession. It is a written instrument which evidences the transfer of ownership from the seller to the buyer.

[Return to top of page](#)

CUSTOMER REQUIREMENTS

1. Submit Application for Certificate of Title and Registration in accordance with [VLIC-3.000](#).
2. Submit acceptable evidence of ownership:
 - Manufacturer's Certificate/Statement of Origin (MCO/MSO)
 - Virginia Certificate of Title
 - Out-of-state certificate of title
 - Out-of state registration card

In some cases, bills of sale and buyer's orders may be used in combination with other acceptable documents to prove ownership. Check with CSC management and refer to [Bills of Sale](#), for more information.

[Return to top of page](#)

FRONT COUNTER CSR

1. Review application for title in accordance with guidelines in [VLIC-3.000](#).
2. Review submitted evidence of ownership documents to ensure:
 - The document's are authentic by referring to the Authenticity Manual,
 - There are no erasures, no scribbled entries, no white out is used, and the title is not mutilated or unreadable in any way, etc.
 - The document(s) is not questionable or fraudulent,
 - If there is question about the evidence of ownership documents presented, refer to [FRAUDULENT DOCUMENTS](#) below:
 - Owners listed on title have printed and signed as seller,
 - Buyer(s) has printed and signed as buyer(s),
 - Odometer reading is clearly written or typed (no decimals or tenths of a mile are recorded),
 - Lienholder(s), if applicable, is clearly recorded,
 - A bill of sale accompanies the titling documents when the sale price of the vehicle is not written on the certificate of title or MCO/MSO, or for casual sales, if the sale price is determined too low by the system and the sale price is not written on the title by the seller.
3. Acceptable evidence of ownership documents to title a vehicle include:
 - Manufacturer's Certificates/Statements of Origin (MCO/MSO):
 - Use to transfer ownership of a new motor vehicle from the manufacturer/dealer to the first retail buyer.
 - MCOs/MSOs are for new motor vehicles and manufactured homes and are only used by dealers. An MCO/MSO is not acceptable evidence of ownership for casual sales between individuals.
 - Can be issued in the dealership's name, or assigned to the dealership by the manufacturer.
 - Must be assigned to the new owner(s) on the MCO/MSO.
 - Odometer reading must be properly disclosed on the MCO/MSO.
 - If the odometer reading is not disclosed on the MCO/MSO, it may be disclosed using the Odometer Disclosure Statement ([VSA 5](#)). Since this is the vehicle's first sale at retail it is not required to disclose the odometer using a secure odometer disclosure form.
 - Sale price must be recorded on the MCO/MSO or be accompanied by a bill of sale.
 - Virginia Certificate of Title
 - Use to transfer ownership of a used vehicle from the owner or dealer to the buyer.

- Reassign ownership of the vehicle from the seller(s) to the buyer(s) in the first reassignment section on the front of the Virginia title for casual sales.
 - If the customer has reassigned the vehicle using one of the dealer's reassignment sections on the back of the form in error, follow CSC manager directions for acceptance.
- Use the 2nd and 3rd reassignments on the back of the Virginia title to reassign ownership when the vehicle is sold by a motor vehicle dealer.
- Ownership must be assigned from the seller(s) to the buyer(s) using the appropriate fields on the title.
- Odometer reading must be properly disclosed on the title and, when the title is not available at the time a vehicle is traded to a Virginia dealer, on the VAD 70A, Secure Power of Attorney form (refer to [VLIC-3.520](#)).
- Sale price must be recorded on the title or be accompanied by a bill of sale.
- Out-of-state certificate of title
 - Use to transfer a used vehicle to Virginia that is titled in another jurisdiction, and
 - To transfer ownership of a used vehicle from the owner(s) to a buyer(s) in a casual sale, or
 - To transfer ownership of a used vehicle from the owner(s) to a buyer(s) when the vehicle is sold by a motor vehicle dealer.
 - Ownership must be assigned from the seller(s) to the buyer(s) using the appropriate fields on the title.
 - Odometer reading must be properly disclosed on the title and, when the title is not available at the time a vehicle is traded to a Virginia dealer, on the VAD 70A, Secure Power of Attorney form (refer to [VLIC-3.520](#)).
 - Sale price must be recorded on the title or be accompanied by a bill of sale.
- Out-of state registration card or a branch of the United States Armed Forces:
 - The registration card must be in the owner's name, and
 - Must be current or expired for less than one year.
 - A registration card is not acceptable alone as evidence of ownership for transferring the ownership of a vehicle from a seller to a buyer.
 - A registration card may be used to transfer a vehicle into Virginia that is currently titled in the owner's name in another state when the title is not available due to its being held by a lienholder, or for other reasons beyond the owner's control.
 - Owner will not receive a printed title until the out-of-state title is submitted to DMV.
 - or
 - May be used in combination with a submitted bill of sale as evidence of ownership to transfer ownership in cases where the state in which the vehicle is currently registered does not issue titles for the vehicle type (refer to [VLIC-3.555](#)).
- Foreign country source of ownership document
 - Use to transfer a used vehicle to Virginia that is currently titled or registered in another country in accordance with [VLIC-3.330](#),
 - or
 - To transfer ownership of a used vehicle from the seller(s) to the buyer(s).
 - Ownership must be assigned from the seller(s) to the buyer(s) in the appropriate fields on the title.
 - Odometer reading must be properly disclosed on the title.
 - If no odometer disclosure field exists on the ownership document, disclose the odometer reading following the guidelines in [VLIC-3.520](#).
 - Sale price must be recorded on the title or be accompanied by a bill of sale.
- Bill of Sale/Buyer's Order
 - Bills of sale alone are not valid evidence of ownership for vehicles sold in a casual sale between individuals.
 - Bills of sale may be used as evidence of ownership in combination with other forms of evidence of ownership in certain instances, including but not limited to:

- To establish or reestablish a vehicle record that has been purged from the system due to inactivity and the originally issued title is lost or otherwise unavailable (refer to [VLIC-3.445](#)).
- To establish a title in the system when the certificate of title, MCO, or MSO are lost or missing due to being unlawfully detained by another in possession of it, or for any other reason beyond a person's or dealer's control (refer to [VLIC-3.555](#)).
- To be used in combination with other available evidence of ownership to establish a title in the system when the state in which the vehicle is currently registered does not issue titles for the vehicle type (refer to [VLIC-3.555](#)).
- May be used to transfer ownership of a used vehicle when sold by a motor vehicle dealer when accompanied by required reassignment forms and powers of attorney (refer to [VLIC-3.320](#)).

4. Process title following the guidelines in [VLIC-3.000](#).

[Return to top of page](#)

FRAUDULENT OR QUESTIONABLE DOCUMENTS

1. Review all documents presented by the customer.

<<<<<REVISION

2. If CSC management, designee, or IR is reasonably certain, based on experience and training, that ANY or ALL of the documents presented by the customer are FRAUDULENT, refer to [LE-1.00](#) to determine who to contact and how to handle the paperwork. **END REVISION>>>>>**

[Return to top of page](#)

CONTACT

For additional information contact :

- Your CSC Manager/Assistant Manager
- DMV Customer Contact Center Help Desk at (804) 367-6646
- VSA/[Titling Work Center](#)