

Vehicle Licensing Guide

Illegible License Plates VLIC-4.505

Original Date: 07/08/1999

Revision Date: 05/10/2019

[Background](#)

[Customer Requirements](#)

[Front Counter CSR](#)

[DMV Customer Contact Center Actions](#)

[Points to Remember](#)

[Contact](#)

POLICY	
Title: Illegible License Plates	
Effective Date: July 8, 1999	Revision Date:
Authority: Code of Virginia §§ 46.2-607 , 46.2-692 , and 46.2-716	
Policy: DMV issues replacement license plates, upon application, to customers with license plates determined by law enforcement to be illegible; having one or more registration letters or numbers that are damaged, mutilated or faded beyond recognition.	
Exception: N/A	

[Return to top of page](#)

BACKGROUND

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Unreadable or non-reflecting license plates inhibit law enforcement's ability to protect public safety. License plates serve to assist law enforcement in identifying vehicles and act as reflectors enabling the vehicle to be seen better at night.

Va. Code § [46.2-607](#) requires owners with vehicles registered in Virginia to apply for and immediately obtain replacement license plates when any license plate becomes illegible. Illegible license plates are those plates with one or more registration letters or numbers that are damaged, mutilated or faded beyond recognition.

Law enforcement issues an Illegible Vehicle License Plate Notice ([VSA-28](#)) to vehicle owners when it is determined that one or both license plates displayed on the vehicle are illegible, as defined above.

Once notified, failure by the vehicle's owner to replace illegible license plates will prevent the renewal of that vehicle's registration and may result in license plate revocation in accordance with law. **END REVISION>>>>>**

[Return to top of page](#)

CUSTOMER REQUIREMENTS

- To comply the requirements of the Illegible License Plate Notice ([VSA-28](#)), submit:
 - Application for Registration" (re-issue) ([VSA-14](#)),
OR
 - Vehicle Registration Renewal Notice (VSA-2), requesting new license plates.
- Pay fee.
 - Prorated reserve and special license plate fees may apply based on the months left in the registration period.

[Return to top of page](#)

FRONT COUNTER CSR

- Verify completion of the application.
- Collect fees, when applicable (refer to [VLIC-4.615](#)).
 - No fee is due if replacing plates at time of renewal.
- Exchange, reissue, or issue new plates (reissue reason code "MU") based on the transaction applied for.
- Continue processing registration in accordance with [VLIC-4.000](#).

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DMV CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTER ACTIONS

- If the customer chooses to change the plate type, prorated reserve and special license plate fees apply according to the months left in the registration period.
- When applicable, the customer may comply with the [VSA-28](#) when the registration is renewed by choosing one of the options on the back of the bottom portion of the VSA-2. The reissue fee does not apply when replaced at renewal.
- The customer may return illegible license plates to DMV for recycling or keep them if they wish. The plates are not valid for use on any vehicle.
- The issuance of the [VSA-28](#) does not preclude taking any formal enforcement action pursuant to Va. Code § [46.2-607](#). These notices should not be issued to vehicles found displaying obscured plates, as defined in Va. Code § [46.2-716](#). **END REVISION>>>>>**

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Illegible Plate Stops are removed by the system from the vehicle file when new plates are issued.
- For customers who are not required by law enforcement to replace plates, CSR's are authorized to determine if a license plate is legible or not. Look at the plate and if one or more of the letters or numbers cannot be read, then it is illegible.
- License plates determined illegible must be replaced prior to renewal. If the plate is determined to be legible, the CSR will remove the "illegible plate stop".
- When transferring plates that have an illegible plate stop (ILLP), you get the error message, "M5295 STOP EXISTS - FURTHER PROCESSING NOT ALLOWED; title number ILLP.
- The message on the renewal notice for illegible plates will be "NEW PLATES ARE TO BE ISSUED." The invitation will have no plate number shown on it.

CONTACT

For additional information contact :

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