

Vehicle Licensing Guide

Correcting Vehicle Identification Numbers VLIC-3.455

Original Date: 04/01/1976

Revision Date: 04/10/2019

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POLICY	
Title: Correcting Vehicle Identification Number Discrepancies	
Effective Date: 04/01/1976	Revision Date: April 10, 2019
Authority: DMV Policy	
<p>Policy: <<<<<REVISION CSCs are authorized to correct Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) errors when the VIN error is determined to have been made by Virginia DMV, and all of the following is true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vehicle is titled in Virginia,• Customer presents a combination of proof documents that supports the fact that it was a DMV error,• Vehicle record, and transaction history in OnBase supports that it was a DMV error,• Corrected VIN verifies in the system, in NMVTIS, and through NCIC, and• VIN correction is approved by CSC management or designee <p>NOTE: Provided all of the above is true, the VIN error can be corrected by the CSC regardless of which character(s) is incorrect, and regardless of how many characters are incorrect, as long as any error being corrected is a Virginia DMV error.</p> <p>For customers applying for a Virginia title who submit a Virginia or out-of-state title with an incorrect VIN (not DMV error), DO NOT correct the VIN. The CSC may place a National Motor Vehicle Titling Information (NMVTIS) Held on the record to process the transaction and to issue the license plates and registration, provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No more than 2 VIN characters are incorrect,• None of the incorrect characters are located in the last 6 characters of the VIN,• Customer submits a combination of acceptable documents to prove the correct VIN, and• NMVTIS Held is approved by CSC management or designee. <p><<<<<REVISION NOTE: The CSC will scan all transaction and proof of VIN documents via Landing Zone to Titling Work Center for follow-up research and correction. END REVISION>>>>></p> <p>IMPORTANT: The only time a CSC is authorized to change any of the last six characters of a VIN is when it is determined that the discrepancy was the result of a Virginia DMV error. END REVISION>>>>></p>	
<p>Exception: <<<<<REVISION • When an out-of-state title has a VIN error that was originally made by VA DMV on a prior title, CSCs DO NOT correct the VIN. Once a vehicle is retitled out of state, the VIN correction must be made by the Titling Work Center at Headquarters (HQ).</p> <p>• DMV Law Enforcement (LE) VIN inspection and/or verification must be performed for VIN corrections if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ The discrepancy does not meet the criteria to qualify for a VIN correction, as listed in this procedure.OR◦ The vehicle was titled by the customer as a Mechanic's/Storage Lien or abandoned vehicle. END REVISION>>>>>	

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BACKGROUND

Pursuant to the Code of Federal Regulations, [Title 49, Chapter V, Part 565](#), each manufactured vehicle shall have a 17 character vehicle identification number (VIN) assigned by the manufacturer. For vehicles manufactured in more than one stage, a separate VIN shall be assigned by the manufacturer of the incomplete vehicle.

VINs for passenger cars, multi-purpose passenger vehicles, low speed vehicles, and trucks with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 10,000 lbs. or less will be made up of a specified combination of alphabetic and numeric characters that must be clearly and indelibly (permanently) displayed inside the passenger compartment and visible from outside the vehicle on the left-hand side of the windshield, or visible on the inside door frame.

VIN errors may be identified by customers, or detected in DMV's system when processing title transactions.

Some scenarios in which VIN errors can occur are listed below:

- The manufacturer assigns a VIN to a newly manufactured vehicle that contains incorrect characters, or characters that are placed out of sequence (incorrect check digits, vehicle model/make indicators, model year, etc.),
- VIN errors occurred in other states and are now being titled in Virginia,
- The VIN is keyed into the system incorrectly by DMV at time of titling in Virginia,
- A dealer or vehicle owner records the VIN number incorrectly on the title transfer documents at time of titling,
- A dealer sells one vehicle, yet provides the title to a different vehicle at time of titling (refer to [VLIC-3.425](#)).

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CUSTOMER REQUIREMENTS

1. Submit the Virginia Certificate of Title for a Motor Vehicle (VSA 3), or out-of-state title.
2. Complete and submit:
 - Application for Supplemental and Transfer Liens or Replacement and Substitute Titles ([VSA 66](#))
 - Change Registration-VIN-Business Name Application ([VSA 71](#))
3. Provide a combination of acceptable documents that support the VIN correction.

Acceptable Documents for VIN Correction ¹	
• Bill of Sale	• Pencil tracing of VIN
• Maintenance Record	• State inspection
• Odometer statement	• VIN inspection
¹ CSC management/designee may use discretion to determine what documents are acceptable to prove a correct VIN.	

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NOTE: Advise customers unable to submit acceptable proof of the correct VIN to mail the [VSA 71](#) and a combination of supporting documentation to the [Titling Work Center](#), or the CSC may offer to scan it via [Landing Zone](#) to the work center.
END REVISION>>>>>

4. Pay appropriate fee (when applicable).
 - No substitute title or registration card fee is charged if the VIN discrepancy is determined to be the result of a Virginia DMV error.

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FRONT COUNTER CSR

1. Collect the Virginia Certificate of Title for a Motor Vehicle (VSA 3), or the out-of-state title.
 - If a lien is on the record (not an elien), advise the customer he must contact the lienholder and request a temporary release of the lien (refer to [VLIC-3.615](#) for guidelines).
 - If there is an elien on the record, or the title has a HELD for another reason, proceed with processing as long as no date displays in the **TTL DOC DT:** field on the record, meaning no title was printed.
2. Verify completion of the:
 - Application for Supplemental and Transfer Liens or Replacement and Substitute Titles ([VSA 66](#)),
 - Change Registration-VIN-Business Name Application ([VSA 71](#)).
3. Verify that the applicant is the owner or co-owner of the vehicle, or has power of attorney granting legal authority to act for the owner.

4. Review and determine there is a sufficient combination of proof documents to support the VIN correction:

Acceptable Documents for VIN Correction ¹	
• Bill of Sale	• Pencil tracing of VIN
• Maintenance Record	• State inspection
• Odometer statement	• VIN inspection
¹ CSC management/designee may use discretion to determine what documents are acceptable to prove a correct VIN.	

5. Research and identify the source of the VIN error by inquiring on the correct and incorrect VIN using the following resources:

- OnBase records,
- Prior title records in the system,
- National Motor Vehicle Titling Information Service (NMVTIS),
- Contacting other state motor vehicle agencies.

NOTE: CSCs will research all VIN errors thoroughly to determine the source of the error.

6. In cases where there is limited documentation to support the correction, request approval from CSC management to do a physical VIN inspection, provided the following is true.

- The title is a Virginia title,
- There is limited or no documentation available to support the correct VIN due to the vehicle being older (i.e. no record in OnBase),
- No more than **1 or 2** VIN characters are incorrect,
- The incorrect character is NOT located in the last 6 spaces of the VIN (unless determined to be DMV error),
- The correct VIN cannot be verified using the standalone VIN inquiry in the system, and
- CSC management/designee authorizes the physical VIN inspection.

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- a. If CSC management/designee does NOT approve a visual verification of the vehicle's VIN, advise the customer that he may mail the [VSA 71](#) and a combination of supporting documentation to the [Titling Work Center](#), or the CSC may offer to scan it via [Landing Zone](#) to the work center.

IMPORTANT: To avoid unnecessary customer delays when a VIN error/correction determination cannot be made in a CSC, CSRs are responsible to verify applications are completed and sufficient documentary evidence is submitted following guidelines in this procedure before scanning via [Landing Zone](#) to the Titling Work Center. **END REVISION>>>>>**

- b. If approved by CSC management/designee, perform a visual inspection of the VIN on the vehicle and record the VIN on the Verification of Vehicle Identification Number ([VSA 69](#)).
- The VIN is located inside the passenger compartment, but visible from outside the vehicle on the left-hand side of the windshield.

NOTE: If the VIN plate appears to be altered or obscured, advise the customer to contact [Law Enforcement Division](#) to obtain a VIN inspection/verification for the vehicle (refer to [VLIC-3.450](#)).

- c. If the VIN recorded to the [VSA 69](#) matches the "Correct VIN" shown on the [VSA 71](#), continue processing the VIN correction.
- d. Follow the steps below if the VIN recorded to the [VSA 69](#) does NOT match the VIN entered in the "Correct VIN" field on the VSA 71:
- Ask the customer if the VIN recorded to the "Correct VIN" field on the VSA 71 is correct:
 - If the customer indicates the "Correct VIN" written on the VSA 71 has an error, ask the customer to correct the VIN on the VSA 71,
 - i. Once corrected by the customer, verify that the corrected VIN matches the VIN recorded to the VSA 69 from the vehicle.
 - ii. Return to [Step # 5](#) above and repeat all subsequent steps using the revised VIN.
 - If the customer indicates the VIN recorded in the "Correct VIN" field on the VSA 71 is correct, advise the customer that the VIN does not match the VIN on the vehicle. Return the application(s) to the customer and ask him to return after verifying the VIN.

7. Verify the "Correct VIN" from the VSA 71 by performing a standalone VIN inquiry in the system.

- The following vehicle VINs cannot be verified in the system:
 - Moped, manufactured home, motor scooter, or ATV.
 - VINs assigned prior to 1966.

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- If the VIN for the vehicle (other than those listed above) does not verify, DO NOT CORRECT THE VIN. Scan documents via [Landing Zone](#) to Titling Work Center for review and research. **END REVISION>>>>>**

8. Perform a National Motor Vehicle Information System (NMVTIS) inquiry to determine if a more current vehicle record exists in NMVTIS,

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- If NMVTIS reports there is a more current vehicle record in another state, DO NOT CORRECT THE VIN. Scan documents via [Landing Zone](#) to Titling Work Center for review and research. **END REVISION>>>>>**

9. Inquire on "Correct VIN" through National Crime Information Center (NCIC).

- If the vehicle record inquiry returns a stolen vehicle message, DO NOT CORRECT THE VIN. Contact DMV Law Enforcement following steps in [LE-1.00](#).

10. Determine how to process the transaction according to the tables below:

VIN CORRECTION QUICK REFERENCE		
VIN CORRECTIONS AUTHORIZED IN CSCs ¹ (VIN Corrections Must Be Approved by CSC Management/Designee)		
Source of Error	Criteria to Qualify	CSR Process
VA Title-DMV Error	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regardless of how many VIN characters are incorrect as long as all were DMV error, and • Regardless of which VIN character fields are incorrect, • Approved by management or designee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process the VIN correction, • Provide a substitute title to the vehicle owner, • Place a note on the record, • Scan¹ all documentation to Titling Work Center to correct prior records and for NMVTIS follow-up.
VIN CORRECTIONS SCANNED ¹ TO TITLING WORK CENTER ¹ (VIN cannot be corrected in the CSC)		
Source of Error	Criteria to Qualify	CSR Process
Dealer VIN Errors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VIN error(s) made by dealers/online dealers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT CORRECT VIN. • Scan¹ all documentation to the Titling Work Center for research and processing.
Out-of-State & VA Title (VIN error not made by VA DMV) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With 2 or less incorrect VIN character positions, • No incorrect VIN character is located in the last 6 character fields of the VIN, • Acceptable documents are submitted to prove VIN, and • NMVTIS Held is approved by management/designee. 	<p>Provided all criteria in column 2 is true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT CORRECT VIN. • Process the title transaction by placing an NMVTIS Held on the record, • Issue a registration and license plates to the customer, • Scan¹ all documentation one to the Titling Work Center for research and processing.
Out-of-State & VA Titles (VIN error not made by VA DMV) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VIN error(s) with more than 2 incorrect VIN characters, and/or • VIN error(s) with incorrect characters located in the last 6 positions of the VIN, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT CORRECT VIN. • Advise the customer they must obtain a VIN correction from the state in which the vehicle was last titled in.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VINs with more than or less than 17 VIN characters. • VIN corrections not approved by CSC management or designee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT CORRECT VIN. • Scan¹ all documentation to the Titling Work Center for research and processing.
<p><<<<<REVISION¹ All VIN errors must be researched thoroughly by the CSC. Follow guidelines in this procedure, and then scan findings and all documents via Landing Zone to Titling Work Center for follow up research and processing.</p> <p>² If it is determined that the actual VIN error on an out-of-state title was originally made by VA DMV on a prior VA title, DO NOT CORRECT THE VIN. Once the VIN error is retitled out-of-state, CSCs do not correct the VIN. Scan findings and all documents via Landing Zone to Titling Work Center for follow up research and processing. END REVISION>>>>></p>		

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IMPORTANT: To avoid unnecessary customer delays when a VIN error/correction determination cannot be made in a CSC, CSRs are responsible to verify applications are completed and sufficient documentary evidence is submitted following guidelines in this procedure **before** scanning to the Titling Work Center. **END REVISION>>>>>**

- a. If the VIN correction is a DMV error, request CSC management or designee to review the materials and approve the VIN correction.

- If approved, proceed to step 11., below.
- If not approved, proceed to step 14., below.

11. Process a substitute title in accordance with [VLIC-3.120](#) (when applicable).

12. Provide the substitute title to the vehicle owner if no lien exists.

- If a paper title has been issued in the past and a lien exists, the title will be mailed to the lienholder in overnight batch.
- If an elien exists, no paper title will print.

13. Place a note on the vehicle record describing the type of correction that was made (if applicable), the documents pulled for review from OnBase or microfilm, and the actions taken, OR, if the correction must be processed at HQ, include any instructions provided to the customer by the CSR about what documents to forward to the Titling Work Center.

<<<<<REVISION

14. Scan all VIN correction documentation via [Landing Zone](#) to Titling Work Center, whether corrected by the CSC or not, as indicated below: **END REVISION>>>>>**

- a. Include the following information:

- Customer name, telephone number (if provided) and/or email address
- Title number AND last 4 digits of the VIN

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- b. If scanned via [Landing Zone](#) to Titling Work Center because the VIN could not be corrected by the CSC, and the customer is waiting, watch for a response from the Titling Work Center. **END REVISION>>>>>**

- If the Titling Work Center responds that the VIN error can be corrected while the customer waits, follow instructions provided by the work center.
- If more research is required by Titling Work Center, advise the applicant he will be contacted by the Titling Work Center once a determination has been made.

15. Collect fees (if applicable).

16. Process a Substitute Title and a replacement registration card following guidelines in [VLIC-3.120](#) and [VLIC-4.118](#).

17. Write "**Incorrect VIN- Substitute Title Issued**" on the face of the customer's current title.

18. Attach the title, the customer's applications, and any additional supporting documentation (if present), to the barcode cover sheet and place in appropriate area with the day's work.

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DMV CONTACT CENTER ACTIONS

- Customers requesting DMV Law Enforcement Services contact information should be given the information for the jurisdiction in which they reside. Refer to [Law Enforcement Division](#)
- For VIN corrections refer to [VLIC-3.455](#):
 - a. Advise the customer to submit the title and a completed [VSA 71](#) indicating the specific reason why the VIN is incorrect, along with any other supporting documentation, to the [Titling Work Center](#) OR a Customer Service Center (CSC):

**Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles
ATTN: Titling Work Center
PO Box 27412
Richmond, VA 23269**

AND

- b. Advise the customer that he may be required to pay the \$125.00 VIN inspection fee.

- Place a note on the vehicle record describing the VIN error, the documents pulled for review from OnBase or microfilm, the actions taken by the agent and instructions given to the customer about what documents to forward to the Titling Work Center.

- **VIN corrections for Non-owners of Records ONLY:**

NOTE: DMV Direct agents do not do VIN corrections. In exceptional situations, DMV Direct may initiate a VIN correction due to DMV error by sending it through the Titling Work Center.

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- To determine service provider options for VIN transactions refer to the [Service Provider Options for VIN Issue/Assign/Correct](#) table. **END REVISION>>>>>**

- a. If the DMV DIRECT agent is able to arrange a VIN correction on a vehicle due to a DMV error and the customer is not the owner of the record, CISADMIN can issue a VIN correction letter. Send an email to CCC/CIS Support Team (Location Code: 756).
- b. If the paperwork does NOT show a DMV keying error and the VIN is incorrect:
 - i. Advise the customer to send a completed VSA 71 including a write up requesting a VIN correction indicating the specific reason why the VIN is incorrect to the [Titling Work Center](#) OR visit a CSC,
AND
 - ii. Advise the customer that he will be required to pay the \$125.00 VIN inspection fee.

- Always check the vehicle record to see if a lien has been recorded.

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POINTS TO REMEMBER

- CSCs may correct an incorrect VIN on Virginia titles only, and only when it is determined to be a VA DMV error. All conditions listed in the [VIN Correction Quick Reference](#) are met.

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- For customers applying for a Virginia title who submit a Virginia or out-of-state title with an incorrect VIN (not DMV error), the CSC may place a National Motor Vehicle Titling Information (NMVTIS) Held on the record to process the transaction and to issue the license plates and registration, provided all conditions listed in the [VIN Correction Quick Reference](#) are met. All documents and proof of VIN are scanned via [Landing Zone](#) to Titling Work Center for follow up research and processing. **END REVISION>>>>>**
- Advise customers submitting out of state titles that have VIN errors with **more than 2** incorrect characters, **and/or with incorrect characters located in the last 6 spaces** to return to the state where the vehicle was last titled for correction.

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- All dealer VIN errors are scanned via [Landing Zone](#) to the Titling Work Center at HQ for research and processing. **END REVISION>>>>>**
- If there is an elien on the record, or the title has a HELD for another reason, proceed with processing as long as no date displays in the **TTL DOC DT:** field on the record, meaning no title was printed.
- Physical VIN inspections are done when all of the following is true, and at the discretion of CSC management:
 - The title is a Virginia title,
 - There is limited documentation available to support the correct VIN due to the vehicle being older,
 - No more than 1 or 2 VIN characters are incorrect,
 - The incorrect character is NOT located in the last 6 spaces of the VIN (unless determined to be DMV error),
 - The correct VIN cannot be verified using the standalone VIN inquiry in the system,
 - CSC management/designee authorizes the physical VIN inspection.

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REFERENCE

[VIN Decoder](#)

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[Service Provider Options for VIN Issue/Assign/Correct](#) **END REVISION>>>>>**

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CONTACT

For additional information contact:

- Your CSC Manager/Assistant Manager
- DMV Contact Center Help Desk at (804) 367-6646
- [Titling Work Center](#)
- [NMVTIS Help Desk](#)
- [DMV Law Enforcement Services](#) **END REVISION>>>>>**