

Vehicle Licensing Guide

License Plate Descriptions-Single and Multiple Year VLIC-4.305

Original Date: 04/01/1997
Revision Date: 01/01/2019

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| POLICY | |
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| Title: License Plate Descriptions-Single and Multiple Year | |
| Effective Date: April 7, 1997 | Revision Date: |
| Authority: Code of Virginia §§ 46.2-100 , 46.2-211 , 46.2-649.1 , 46.2-694 , 46.2-694.1 , 46.2-695 , 46.2-697 , 46.2-698 , 46.2-700 , 46.2-701 , 46.2-711 , 46.2-712 , 46.2-715 , 46.2-720 , 46.2-721 , <<<<<REVISION 46.2-730.1 , END REVISION>>>>> 46.2-1168 , 46.2-2000 , 46.2-2500 <<<<<REVISION and Chapter 555 END REVISION>>>>> | |
| Policy: This section provides plate type, characters, vehicle description and applicable Va. Code Sections. | |
| Exception: N/A | |

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PLATE DESCRIPTION/USE TABLE

| Plate Description/Use Table | | | |
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| LICENSE PLATE TYPE | PLATE CHARACTERS | VEHICLE DESCRIPTION | CODE SECTIONS |
| Passenger ^{1,3,6} | 6 or 7 characters e.g., 3 letters - 4 numbers. | Motor vehicle designed and used exclusively for the transportation of passengers, not-for-compensation, with a seating capacity of not more than 10 persons including the driver and vehicles leased for 12 months or more. | 46.2-694 (1) (2) (13) , 46.2-1168 , 46.2-695(ii) |
| Passenger ^{1,3,6} | 6 or 7 characters e.g., 3 letters - 4 numbers. | Motor vehicle designed for the transportation of property having a registered gross weight of (i) 7,500 lbs. or less, or (ii) 7,501 lbs. or more, but not in excess of 10,000 lbs., and registered for personal use. | 46.2-100 |
| Passenger ^{1,3,6} | 6 or 7 characters e.g., 3 letters - 4 numbers. | Motor vehicle used for the transportation of passengers, not-for-compensation, with a seating capacity of more than 10 persons including the driver. | 46.2-694 (3) (13) , 46.2-1168 |
| Passenger ^{1,3,6} | 6 or 7 characters e.g., 3 letters - 4 numbers. | School bus (Private) | 46.2-694 (4) (13) , 46.2-1168 |
| Passenger ^{1,3,6} | 6 or 7 characters e.g., 3 letters - 4 numbers. | Bus used exclusively for transporting persons to and from church or Sunday School for purpose of divine worship only. (Requires form VSA-71) | 46.2-694 (11) (13) , 46.2-1168 |
| Passenger ^{1,3,6} | 6 or 7 characters e.g., 3 letters - 4 numbers. | Bus converted to incorporate full or part-time living quarters with seating capacity of not more than 10 adult persons including the driver. | 46.2-694 (1) (2) (13) , 46.2-1168 |
| Passenger ^{1,3,6} | 6 or 7 characters e.g., 3 letters - 4 numbers. | Motor home or camper | 46.2-694 (1) (2) (13) , 46.2-1168 |

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| Passenger ^{1,3,6} | 6 or 7 characters e.g., 3 letters - 4 numbers. | Truck with a van-type body converted to full or part-time living quarters. | 46.2-694 (1) (2) (13) , 46.2-1168 |
| Passenger ^{1,3,6} | 6 or 7 characters e.g., 3 letters - 4 numbers. | Station Wagon | 46.2-694 (1) (2) (13) , 46.2-1168 |
| Passenger ^{1,3,6} | 6 or 7 characters e.g., 3 letters - 4 numbers. | Carryall and sports vans used for the transportation of passengers. | 46.2-694 (1) (2) (13) , 46.2-1168 |
| Passenger ^{1,3,6} | 6 or 7 characters e.g., 3 letters - 4 numbers. | Ambulance used as a private operation. | 46.2-694 (1) (2) (13) , 46.2-1168 |
| Passenger ^{1,3,6} | 6 or 7 characters e.g., 3 letters - 4 numbers. | Hearse used as a private operation. | 46.2-694 (1) (2) (13) , 46.2-1168 |
| Farm Vehicle ^{2,3,6} | 1 letter - 5 numbers. e.g. F12345 | Used exclusively for farm-use as defined in 46.2-698 . Vehicle must have a gross weight of 7500 lbs. or more and cannot be used for-hire. | 46.2-698 |
| Low Speed Vehicle ^{2,3,6} | 6 or 7 characters e.g., 3 letters - 4 numbers. | Used exclusively for low-speed vehicles pursuant to 46.2-908.3 . Vehicle is not a golf cart; speed is greater than 20 miles per hour but not greater than 25 miles per hour; complies with Title 49 CFR low-speed vehicle safety standards. | 46.2-100 , 46.2-711 , 46.2-908.2 , 46.2-908.3 |
| Permanent Farm License Plates ^{2,3,6} [Available] | 5 numbers - 1 letter. e.g. 12345F | Truck or tractor-truck having a gross weight of 7501 lbs. or more used exclusively for farm-use as defined in 46.2-698 | 46.2-712(B) |
| Motorcycle ^{2,3,5,6} | 6 characters | Motor vehicle designed to operate on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground; capable of traveling at speeds in excess of 35 miles per hour; weighing less than 500 lbs. and equipped with an engine of less than six horsepower. | 46.2-100 46.2-694 (10) (13) , 46.2-711 , 46.2-715 , 46.2-1168 |
| Autocycle ^{2,3,5,6} | 6 characters | A three-wheeled motor vehicle that has a steering wheel and seating that does not require the operator to straddle or sit astride and is manufactured to comply with federal safety requirements for motorcycles. Unless otherwise indicated, an autocycle is not considered to be a motorcycle. Autocycles (AC) are issued motorcycle plates, though not defined as a motorcycle for title and registration purposes. | 46.2-100 , 46.2-694 (10b)(13) , 46.2-711 , 46.2-715 , 46.2-1168 |
| Military Surplus ³ | 6 characters 5001MS-thru- 9950MS | A multipurpose or tactical vehicle manufactured by or under the direction of the United States Armed Forces for off-road use and subsequently authorized for sale to civilians. Does not include specialized mobile equipment as defined in Va. Code § 46.2-700 , trailers, or semitrailers. Mileage limited to 125 miles from where vehicle is garaged. <<<<<REVISION NOTE: Owners of Military Surplus Vehicles that are applying for an original registration are <u>only</u> eligible for Military Surplus license plates. Owners that already have a General Use Plate or Antique plate may retain that registration as long as they own the vehicle. | 46.2-730.1 END REVISION>>>>> |

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| Moped | 6 characters | Used exclusively for mopeds pursuant to 46.2-711 . Vehicle that travels on not more than three wheels with a seat no less than 24 inches in height; a gasoline, electric, or hybrid motor that displaces 50 cubic centimeters or less or an input of 1500 watts or less; power-driven, with or without pedals that allow propulsion by human power; and not operated at speeds in excess of 35 miles per hour. | 46.2-100 , 46.2-711 , 46.2-715 , 46.2-720 , 46.2-721 , 46.2-694 (10a) (13) |
| Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (For Hire) ^{3,6} | 7 characters e.g., 1 letter - 5 numbers | Vehicle used for For-Hire non-emergency medical transportation authorized by the Department of Medical Assistance Services or as a Medical Managed Care Organization contracted with the Department of Medical Assistance Services. | 46.2-211 |
| Truck ^{2,3,6} [Not For-Hire or For-Hire] | 2 letters - 5 numbers. e.g., HA10001 | Motor vehicles (including truck with removable camper) used for hauling goods and with registered gross weight of 7501 lbs. or more. | 46.2-100 , 46.2-697 , 46.2-701 , 46.2-1168 |
| Truck [Not For-Hire or For-Hire] Permanent License Plates ^{2,3,6} [Available] | 5 numbers - 2 letters. e.g., 10001HA | Permanent license plates are available for truck or tractor truck having a GVWR or GCWR of 26001 lbs. or more or a GVWR or GCWR of 7501 - 26000 lbs. provided the vehicle is used for business use only. | 46.2-712(B) |
| Tractor Truck ^{2,3,6} [Not For-Hire or For-Hire] | 2 letters - 5 numbers. e.g. XA10001 | Motor vehicle designed and used exclusively for towing semi-trailers and incapable of transporting a cargo on the frame or body of the vehicle. | 46.2-100 , 46.2-697 , 46.2-701 , 46.2-1168 |
| Tractor Truck (Not For-Hire or For-Hire) Permanent license plates ^{2,3,6} [Available] | 5 numbers - 2 letters. e.g. 10001XA | Permanent license plates available for tractor trucks having a GVWR or GCWR of 26001 lbs. or more or a GVWR or GCWR of 7501 - 26000 lbs. provided the vehicle is used for business use only. | 46.2-712(B) |
| Trailer ^{2,5,6} (1500 lbs. or less) | CT - TR - UT | Vehicles without motive power designed for carrying property or passengers wholly on its own structure and for being drawn by a motor vehicle, including tow dollies and converter gear. | 46.2-694.1 |
| Trailer ^{2,5,6} 1501 lbs. thru 4000 lbs. gross weight (G.W.) | CT - TR - UT | Vehicles without motive power designed for carrying property or passengers wholly on its own structure and for being drawn by a motor vehicle, including tow dollies and converter gear. | 46.2-694.1 |
| Trailer ^{2,5,6} 4001 lbs. or more gross weight (G.W.). | CT - TR - UT | Vehicles without motive power designed for carrying property or passengers wholly on its own structure and for being drawn by a motor vehicle, including tow dollies and converter gear. | 46.2-694.1 |
| Trailer Permanent Trailer ^{2,5,6} [Available] | 5 numbers - 2 letters | Permanent trailer plates available for all trailers, tow dollies and converter gear. | 46.2-712(B) |
| Tow Truck ^{2,3,4,6} [For-Hire] | WT1001 | Motor vehicle must be designed to lift, pull or carry another vehicle by means of a hoist or other mechanical apparatus. May also be designed with a capacity to haul or tow (commonly called "rollback") for compensation. | 46.2-649.1 |
| Permanent Tow Truck ^{2,3,6} [Available] | 10001WT | Permanent license plates are available for a truck having a GVWR or GCWR of 10000 lbs. or more. | 46.2-712(B) |

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| Well Machinery and Special Mobile Equipment ^{2,6} | EQ10001 | Any truck, trailer, or semitrailer on which well drilling machinery is permanently mounted and is used solely for the transportation of such machinery. Specialized mobile equipment not designed for the transportation of passengers or property which will be used on a job site and whose movement upon the highways is incidental to the purpose for which it was designed. Must be capable of maintaining speeds of 40 MPH or more. | 46.2-700 |
| Chauffeur Driven Passenger Vehicles, Pick-up and Panel Trucks ^{2,6} | H H101 -thru- H99999 | Chauffeur driven passenger vehicles (other than taxies). For hire pick-up and panel trucks having a gross weight of 7500 or less and used as a property carrier. | 46.2-100 , 46.2-694 (9) (13) , 46.2-1168 , 46.2-711 , 46.2-2000 , 46.2-2500 |
| Clean Special Fuel Taxi Non Permanent ^{3,6} | 6 characters e.g., 4 numbers - 1 letter | Taxicabs or motor vehicles performing a taxicab service as defined in 46.2-2000. (Seating Capacity =6 passengers. Issued, upon application, to qualifying vehicles (exclusively powered by clean special fuel). | 46.2-694 (9) (13) , 46.2-1168 , 46.2-711 , 46.2-2000 , 46.2-2500 |
| Clean Special Fuel Taxi Permanent ^{3,6} | characters e.g., 1 letter - 4 numbers | Taxicabs or motor vehicles performing a taxicab service (Code of Virginia § 46.2-2000). (Seating Capacity =6 passengers. Issued to qualifying vehicles (exclusively powered by clean special fuel. | 46.2-712b , 46.2-749.3 |
| Taxi Non-Permanent ^{3,6} | H100001 -thru- H999999 | Taxicabs or other motor vehicles performing a taxicab service (Code of Virginia § 46.2-2000). (Seating capacity = 6 passengers) | 46.2-100 , 46.2-694 (9) (13) , 46.2-1168 , 46.2-711 , 46.2-2000 , 46.2-2500 |
| Taxi Permanent ^{3,6} [Available] | 100001H -thru- 999999H | Taxicabs or other motor vehicles performing taxicab service (Code of Virginia § 46.2-2000). (Seating capacity = 6 passengers) | 46.2-712(B) |
| Rental (Passenger Vehicle) ² | Passenger plate displaying the orange & white rental decal | Passenger vehicle rented for a period of less than twelve months without a chauffeur. | 46.2-694 (8) (13) , 46.2-1168 |
| Rental (Pickup & Panel Trucks) ^{2,6} | Passenger plate displaying the orange & white rental decal | Pickup and panel trucks rented for a period of less than twelve months without a chauffeur. | 46.2-697 , 46.2-1168 |
| Rental (Trucks & Tractor Trucks) ^{1,3} | 2 letters - 5 numbers. e.g., RA10001 | Truck or tractor truck rented for a period of less than twelve months. | 46.2-697 , 46.2-1168 |
| Rental (Trucks & Tractor Trucks) Permanent plates ^{2,3} [Available] | 5 numbers - 2 letters. e.g., 10001RA | Permanent license plates available for truck and tractor truck having a GVWR or GCWR of 26001 lbs. or more; or a GVWR or GCWR of 7501 - 26000 lbs. Provided the vehicle is used for business use only. | 46.2-712(B) |
| Rental Trailer ^{2,4} (Single Weight) | 5 numbers - 2 letters | Vehicles without motive power designed for carrying property or passengers wholly on its own structure and for being drawn by a motor vehicle, including mobile homes. | 46.2-694.1 , 46.2-712(B) |
| Permanent Trailer ^{2,4,6} [Available] | 5 numbers - 2 letters | For all trailers | 46.2-694.1 , 46.2-712(B) |
| Common, Carrier of passenger ⁶ | E | Common carriers of interstate or intrastate passengers operating under a certificate of public convenience and necessity issued by | 46.2-694 (6) (13) , 46.2-1168 |

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| Buses ^{2,3,6} | P1 - P100 PY1 - PY100 | Bus used as an interstate carrier, the owner choosing to apportion the vehicle. | 46.2-694 (7) (13) , 46.2-1168 |
| Buses Permanent [Available] ^{2,3,6} | 101P - 1000P 1PY - 1000PY | Bus used as an interstate carrier, the owner choosing to apportion the vehicle. | 46.2-694 (7) (13) , 46.2-1168 |
| Office Trailer ² | OT followed by 10001 -thru- 99999 | Issued to persons solely engaged in the business of transporting mobile home/house trailer, to be used as an office, from one construction site to another. | 46.2-723 |
| Drive-Away ² | DA | <p>Issued to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persons delivering unladen motor vehicles under their own power from points of assembly or distribution Financial institutions taking, repossessing, or transporting vehicles for the purpose of preservation, sale, or otherwise in connection with such repossession. Businesses engaged in automobile auctions or the mounting, installing, servicing or repairing of equipment on a vehicle. (This is limited to driving on the highway to test the installation, service or repair at a distance of less than 5 miles from the place of business or for the pickup and delivery of a vehicle only. <p>NOTE: Drive away plates are NOT AVAILABLE if any portion of the trip does not take place in Virginia (origin and destination).</p> | 46.2-733 |
| Quarterly License Plates Truck or Tractor Truck ^{2,6} | Use appropriate plates. Special Quarterly Plates discontinued. | Truck or tractor truck, the owner of which elects to license for one or more quarters of the year. | 46.2-697 |
| Apportioned License Plates Truck and Bus ^{2,3} | P with the word Apportioned embossed on the plate | Truck or Bus, the owner of which elects to license the vehicle under the International Registration Plan. | 46.2-703 |
| Apportioned License Plates Tractor Truck or Trailer ^{2,3,4} | PY with the word Apportioned embossed on the plate | Tractor or trailer, the owner of which elects to license the vehicle under the International Registration Plan. | 46.2-703 |
| Apportioned Permanent Plates Tractor Truck ^{2,3} | 5 numbers followed by 1 letter. e.g., 10001 P | Truck or bus | 46.2-712(B) |
| Apportioned License Plates Permanent Tractor or Trailer ^{2,4} [Available] | 5 numbers followed by 2 letters. e.g., 10001PY | Permanent Trailer Plates are available for all trailers. | 46.2-694.1 |
| Independent Dealer ² | ID in front of numbers. | Applicant must be licensed under Dealer Licensing Act before obtaining dealer plates. Also issued to independent, re-builder and trailer dealers. | 46.2-1546 |
| Independent Dealer Reserved Plate ² | ID in front of numbers or numbers in front of ID | Applicant must be licensed under Dealer Licensing Act before obtaining reserve independent dealer plates. | 46.2-1546 |

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| Independent and Franchised Motorcycle Dealer ² | IB & FB in front of numbers. | Applicant must be licensed under Dealer Licensing Act before obtaining dealer plates. Issued to independent and franchised dealers. | 46.2-1546 |
| Franchised Dealer Plates ² | D in front of numbers | Applicant must be licensed under Dealer Licensing Act before obtaining dealer plates | 46.2-1546 |
| Franchised Dealer Reserved Plate ² | D in front of numbers | Applicant must be licensed under Dealer Licensing Act before obtaining reserved dealer plates. | 46.2-1546 |
| Franchised Trailer Dealer Plates ² Independent Trailer Dealer Plates ² | FT & IT in front of numbers. | Applicant must be licensed under Dealer Licensing Act before obtaining franchised or independent trailer dealer plates. | 46.2-1546 |
| Factory Assembly Testing Plates ² | FD in front of numbers. | Applicant must be licensed under Dealer Licensing Act before obtaining plates. Used for testing by factory assembly branches. | 46.2-1546 |
| Franchise Recreational Vehicle Dealer ² Independent Recreational Vehicle Dealer ² | FM & IM | Applicant must be licensed under Dealer Licensing Act before obtaining franchise or independent motor home dealer plates. | 46.2-1500 |
| Temporary License Plates ² | W, X, and Z followed by numbers | Issued to dealers licensed under the Dealer Licensing Act. Dealer issues plates to purchaser for temporary registration pending permanent registration. | 46.2-1500 |
| Temporary License Plates ² (Motorcycle) | V followed by numbers | Issued to motorcycle dealers licensed under the Dealer Licensing Act. Dealer issues plates to purchaser for temporary registration pending permanent registration. | 46.2-1500 |
| Antique Vehicle License Plates Black & White Yellow ⁶ | 10001-99999 1001AQ-9999AQ | Vehicle must be 25 years old or older. Restricted use of the vehicle applies. *Customer may choose between the Black & White or Yellow plates. | 46.2-730 |
| Antique License Plates (Motorcycle) Black & White Yellow ⁶ | 1001A-9999A 1001AQ-9999AQ | Vehicle must be 25 years old or older. Restricted use of the vehicle applies. *Customer may choose between the Black & White or Yellow plates. | 46.2-730 |
| Vintage License Plates ⁶ | DMV issued plates manufactured prior to 1976 | Vehicle must be 25 years old or older. Restricted use of the vehicle applies. | 46.2-730 |
| Vintage License Plates (General Transportation Purposes) ⁶ | DMV issued plates manufactured prior to 1976 | Vehicle must be 25 years old or older. Vehicle requires safety inspection and liability insurance. No use restrictions apply. | 46.2-730 |

¹ Scenic (Mountain to Seashore and Autumn (7characters), or Patriot) Heritage 6 characters (Cardinal and Dogwood) available-Additional \$10.00 fee.

² Scenic or Heritage not available.

³ Communiplates available - Additional \$10.00 fee.

⁴ May also be registered under Section [46.2-697](#) as a wrecker.

⁵ Communiplates available - One-time \$10.00 fee.

⁶ Local vehicle registration (LVR) fees, when applicable, will be added to this registration fee. (Refer to [VLIC-4.415.](#))

CONTACT

For additional information contact :

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

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