

Title and Registration

DMV ISSUES A CERTIFICATE OF Title to show ownership and record a financial interest in a motor vehicle. Your dealership must have proof of ownership at the dealership to offer the vehicle for sale.

Vehicles must be registered to operate legally on Wisconsin highways. DMV issues license plates as evidence that an owner has paid the appropriate registration fee. Fees vary with the type and intended use of the vehicle.

Wisconsin laws require motor vehicle dealers to prepare and submit customer applications for title and registration to DMV. Your dealership must furnish customers with temporary or permanent registration plates before they can operate the vehicle legally. Motorcycles are exempt from this requirement.

Effective July 1, 2007 Wisconsin motor vehicle dealers are required to process their title applications electronically for Wisconsin customers.

Transfer of ownership

Manufacturers transfer ownership of new vehicles to dealers by signing over the Manufacturer Certificate of Origin (MCO). The MCO is the “birth certificate” of the vehicle. It lists the manufacturer, vehicle make, the vehicle identification number (VIN), the place of assembly, and vehicle delivery point.

Individuals transfer vehicle ownership to the dealer by signing over the vehicle’s title to the dealer. Failure to show a change of ownership is considered “title jumping” and is illegal in Wisconsin. Trade-in vehicles must be titled in the name of the purchaser.

To transfer ownership to a retail customer, the dealer must process electronically or use a “Wisconsin Title and License Plate Application” (MV11) for manual (paper) submissions not able to be processed electronically.

A manual application for Title and Registration will include:

- » Completed and signed MV11
- » Title or Manufacturer Certificate of Origin
- » Appropriate fees

An electronic application for Title and Registration will include:

- » Signed copy of e-receipt
- » Title or Manufacturers Certificate of Origin

Dealers must electronically send, deliver or mail completed applications for title and registration to DMV within 7 business days after delivery of the vehicle. Customers are not allowed to take these materials to a DMV Customer Service Center unless accompanied by a dealer representative. Dealers who sell a vehicle to a nonresident are required to apply for a Wisconsin title only when it is necessary to secure a lien.

Note: If processing electronically, the required documents need to be mailed the following business day.

And/or

When more than one person owns a vehicle, the owners’ names on the title may be joined by the conjunction “and” or “or.” When “and” is used, all titled owners must sign the title to transfer ownership. When “or” is used, only one signature is required.

Replacement Titles

Ownership cannot be transferred without a title. When a customer attempts to sell or trade a vehicle and does not have a valid title, the customer must get a replacement title from DMV.

Title Brands

Dealers must disclose to a prospective purchaser any title brands that appear on the vehicle title or that will appear on the next title. Brands become a permanent part of the title.

The following brands may appear on a Wisconsin title:

- » **SALVAGE VEHICLE:** vehicle less than 7 years old which is damaged by collision or other occurrence to the extent that the estimated or actual cost, whichever is greater, of repairing the vehicle exceeds 70% of its fair market value. You can figure which vehicles are exempt from the salvage brand by using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{current calendar year}}{\text{minus 7}} \text{ equals } \frac{\text{this model year or older}}{\text{no salvage title}}$$

- » **THIS VEHICLE TRANSFERRED TO INSURER UPON PAYMENT OF CLAIM:** vehicle is less than 7 model years old, damaged more than 30% but not more than 70% of its fair market value, and, after payment of claim, transferred to the insurance company.
- » **THIS VEHICLE IS A MANUFACTURER'S BUYBACK:** vehicle was repurchased by the manufacturer under Wisconsin's or another state's Lemon Law.
- » **MODIFIED TO MEET FEDERAL SAFETY AND EMISSION STANDARDS:** vehicle that was not manufactured with all federal emission and safety standards applicable (gray market vehicle.)
- » **THIS VEHICLE WAS PREVIOUSLY USED AS A POLICE VEHICLE:** vehicle used or registered as a police vehicle by a law enforcement agency.
- » **REBUILT SALVAGE:** vehicle that was declared salvage and has now been rebuilt and has passed a Wisconsin salvage inspection.
- » **PREVIOUS TAXICAB OR PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** vehicle used or registered as a taxicab or for public transportation.
- » **THIS VEHICLE HAS BEEN FLOOD DAMAGED:** vehicle damaged by flood to the extent that the estimated or actual cost of repairs exceed 70 percent of its fair market value.
- » **HAIL DAMAGED:** vehicle less than 7 years old damaged solely by hail to the extent that the estimated or actual cost, whichever is greater, to repair the vehicle exceeds 70% of its fair market value, and repaired without replacing any exterior parts.

Odometer Disclosures

Odometer disclosures signed by the seller must accompany all motor vehicle ownership transfers. You must:

Have the seller complete the odometer disclosure statement on the title or MCO

- » Show the prior owner's odometer disclosure statement on the title to any prospective customer
- » Give the retail purchaser a new odometer statement on the MV11 or, if processing electronically, on the original title.

Mopeds, vehicles 10 years old and older, and vehicles with a gross weight rating of more than 16,000 pounds are exempt from the odometer disclosure requirements. You can figure which vehicles are exempt from odometer disclosure by using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{current}}{\text{calendar year}} \text{ minus } 10 \text{ equals } \frac{\text{this model}}{\text{year or older}} \\ \text{no odometer disclosure}$$

Liens

When a vehicle is used as collateral to obtain a loan, a lien is recorded by DMV on the vehicle's title. A recorded lien notifies all interested parties that the vehicle is encumbered to another party. DMV assesses a processing fee to record a lien, but not to remove a lien. Dealers list lienholders on the MV11 form or electronic application.

A dealer may offer a vehicle for sale with a lien on the title only if funds to pay the lien off have been mailed or electronically transferred by the dealer to the lienholder. You do not need to wait for the actual lien release. You may sell the vehicle to the new purchaser if funds have been mailed or transferred, and you complete the certification on the MV11 or electronic application that the lien on the title has been paid.

Customer with plates to transfer

Under Wisconsin law, when a resident sells or trades in an automobile, whether owned or leased, he or she retains the license plates. Therefore, your customer may have license plates to transfer to the vehicle purchased. Show the plate to transfer on the MV11.

Customer without plates to transfer

When your customer purchases a vehicle and does not have license plates to transfer, you must submit a completed MV11 with proper fees to DMV. Your dealership must furnish customers with temporary or permanent registration to legally operate the vehicle.

Dealer license plates

DMV issues dealer license plates to motor vehicle dealers. The plates identify each dealer by its dealer number. Dealers may use these plates for business or private purposes. They may use them only on vehicles the dealer owns and offers for sale or service loaner vehicles. Lending or displaying dealer plates on rental vehicles or vehicles not for sale (not displaying a buyer's guide or Monroney label) is prohibited.