

**MICHIGAN VEHICLE CODE (EXCERPT)**  
**Act 300 of 1949**

**257.224 Registration plate; digital registration plate; issuance; design; display; limitation on renewal; replacement.**

Sec. 224. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this act regarding tabs or stickers, upon registering a vehicle, the secretary of state shall issue to the owner 1 registration plate.

(2) A registration plate shall display the registration number assigned to the vehicle for which the registration plate is issued; the name of this state, which may be abbreviated; and when the registration plate expires, which may be shown by a tab or sticker furnished by the secretary of state.

(3) A registration plate issued for motor vehicles owned and operated by this state; a state institution; a municipality; a privately incorporated, nonprofit volunteer fire department; or a nonpublic, nonprofit college or university of this state does not expire at any particular time but must be renewed when the registration plate is worn out or is illegible. This registration plate must be assigned upon proper application and payment of the applicable fee and may be used on any eligible vehicle titled to the applicant if a written record is kept of the vehicles upon which the registration plate is used. The written record shall state the time the registration plate is used on a particular vehicle. The record shall be open to inspection by a law enforcement officer or a representative of the secretary of state.

(4) A registration plate issued for a vehicle owned by the civil air patrol as organized under 36 USC 40301 to 40307; a vehicle owned by a nonprofit organization and used to transport equipment for providing dialysis treatment to children at camp; an emergency support vehicle used exclusively for emergencies and owned and operated by a federally recognized nonprofit charitable organization; a vehicle owned and operated by a nonprofit food pantry or nonprofit food bank; a vehicle owned and operated by a nonprofit veterans center; a motor vehicle having a truck chassis and a locomotive or ship's body that is owned by a nonprofit veterans organization and used exclusively in parades and civic events; a vehicle owned and operated by a nonprofit recycling center or a federally recognized nonprofit conservation organization until December 31, 2000; a motor vehicle owned and operated by a senior citizen center; and a registration plate issued for buses including station wagons, carryalls, or similarly constructed vehicles owned and operated by a nonprofit parents' transportation corporation used for school purposes, parochial school, society, church Sunday school, or other grammar school, or by a nonprofit youth organization or nonprofit rehabilitation facility shall be issued upon proper application and payment of the applicable tax provided in section 801(1)(g) or (h) to the applicant for the vehicle identified in the application. The vehicle shall be used exclusively for activities of the school or organization and shall be designated by proper signs showing the school or organization operating the vehicle. The registration plate expires on December 31 in the fifth year following the date of issuance. The registration plate may be transferred to another vehicle upon proper application and payment of a \$10.00 transfer fee.

(5) The department shall offer a standard design registration plate that complies with the requirements of this act. The standard design registration plate shall be of a common color scheme and design that is made of fully reflectorized material and shall be clearly visible at night.

(6) No later than 1 year after the effective date of the amendatory act that amended this section, the department shall permit the registrant of a vehicle to display a digital registration plate in lieu of the standard design registration plate described in subsection (5). As used in this subsection "digital registration plate" means an electronic display that is mounted on the rear of a vehicle in place of a registration plate issued by the secretary of state. Any data collected by the department or by a vendee selected by the department through the use of digital registration plates is the property of the department. Any use of data collected through the use of a digital registration plate is nonexclusive and is governed by this act.

(7) The department may use the Pure Michigan brand or a successor or similar brand that is used in conjunction with this state's promotion, travel, and tourism campaigns or marketing efforts as part of the standard design for registration plates.

(8) The registration plate and the required letters and numerals on the registration plate shall be of sufficient size to be plainly readable from a distance of 100 feet during daylight. The secretary of state may issue a tab or tabs designating the month and year of expiration.

(9) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the secretary of state shall issue for every passenger motor vehicle rented without a driver the same type of registration plate as the type of registration plate issued for private passenger vehicles. This subsection does not apply to a special registration plate issued for a vehicle in a fleet under section 801h.

(10) A person shall not operate a vehicle on the public highways or streets of this state displaying a registration plate other than the registration plate issued for the vehicle by the secretary of state, except as

provided in this chapter for nonresidents, or by assignment as provided in subsection (3).

(11) The registration plate displayed on a vehicle registered on the basis of elected gross weight shall indicate the elected gross weight for which the vehicle is registered.

(12) Beginning on January 1, 2015, a registration plate issued by the department under this section shall not be renewed 10 years after the date that registration plate was issued. The owner of a vehicle whose registration plate is no longer eligible for renewal under this subsection must obtain a replacement registration plate upon payment of the fee required under section 804. For any alphanumeric series that the department has retired from circulation, upon request of the owner of a vehicle whose registration plate is no longer eligible for renewal under this subsection, the department may issue a new registration plate with the same registration number as was displayed on the expired registration plate as provided under section 803b.

**History:** 1949, Act 300, Eff. Sept. 23, 1949;—Am. 1959, Act 247, Eff. Mar. 19, 1960;—Am. 1961, Act 25, Imd. Eff. May 11, 1961;—Am. 1965, Act 184, Imd. Eff. July 15, 1965;—Am. 1967, Ex. Sess., Act 3, Imd. Eff. Nov. 15, 1967;—Am. 1970, Act 106, Imd. Eff. July 23, 1970;—Am. 1976, Act 114, Imd. Eff. May 14, 1976;—Am. 1976, Act 439, Imd. Eff. Jan. 13, 1977;—Am. 1980, Act 46, Imd. Eff. Mar. 19, 1980;—Am. 1980, Act 153, Imd. Eff. June 11, 1980;—Am. 1980, Act 270, Imd. Eff. Oct. 1, 1980;—Am. 1980, Act 476, Eff. Mar. 31, 1981;—Am. 1982, Act 350, Imd. Eff. Dec. 21, 1982;—Am. 1984, Act 173, Imd. Eff. June 29, 1984;—Am. 1987, Act 238, Imd. Eff. Dec. 28, 1987;—Am. 1990, Act 181, Imd. Eff. July 18, 1990;—Am. 1994, Act 395, Eff. Mar. 30, 1995;—Am. 1995, Act 129, Imd. Eff. June 30, 1995;—Am. 2006, Act 177, Imd. Eff. June 6, 2006;—Am. 2012, Act 491, Imd. Eff. Dec. 28, 2012;—Am. 2013, Act 179, Eff. Dec. 1, 2013;—Am. 2018, Act 342, Eff. Jan. 14, 2019;—Am. 2018, Act 656, Eff. Mar. 29, 2019.

**Compiler's note:** For effective date of increases in certain fees, charges or taxes provided by this section, see MCL 257.817(1).