



South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles

Customer Information Sheet

Abandoned Vehicle Frequently Asked Questions

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WHAT is the governing legislation for abandoned vehicles?

The authority to remove an abandoned vehicles is contained in SC Codes of Law §29-15-10, §56-5-5810, and §56-5-5640. These codes of law set out the procedure to be followed when a motor vehicle is abandoned on the highway or private property.

WHAT constitutes an abandoned vehicle?

A motor vehicle that is required to be registered in this State if operated on a public highway in this State that

- is left unattended on a highway for more than forty-eight hours, or
- has remained on private or public property for a period of more than seven days without the consent of the owner or person in control of the property.
- has been left at a shop for repairs or storage and the repairs have been completed or the storage contract has expired; the vehicle has been continuously retained in his possession; and thirty days have passed since written notice was given to the owner/lien holder of the motor vehicle that the repairs have been completed or the storage contract has expired.

I found an old vehicle on a lot that I purchased. Who do I report it to?

- You must report the abandoned vehicle to a member of law enforcement, who might then contact a towing company, a storage facility, garage, or repair shop.
- Only these entities can arrange for the removal and/or disposal of abandoned vehicles.
- The South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles does not dispose of abandoned vehicles.

Somebody left a vehicle on my property. It's been there for weeks. How can I find out who it belongs to?

- You must report the abandoned vehicle to a member of law enforcement, a towing company, a storage facility, garage, or repair shop.
- Only these entities can arrange for the removal and/or disposal of abandoned vehicles and obtain information on the vehicle's owner.
- The Department will not give out personal owner information on an abandoned vehicle unless the person reporting the vehicle is associated with one of the entities named above.

I own a repair shop and a customer never picked up his car and never paid me for the repairs. What can I do?

- You can begin the process to declare an unclaimed vehicle and to have the vehicle sold at public auction through a magistrate sale.
- Follow the steps below to report the vehicle to DMV, obtain owner information, provide notice to the owner and lien holder, and have the vehicle sold at public auction.

I own a towing company and need to report some abandoned vehicles. I also need to get owner information. WHAT do I need to do?

- Complete DMV form TR-2 Report of Abandoned, Derelict or Unclaimed Vehicles or Motor Homes, listing all vehicles that you're reporting or for which you're requesting information.
- Be sure to complete Page 1 and Page 2 of the form if you are requesting personal owner information, as well as reporting vehicles.
- Include \$6.00 for every vehicle for which you need personal information returned to you.
- There is no charge if you are ONLY reporting abandoned vehicle information

WHAT does an authorized customer receive from DMV when requesting information on an abandoned vehicle?

- A letter listing the abandoned vehicles and
- An Abandoned Vehicle Report for vehicles registered in South Carolina.
- If the vehicle is not registered in South Carolina, the applicant is provided with a letter stating such. The applicant will also be provided with the state in which the vehicle may be registered if that is known to the SCDMV.

WHAT do I have to do to have an abandoned or unclaimed vehicle sold at auction?

- If you're an authorized entity as described above, once you receive the information from DMV you must send notice by certified or registered mail to the owners and any lien holders as specified in SC Codes of Law §29-15-10.
- Once you've followed the proper notice procedures, you may petition the magistrate to conduct a sale. Your magistrate's office will instruct you on the proper procedures.

WHERE can I get more information about abandoned or unclaimed vehicles?

- Check the SCDMV website at www.scdmvonline.com, check with your local law enforcement or magistrate's office.