

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2009**

**HOUSE BILL 1729  
RATIFIED BILL**

AN ACT TO MAKE VARIOUS CHANGES TO THE MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 20-7(f) reads as rewritten:

"(f) Duration and Renewal of Licenses. – Drivers licenses shall be issued and renewed pursuant to the provisions of this subsection:

- (1) Duration of license for persons under age 18. – A full provisional license issued to a person under the age of 18 expires on the person's twenty-first birthday.
- (2) Duration of original license for persons at least 18 years of age or older. – A drivers license issued to a person at least 18 years old but less than 54 years old expires on the birthday of the licensee in the eighth year after issuance. A drivers license issued to a person at least 54 years old expires on the birthday of the licensee in the fifth year after issuance. A commercial drivers license expires on the birthday of the licensee in the fifth year after issuance. A commercial drivers license that has a vehicles carrying passengers (P) and school bus (S) endorsement issued pursuant to G.S. 20-37.16 ~~shall expire on the birth date of the licensee three years after the date of~~ expires on the birthday of the licensee in the third year after issuance, if the licensee is certified to drive a school bus in North Carolina.
- (2a) Duration of renewed licenses. – A renewed drivers license that was issued by the Division to a person at least 18 years old but less than 54 years old expires eight years after the expiration date of the license that is renewed. A renewed drivers license that was issued by the Division to a person at least 54 years old expires five years after the expiration date of the license that is renewed. A renewed commercial drivers license expires five years after the expiration date of the license that is renewed.
- (3) Duration of license for certain other drivers. – The durations listed in subdivisions (1), (2) and (2a) of this subsection are valid unless the Division determines that a license of shorter duration should be issued when the applicant holds valid documentation issued by, or under the authority of, the United States government that demonstrates the applicant's legal presence of limited duration in the United States. In no event shall a license of limited duration expire later than the expiration of the authorization for the applicant's legal presence in the United States.
- (3a) When to renew. – A person may apply to the Division to renew a license during the 180-day period before the license expires. The Division may not accept an application for renewal made before the 180-day period begins.
- (3b) Renewal for certain members of the Armed Forces and reserve components of the Armed Forces.
  - a. The Division may renew a drivers license, without limitation on the period of time before the license expires, if the person applying for renewal is a member of the Armed Forces or of a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States and provides orders that place the member on active duty and duty station outside this State.
  - b. A person who is a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States whose license bears an expiration date that occurred while the person was on active duty outside this State



shall be considered to have a valid license until 60 days after the date of release from active duty upon showing proof of the release date, unless the license was rescinded, revoked, or otherwise invalidated under some other provision of law. Notwithstanding the provisions of this sub-subdivision, no license shall be considered valid more than 18 months after the date of expiration.

- (4) Renewal by mail. – The Division may renew by mail a drivers license issued by the Division to a person who meets any of the following descriptions:
- a. Is a member of the Armed Forces or a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States serving on active duty and is stationed outside this State.
  - b. Is a resident of this State and has been residing outside the State for at least 30 continuous days.

When renewing a license by mail, the Division may waive the examination that would otherwise be required for the renewal and may impose any conditions it finds advisable. A license renewed by mail is a temporary license that expires 60 days after the person to whom it is issued returns to this State.

- (5) License to be sent by mail. – The Division shall issue to the applicant a temporary driving certificate valid for 20 days, unless the applicant is applying for renewal by mail under subdivision (4) of this subsection. The temporary driving certificate shall be valid for driving purposes only and shall not be valid for identification purposes. The Division shall produce the applicant's drivers license at a central location and send it to the applicant by first-class mail at the residence address provided by the applicant, unless the applicant is ineligible for mail delivery by the United States Postal Service at the applicant's residence. If the United States Postal Service documents that it does not deliver to the residential address provided by the applicant, and the Division has verified the applicant's residential address by other means, the Division may mail the drivers license to the post office box provided by the applicant. Applicants whose only mailing address prior to July 1, 2008, was a post office box in this State may continue to receive their license at that post office box, provided the applicant's residential address has been verified by the Division."

**SECTION 2.** G.S. 20-63(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) Every license plate ~~shall have displayed upon it~~ must display the registration number assigned to the vehicle for which it is issued, the name of the State of North Carolina, which may be abbreviated, and the year number for which it is issued or the date of expiration. A plate issued for a commercial vehicle, as defined in G.S. 20-4.2(1), and weighing 26,001 pounds or more, must bear the word "commercial," unless the plate is a special registration plate authorized in G.S. 20-79.4 or the commercial vehicle is a trailer or is licensed for 6,000 pounds or less. The plate issued for vehicles licensed for 7,000 pounds through 26,000 pounds must bear the word ~~"weighted"~~ "weighted," unless the plate is a special registration plate authorized in G.S. 20-79.4.

Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, a registration plate issued by the Division for a private passenger vehicle or for a private hauler vehicle licensed for 6,000 pounds or less shall be a "First in Flight" plate. A "First in Flight" plate shall have the words "First in Flight" printed at the top of the plate above all other letters and numerals. The background of the plate shall depict the Wright Brothers biplane flying over Kitty Hawk Beach, with the plane flying slightly upward and to the right. The following special registration plates do not have to be a "First in Flight" plate. The design of the plates that are not "First in Flight" plates must be approved by the Division and the State Highway Patrol for clarity and ease of identification.

- (1) Friends of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
- (2) Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.
- (3) Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation.
- (4) Friends of the Appalachian Trail.
- (5) NC Coastal Federation.
- (6) In God We Trust.
- (7) Stock Car Racing Theme.

- (8) Buddy Pelletier Surfing Foundation.
- (9) Guilford Battleground Company.
- (10) National Wild Turkey Federation.
- (11) North Carolina Aquarium Society.
- (12) First in Forestry.
- (13) North Carolina Wildlife Habitat Foundation.
- (14) NC Trout Unlimited.
- (15) Ducks Unlimited.
- (16) Lung Cancer Research.
- (17) NC State Parks.
- (18) Support Our Troops.
- (19) US Equine Rescue League.
- (20) Fox Hunting.
- (21) Back Country Horsemen of North Carolina.
- (22) Hospice Care.
- (23) Home Care and Hospice.
- (24) NC Tennis Foundation.
- (25) AIDS Awareness."

**SECTION 3.** G.S. 20-63(g) reads as rewritten:

"(g) Alteration, Disguise, or Concealment of Numbers. – Any operator of a motor vehicle who shall willfully mutilate, bend, twist, cover or cause to be covered or partially covered by any bumper, light, spare tire, tire rack, strap, or other device, or who shall paint, enamel, emboss, stamp, print, perforate, or alter or add to or cut off any part or portion of a registration plate or the figures or letters thereon, or who shall place or deposit or cause to be placed or deposited any oil, grease, or other substance upon such registration plates for the purpose of making dust adhere thereto, or who shall deface, disfigure, change, or attempt to change any letter or figure thereon, or who shall display a number plate in other than a horizontal upright position, shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor. Any operator of a motor vehicle who shall willfully cover or cause to be covered any part or portion of a registration plate or the figures or letters thereon by any device designed or intended to prevent or interfere with the taking of a clear photograph of a registration plate by a traffic control or toll collection system using cameras commits an infraction and shall be ~~fin~~penalized under G.S. 14-3.1. Any operator of a motor vehicle who shall otherwise intentionally cover any number or registration renewal sticker on a registration plate with any material that makes the number or registration renewal sticker illegible commits an infraction and shall be ~~fin~~penalized under G.S. 14-3.1. Any operator of a motor vehicle who covers any registration plate with any frame or transparent clear or color-tinted cover that makes a number or letter on the plate, the State name on the plate, or a number or month on the registration renewal sticker on the plate illegible commits an infraction and shall be penalized under G.S. 14-3.1. Any operator of a motor vehicle who covers the State name, year sticker, or month sticker on a registration plate with a license plate frame commits an infraction and shall be fined under G.S. 14-3.1. Nothing in this subsection shall prohibit the use of transparent covers that do not prevent or interfere with the taking of a clear photograph of a registration plate by a traffic control or toll collection system using cameras."

**SECTION 4.** G.S. 20-64.2 is repealed.

**SECTION 5.** G.S. 20-79 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 20-79. Dealer license plates.**

(a) How to Get a Dealer Plate. – The Division may issue a person licensed under Article 12 of this Chapter the appropriate classification of dealer license plate. A person eligible for a dealer license plate may obtain one by filing an application with the Division and paying the required fee. An application must be filed on a form provided by the Division. The required fee is the amount set by G.S. 20-87(7).

(b) Number of Plates. – A dealer who was licensed under Article 12 of this Chapter for the previous 12-month period ending December 31 may obtain the number of dealer license plates allowed by the following table; the number allowed is based on the number of motor vehicles the dealer sold during the relevant 12-month period and the average number of qualifying sales representatives the dealer employed during that same 12-month period:

Vehicles Sold In Relevant

Maximum Number of Plates

12-Month Period

Fewer than 12

At least 12 but less than 25

At least 25 but less than 37

At least 37 but less than 49

49 or more

1<sub>3</sub>

4<sub>6</sub>

5<sub>7</sub>

6<sub>8</sub>

At least ~~6~~ 8, but no more than ~~4~~ 5 times the average number of qualifying sales representatives employed by the dealer during the relevant 12-month period.

A dealer who was not licensed under Article 12 of this Chapter for part or all of the previous 12-month period ending December 31 may obtain the number of dealer license plates that equals four times the number of qualifying sales representatives employed by the dealer on the date the dealer files the application. A "qualifying sales representative" is a sales representative who works for the dealer at least 25 hours a week on a regular basis and is compensated by the dealer for this work.

A dealer who sold fewer than 49 motor vehicles the previous 12-month period ending December 31 but has sold at least that number since January 1 may apply for additional dealer license plates at any time. The maximum number of dealer license plates the dealer may obtain is the number the dealer could have obtained if the dealer had sold at least 49 motor vehicles in the previous 12-month period ending December 31.

A dealer who applies for a dealer license plate must certify to the Division the number of motor vehicles the dealer sold in the relevant period. Making a material misstatement in an application for a dealer license plate is grounds for the denial, suspension, or revocation of a dealer's license under G.S. 20-294.

A dealer engaged in the alteration and sale of specialty vehicles may apply for up to two dealer plates in addition to the number of dealer plates that the dealer would otherwise be entitled to under this section.

This subsection does not apply to manufacturers licensed under Article 12 of this Chapter.

(c) Form and Duration. – A dealer license plate is subject to G.S. 20-63, except for the requirement that the plate display the registration number of a motor vehicle and the requirement that the plate be a "First in Flight" plate. A dealer license plate must have a distinguishing symbol identifying the plate as a dealer license plate. The symbol may vary depending upon the classification of dealer license plate issued. The Division must provide suitably reduced sized license plates for motorcycle dealers and manufacturers.

A dealer license plate is issued for a period of one year. The Division shall vary the expiration dates of dealer registration renewals so that an approximately equal number expires at the end of each month, quarter, or other period consisting of one or more months. A dealer license plate may be transferred from one vehicle to another. When the Division issues a dealer plate, it may issue a registration that expires at the end of any monthly interval. When one of the following occurs, a dealer must surrender to the Division all dealer license plates issued to the dealer:

- (1) The dealer surrenders the license issued to the dealer under Article 12 of this Chapter.
- (2) The Division suspends or revokes the license issued to the dealer under Article 12 of this Chapter.
- (3) The Division rescinds the dealer license plates because of a violation of the restrictions on the use of a dealer license plate.

To obtain a dealer license plate after it has been surrendered, the dealer must file a new application for a dealer license plate and pay the required fee for the plate.

(d) Restrictions on Use. – A dealer license plate may be displayed only on a motor vehicle that meets all of the following requirements:

- (1) Is part of the inventory of the dealer.
- (2) Is not consigned to the dealer.
- (3) Is covered by liability insurance that meets the requirements of Article 9A of this Chapter.
- (4) Is not used by the dealer in another business in which the dealer is engaged.
- (5) Is driven on a highway by a person who meets one of the following descriptions:

- a. Has a demonstration permit to test-drive the motor vehicle and carries the demonstration permit while driving the motor vehicle.
  - b. Is an officer or sales representative of the dealer and is driving the vehicle for a business purpose of the dealer.
  - c. Is an employee of the dealer and is driving the vehicle in the course of employment.
  - d. Is an employee of the dealer or of a contractor of the dealer and is driving the vehicle within a 20-mile radius of a place where the vehicle is being repaired or otherwise prepared for sale.
  - e. Is an employee of the dealer or of a contractor of the dealer and is transporting the vehicle to or from a vehicle auction or to the dealer's established salesroom.
- (6) A copy of the registration card for the dealer plate issued to the dealer is carried by the person operating the motor vehicle or, if the person is operating the motor vehicle in this State, the registration card is maintained on file at the dealer's address listed on the registration card, and the registration card must be able to be produced within 24 hours upon request of any law enforcement officer.

A dealer may issue a demonstration permit for a motor vehicle to a person licensed to drive that type of motor vehicle. A demonstration permit authorizes each person named in the permit to drive the motor vehicle described in the permit for up to 96 hours after the time the permit is issued. A dealer may, for good cause, renew a demonstration permit for one additional 96-hour period.

A dealer may not lend, rent, lease, or otherwise place a dealer license plate at the disposal of a person except as authorized by this subsection.

(e) Sanctions. – The following sanctions apply when a motor vehicle displaying a dealer license plate is driven in violation of the restrictions on the use of the plate:

- (1) The individual driving the motor vehicle is responsible for an infraction and is subject to a penalty of  ~~fifty dollars (\$50.00)~~ one hundred dollars (\$100.00).
- (2) The dealer to whom the plate is issued is subject to a civil penalty imposed by the Division of  ~~two hundred dollars (\$200.00)~~ two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00).
- (3) The Division may rescind all dealer license plates issued to the dealer whose plate was displayed on the motor vehicle.

A penalty imposed under subdivision (1) of this subsection is payable to the county where the infraction occurred, as required by G.S. 14-3.1. A civil penalty imposed under subdivision (2) of this subsection shall be credited to the Highway Fund as nontax revenue.

(f) Transfer of Dealer Registration. – No change in the name of a firm, partnership or corporation, nor the taking in of a new partner, nor the withdrawal of one or more of the firm, shall be considered a new business; but if any one or more of the partners remain in the firm, or if there is change in ownership of less than a majority of the stock, if a corporation, the business shall be regarded as continuing and the dealers' plates originally issued may continue to be used.

(g) Penalties. – The clear proceeds of all civil penalties, civil forfeitures, and civil fines that are collected by the Department of Transportation pursuant to this section shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2.

(h) Definition. – For purposes of this section, the term "dealer" means a person who is licensed under Article 12 of this Chapter."

**SECTION 6.** G.S. 20-79.2 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 20-79.2. Transporter plates.**

(a) Who Can Get a Plate. – ~~A person engaged in a business requiring the limited operation of a motor vehicle for any of the following purposes may obtain a transporter plate authorizing the movement of the vehicle for the specific purpose:~~ The Division may issue a transporter plate authorizing the limited operation of a motor vehicle in the circumstances listed in this subsection. A person who receives a transporter plate must have proof of financial responsibility that meets the requirements of Article 9A of this Chapter. The person to whom a transporter plate may be issued and the circumstances in which the vehicle bearing the plate may be operated are as follows:

- (1) To a business or a dealer to facilitate the manufacture, construction, rebuilding, or delivery of new or used truck cabs or bodies between manufacturer, dealer, seller, or purchaser.
- (2) To a financial institution that has a recorded lien on a motor vehicle to repossess ~~a~~ the motor vehicle.
- (3) To a dealer or repair facility to pick up and deliver a motor vehicle that is to be ~~repaired~~ repaired, is to undergo a safety or emissions inspection, or is to otherwise be prepared for sale by a dealer, to road-test the vehicle, if it is ~~repaired, repaired or inspected~~ repaired or inspected within a ~~10-mile~~ 20-mile radius of the place where it is ~~repaired, repaired or inspected~~, and to deliver the vehicle to the dealer. A repair facility may not receive more than two transporter plates for this purpose.
- (4) To a business that has at least 10 registered vehicles to move a motor vehicle that is owned by the business and is a replaced vehicle offered for sale.
- (5) To a dealer or a business that contracts with a dealer and has a business privilege license to take a motor vehicle either to or from a motor vehicle auction where the vehicle will be or was offered for sale. The title to the vehicle, a bill of sale, or written authorization from the dealer or auction must be inside the vehicle when the vehicle is operated with a transporter plate.
- (6) To a business or dealer to road-test a repaired truck whose GVWR is at least 15,000 pounds when the test is performed within a 10-mile radius of the place where the truck was repaired and the truck is owned by a person who has a fleet of at least five trucks whose GVWRs are at least 15,000 pounds and who maintains the place where the truck was repaired.
- (7) To a business or dealer to move a mobile office, a mobile classroom, or a mobile or manufactured ~~home, home,~~ or to transport a newly manufactured travel trailer, fifth-wheel trailer, or camping trailer between a manufacturer and a dealer. Any transporter plate used under this subdivision may not be used on the power unit.
- (8) To a business to drive a motor vehicle that is registered in this State and is at least ~~25~~ 35 years old to and from a parade or another public event and to drive the motor vehicle in that event. A person who owns ~~a motor vehicle that is at least 25 years old~~ one of these motor vehicles is considered to be in the business of collecting those vehicles.
- (9) To a dealer to drive a motor vehicle that is part of the inventory of a dealer to and from a motor vehicle trade show or exhibition or to, during, and from a parade in which the motor vehicle is used.
- (10) To drive special mobile equipment in any of the following circumstances:
  - a. From the manufacturer of the equipment to a facility of a dealer.
  - b. From one facility of a dealer to another facility of a dealer.
  - c. From a dealer to the person who buys the equipment from the dealer.

(b) How to Get a Plate. – ~~A person~~ business or a dealer may obtain a transporter plate by filing an application with the Division and paying the required fee. An application must be on a form provided by the Division and contain the information required by the Division. The fee for a transporter plate is one-half the fee set in G.S. 20-87(5) for a passenger motor vehicle of not more than 15 passengers.

(b1) Number of Plates. – The total number of ~~transporter and Dealer-Transporter~~ or dealer plates issued to a dealer may not exceed the total number of ~~dealer~~ plates that can be issued to the dealer under G.S. 20-79(b). ~~This restriction does not apply to a person who is not a dealer.~~ Transporter plates issued to a dealer shall bear the words "Dealer-Transporter." This subsection does not apply to a person who is not a dealer.

(b2) Sanctions. – The following sanctions apply when a motor vehicle displaying a "Dealer-Transporter" or "Transporter" license plate is driven in violation of the restrictions on the use of the ~~plate~~ plate or of the requirement to have proof of financial responsibility:

- (1) The individual driving the motor vehicle is responsible for an infraction and is subject to a penalty of ~~fifty dollars (\$50.00)~~ one hundred dollars (\$100.00).

- (2) ~~The dealer~~ dealer or business to whom the plate is issued is subject to a civil penalty imposed by the Division of ~~two hundred dollars (\$200.00)~~ two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00) per occurrence.
- (3) The Division may rescind all dealer license plates, dealer transporter plates, or transporter plates issued to the dealer or business whose plate was displayed on the motor vehicle.
- (4) A person who sells, rents, leases, or otherwise provides a transporter plate to another person in exchange for the money or any other thing of value is guilty of a Class I felony. A conviction for a violation of this subdivision is considered a felony involving moral turpitude for purposes of G.S. 20-294.

A penalty imposed under subdivision (1) of this subsection is payable to the county where the infraction occurred, as required by G.S. 14-3.1. A civil penalty imposed under subdivision (2) of this subsection shall be credited to the Highway Fund as nontax revenue. A law enforcement officer having probable cause to believe that a transporter plate is being used in violation of this section may seize the plate.

(c) Form, Duration, and Transfer. – A transporter plate is a type of commercial license plate. A transporter plate issued to a dealer is issued on a fiscal year basis. A transporter plate issued to a person who is not a dealer is issued on a calendar year basis. A transporter plate is subject to G.S. 20-63, except for the requirement that the plate display the registration number of a motor vehicle and the requirement that the plate be a "First in Flight" plate. A transporter plate shall have a distinguishing symbol identifying the plate as a transporter plate. The symbol may vary depending upon the classification of transporter plate issued. A transporter plate is issued for a period of one year. The Division shall vary the expiration dates of transporter registration renewals so that an approximately equal number expires at the end of each month, quarter, or other period consisting of one or more months. When the Division issues a transporter plate, it may issue a registration that expires at the end of any monthly interval. During the year for which it is issued, a person-business or dealer may transfer a transporter plate from one vehicle to another as long as the vehicle is driven only for a purpose authorized by subsection (a) of this section. The Division may- must rescind a transporter plate that is displayed on a motor vehicle driven for a purpose that is not authorized by subsection (a) of this section.

(d) County. – A county may obtain one transporter plate, without paying a fee, by filing an application with the Division on a form to be provided by the Division. A transporter plate issued pursuant to this subsection may only be used to transport motor vehicles as part of a program established by the county to receive donated motor vehicles and make them available to low-income individuals.

If a motor vehicle is operated on the highways of this State using a transporter plate authorized by this section, all of the following requirements shall be met:

- (1) The driver of the vehicle shall have in his or her possession the certificate of title for the motor vehicle, which has been properly reassigned by the previous owner to the county or the affected donor program.
- (2) The vehicle shall be covered by liability insurance that meets the requirements of Article 9A of this Chapter.

The form and duration of the transporter plate shall be as provided in subsection (c) of this section.

(e) Any vehicle being operated on the highways of this State using a transporter plate shall have proof of financial responsibility that meets the requirement of Article 9A of this Chapter."

**SECTION 7.** G.S. 20-79.7(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Fees. – Upon request, the Division shall provide and issue free of charge ~~one registration plate~~ a single Legion of Valor, 100% Disabled Veteran, and Ex-Prisoner of War registration plate to a recipient of a Legion of Valor award, a 100% disabled veteran, and an ex-prisoner of war-war each year. The preceding special registration plates are subject to the regular motor vehicle registration fees in G.S. 20-88, if the registered weight of the vehicle is greater than 6,000 pounds. All other special registration plates, including additional Legion of Valor, 100% Disabled Veteran, and Ex-Prisoner of War plates, plates are subject to the regular motor vehicle registration fee in G.S. 20-87 or G.S. 20-88 plus an additional fee in the following amount:

...."

**SECTION 8.** G.S. 20-85.1 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 20-85.1. Registration by mail; one-day title service; fees.**

(a) The owner of a vehicle registered in North Carolina may renew that vehicle registration by mail. ~~A postage and handling fee of one dollar (\$1.00) per vehicle to be registered shall be charged for this service.~~

(b) The Commissioner and the employees of the Division designated by the Commissioner may prepare and deliver upon request a certificate of title, charging a fee of seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) for one-day title service, in lieu of the title fee required by G.S. 20-85(a). The fee for one-day title service must be paid by cash or by certified check. This fee shall be credited to the Highway Trust Fund.

~~(c) The fee collected under subsection (a) shall be credited to the Highway Fund. The fee collected under subsection (b) shall be credited to the Highway Trust Fund."~~

**SECTION 9.** G.S. 20-88.02 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 20-88.02. Registration of logging vehicles.**

Upon receipt of an application on a form prescribed by it, the Division shall register ~~trucks, tractor trucks, trailers, and semitrailers~~ trucks and tractor trucks used exclusively in connection with logging operations ~~in a separate category.~~ operations, as provided in section 4483(e) of the Internal Revenue Code and 26 C.F.R. § 41.4483-6 for the collection of the federal heavy vehicle use tax. For the purposes of this section, "logging" shall mean the harvesting of timber and transportation from a forested site to places of sale.

Fees for the registration of vehicles under this section shall be the same as those ordinarily charged for the type of vehicle being registered."

**SECTION 10.** G.S. 20-118(c) reads as rewritten:

**"§ 20-118. Weight of vehicles and load.**

...

(c) Exceptions. – The following exceptions apply to G.S. 20-118(b) and 20-118(e).

- (1) Two consecutive sets of tandem axles may carry a gross weight of 34,000 pounds each without penalty provided the overall distance between the first and last axles of the consecutive sets of tandem axles is 36 feet or more.
- (2) When a vehicle is operated in violation of G.S. 20-118(b)(1), 20-118(b)(2), or 20-118(b)(3), but the gross weight of the vehicle or combination of vehicles does not exceed that permitted by G.S. 20-118(b)(3), the owner of the vehicle shall be permitted to shift the load within the vehicle, without penalty, from one axle to another to comply with the weight limits in the following cases:
  - a. Where the single-axle load exceeds the statutory limits, but does not exceed 21,000 pounds.
  - b. Where the vehicle or combination of vehicles has tandem axles, but the tandem-axle weight does not exceed 40,000 pounds.
- (3) When a vehicle is operated in violation of G.S. 20-118(b)(4) the owner of the vehicle shall be permitted, without penalty, to shift the load within the vehicle from one axle to another to comply with the weight limits where the single-axle weight does not exceed the posted limit by 2,500 pounds.
- (4) A truck or other motor vehicle shall be exempt from such light-traffic road limitations provided for pursuant to G.S. 20-118(b)(4), when transporting supplies, material or equipment necessary to carry out a farming operation engaged in the production of meats and agricultural crops and livestock or poultry by-products or a business engaged in the harvest or processing of seafood when the destination of such vehicle and load is located solely upon said light-traffic road.
- (5) The light-traffic road limitations provided for pursuant to subdivision (b)(4) of this section do not apply to a vehicle while that vehicle is transporting only the following from its point of origin on a light-traffic road to either one of the two nearest highways that is not a light-traffic ~~road~~ road. If that vehicle's point of origin is a non-light-traffic road and that road is blocked by light-traffic roads from all directions and is not contiguous with other non-light-traffic roads, then the road at point of origin is treated as a light-traffic road for purposes of this subdivision:



- a. Processed or unprocessed seafood transported from boats or any other point of origin to a processing plant or a point of further distribution.
  - b. Meats or agricultural crop products transported from a farm to first market.
  - c. Forest products originating and transported from a farm or from woodlands to first market without interruption or delay for further packaging or processing after initiating transport.
  - d. Livestock or poultry transported from their point of origin to a processing plant or first market.
  - e. Livestock by-products or poultry by-products transported from their point of origin to a rendering plant.
  - f. Recyclable material transported from its point of origin to a scrap-processing facility for processing. As used in this subpart, the terms "recyclable material" and "processing" have the same meaning as in G.S. 130A-290(a).
  - g. Garbage collected by the vehicle from residences or garbage dumpsters if the vehicle is fully enclosed and is designed specifically for collecting, compacting, and hauling garbage from residences or from garbage dumpsters. As used in this subpart, the term "garbage" does not include hazardous waste as defined in G.S. 130A-290(a), spent nuclear fuel regulated under G.S. 20-167.1, low-level radioactive waste as defined in G.S. 104E-5, or radioactive material as defined in G.S. 104E-5.
  - h. Treated sludge collected from a wastewater treatment facility.
  - i. Apples when transported from the orchard to the first processing or packing point.
  - j. Trees grown as Christmas trees from the field, farm, stand, or grove to first processing point.
- (6) A truck or other motor vehicle shall be exempt from such light-traffic road limitations provided by G.S. 20-118(b)(4) when such motor vehicles are owned, operated by or under contract to a public utility, electric or telephone membership corporation or municipality and such motor vehicles are used in connection with installation, restoration or emergency maintenance of utility services.
  - (7) A wrecker may tow any disabled truck or other motor vehicle or combination of vehicles to a place for repairs, parking, or storage within 50 miles from the point that the vehicle was disabled and may tow a truck, tractor, or other replacement vehicle to the site of the disabled vehicle without being in violation of G.S. 20-118 provided that the wrecker and towed vehicle or combination of vehicles otherwise meet all requirements of this section.
  - (8) A firefighting vehicle operated by any member of a municipal or rural fire department in the performance of his duties, regardless of whether members of that fire department are paid or voluntary and any vehicle of a voluntary lifesaving organization, when operated by a member of that organization while answering an official call shall be exempt from such light-traffic road limitations provided by G.S. 20-118(b)(4).
  - (9) Repealed by Session Laws 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 761, s. 12.
  - (10) Fully enclosed motor vehicles designed specifically for collecting, compacting and hauling garbage from residences, or from garbage dumpsters shall, when operating for those purposes, be allowed a single axle weight not to exceed 23,500 pounds on the steering axle on vehicles equipped with a boom, or on the rear axle on vehicles loaded from the rear. This exemption shall not apply to vehicles operating on interstate highways, vehicles transporting hazardous waste as defined in G.S. 130A-290(a)(8), spent nuclear fuel regulated under G.S. 20-167.1, low-level radioactive waste as defined in G.S. 104E-5(9a), or radioactive material as defined in G.S. 104E-5(14).

- (11) A truck or other motor vehicle shall be exempt for light-traffic road limitations issued under subdivision (b)(4) of this section when transporting heating fuel for on-premises use at a destination located on the light-traffic road.
- (12) Subsections (b) and (e) of this section do not apply to a vehicle that meets all of the conditions set out below:
  - a. Is hauling agricultural crops from the farm where the crop is grown to any market within 150 miles of that farm.
  - b. Repealed by Session Laws 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 761, s. 13.
  - b1. Does not operate on an interstate highway or exceed any posted bridge weight limits during transportation or hauling of agricultural products.
  - c. Does not exceed a single-axle weight of 22,000 pounds, a tandem-axle weight of 42,000 pounds, or a gross weight of 90,000 pounds.
- (13) Vehicles specifically designed for fire fighting that are owned by a municipal or rural fire department. This exception does not apply to vehicles operating on interstate highways.
- (14) Subsections (b) and (e) of this section do not apply to a vehicle that meets all of the conditions below, but all other enforcement provisions of this Article remain applicable:
  - a. Is hauling aggregates from a distribution yard or a State-permitted production site located within a North Carolina county contiguous to the North Carolina State border to a destination in another state adjacent to that county as verified by a weight ticket in the driver's possession and available for inspection by enforcement personnel.
  - b. Does not operate on an interstate highway or exceed any posted bridge weight limits.
  - c. Does not exceed 69,850 pounds gross vehicle weight and 53,850 pounds per axle grouping for tri-axle vehicles. For purposes of this subsection, a tri-axle vehicle is a single power unit vehicle with a three consecutive axle group on which the respective distance between any two consecutive axles of the group, measured longitudinally center to center to the nearest foot, does not exceed eight feet. For purposes of this subsection, the tolerance provisions of subsection (h) of this section do not apply, and vehicles must be licensed in accordance with G.S. 20-88.
  - d. Repealed by Session Laws 2001-487, s. 10, effective December 16, 2001.
- (15) Subsections (b) and (e) of this section do not apply to a vehicle or vehicle combination that meets all of the conditions below, but all other enforcement provisions of this Article remain applicable:
  - a. Is hauling wood residuals, including wood chips, sawdust, mulch, or tree bark from any site; is hauling raw logs to first market; ~~or is transporting bulk soil, bulk rock, sand, sand rock, or asphalt millings from a site that does not have a certified scale for weighing the vehicle-vehicle; or is hauling animal waste products from the animal waste storage site to a farm or field.~~
  - b. Does not operate on an interstate highway, a posted light-traffic road, except as provided by subdivision (c)(5) of this section, or exceed any posted bridge weight limits.
  - c. Does not exceed a maximum gross weight 4,000 pounds in excess of what is allowed in subsection (b) of this section.
  - d. Does not exceed a single-axle weight of more than 22,000 pounds and a tandem-axle weight of more than 42,000 pounds.

....."  
**SECTION 11.** G.S. 20-130.1 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 20-130.1. Use of red or blue lights on vehicles prohibited; exceptions.**

(a) It is unlawful for any person to install or activate or operate a red light in or on any vehicle in this State. As used in this subsection, unless the context requires otherwise, "red light" means an operable red light not sealed in the manufacturer's original package which: (i) is designed for use by an emergency vehicle or is similar in appearance to a red light designed for use by an emergency vehicle; and (ii) can be operated by use of the vehicle's battery, vehicle's electrical system, or a dry cell battery. As used in this subsection, the term "red light" shall also mean any forward facing red light installed on a vehicle after initial manufacture of the vehicle.

(b) The provisions of subsection (a) of this section do not apply to the following:

- (1) A police car;
- (2) A highway patrol car;
- (3) A vehicle owned by the Wildlife Resources Commission and operated exclusively for law-enforcement purposes;
- (4) An ambulance;
- (5) A vehicle used by an organ procurement organization or agency for the recovery and transportation of blood, human tissues, or organs for transplantation;
- (6) A fire-fighting vehicle;
- (7) A school bus;
- (8) A vehicle operated by any member of a municipal or rural fire department in the performance of his duties, regardless of whether members of that fire department are paid or voluntary;
- (9) A vehicle of a voluntary lifesaving organization (including the private vehicles of the members of such an organization) that has been officially approved by the local police authorities and which is manned or operated by members of that organization while answering an official call;
- (10) A vehicle operated by medical doctors or anesthetists in emergencies;
- (11) A motor vehicle used in law enforcement by the sheriff, or any salaried rural policeman in any county, regardless of whether or not the county owns the vehicle;
- (11a) A vehicle operated by the State Fire Marshal or his representatives in the performance of their duties, whether or not the State owns the vehicle;
- (12) A vehicle operated by any county fire marshal, assistant fire marshal, or emergency management coordinator in the performance of his duties, regardless of whether or not the county owns the vehicle;
- (13) A light required by the Federal Highway Administration;
- (14) A vehicle operated by a transplant coordinator who is an employee of an organ procurement organization or agency when the transplant coordinator is responding to a call to recover or transport human tissues or organs for transplantation;
- (15) A vehicle operated by an emergency medical service as an emergency support vehicle; ~~and~~
- (16) A State emergency management ~~vehicle-vehicle; and~~
- (17) An Incident Management Assistance Patrol vehicle operated by the Department of Transportation, when using rear-facing red lights while stopped for the purpose of providing assistance or incident management.

(c) It is unlawful for any person to possess a blue light or to install, activate, or operate a blue light in or on any vehicle in this State, except for a publicly owned vehicle used for law enforcement purposes or any other vehicle when used by law enforcement officers in the performance of their official duties. As used in this subsection, unless the context requires otherwise, "blue light" means any forward facing blue light installed on a vehicle after initial manufacture of the vehicle; or an operable blue light which:

- (1) Is not (i) being installed on, held in inventory for the purpose of being installed on, or held in inventory for the purpose of sale for installation on a vehicle on which it may be lawfully operated or (ii) installed on a vehicle which is used solely for the purpose of demonstrating the blue light for sale to law enforcement personnel;
- (1a) Is designed for use by an emergency vehicle, or is similar in appearance to a blue light designed for use by an emergency vehicle; and

- (2) Can be operated by use of the vehicle's battery, the vehicle's electrical system, or a dry cell battery.

(c1) The provisions of subsection (c) of this section do not apply to the possession and installation of an inoperable blue light on a vehicle that is inspected by and registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles as a specially constructed vehicle and that is used primarily for participation in shows, exhibitions, parades, or holiday/weekend activities, and not for general daily transportation. For purposes of this subsection, "inoperable blue light" means a blue-colored lamp housing or cover that does not contain a lamp or other mechanism having the ability to produce or emit illumination.

(d) Repealed by Session Laws 1999-249, s. 1.

(e) Violation of subsection (a) or (c) of this section is a Class 1 misdemeanor."

**SECTION 12.** G.S. 20-157(f) reads as rewritten:

"(f) When an authorized emergency vehicle as described in subsection (a) of this section or any public service vehicle is parked or standing within 12 feet of a roadway and is giving a warning signal by appropriate light, the driver of every other approaching vehicle shall, as soon as it is safe and when not otherwise directed by an individual lawfully directing traffic, do one of the following:

- (1) Move the vehicle into a lane that is not the lane nearest the parked or standing authorized emergency vehicle or public service vehicle and continue traveling in that lane until safely clear of the authorized emergency vehicle. This paragraph applies only if the roadway has at least two lanes for traffic proceeding in the direction of the approaching vehicle and if the approaching vehicle may change lanes safely and without interfering with any vehicular traffic.
- (2) Slow the vehicle, maintaining a safe speed for traffic conditions, and operate the vehicle at a reduced speed and be prepared to stop until completely past the authorized emergency vehicle or public service vehicle. This paragraph applies only if the roadway has only one lane for traffic proceeding in the direction of the approaching vehicle or if the approaching vehicle may not change lanes safely and without interfering with any vehicular traffic.

For purposes of this section, "public service vehicle" means a vehicle that is being used to assist motorists or law enforcement officers with wrecked or disabled vehicles, or is a vehicle being used to restore electric utility service due to an unplanned event, and is operating an amber-colored flashing light authorized by G.S. 20-130.2. Violation of this subsection shall be negligence per se."

**SECTION 13.** G.S. 20-161(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) No person shall park or leave standing any vehicle, whether attended or unattended, upon the ~~paved or~~ main-traveled portion of any highway or highway bridge ~~outside municipal corporate limits~~ with the speed limit posted less than 45 miles per hour unless the vehicle is disabled to such an extent that it is impossible to avoid stopping and temporarily leaving the vehicle upon the paved or main traveled portion of the highway or highway bridge. This subsection shall not apply to a solid waste vehicle stopped on a highway while engaged in collecting garbage as defined in G.S. 20-118(c)(5)g. or recyclable material as defined in G.S. 130A-290(a)(26)."

**SECTION 14.** G.S. 20-161 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(a1) No person shall park or leave standing any vehicle, whether attended or unattended, upon the paved or main-traveled portion of any highway or highway bridge with the speed limit posted 45 miles per hour or greater unless the vehicle is disabled to such an extent that it is impossible to avoid stopping and temporarily leaving the vehicle upon the paved or main-traveled portion of the highway or highway bridge. This subsection shall not apply to a solid waste vehicle stopped on a highway while engaged in collecting garbage as defined in G.S. 20-118(c)(5)g. or recyclable material as defined in G.S. 130A-290(a)(26)."

**SECTION 15.** G.S. 20-161(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) No person shall park or leave standing any vehicle upon the shoulder of a public highway ~~outside municipal corporate limits~~ unless the vehicle can be clearly seen by approaching drivers from a distance of 200 feet in both directions and does not obstruct the normal movement of traffic."

**SECTION 16.** G.S. 20-294(2) reads as rewritten:

"§ 20-294. **Grounds for denying, suspending or revoking licenses.**

The Division may deny, suspend, or revoke a license issued under this Article for any one or more of the following grounds:

- ...
- (2) Willfully and intentionally failing to comply with this Article, Article 15 of this Chapter, or G.S. 20-52.1, 20-75, 20-79.1, 20-79.2, 20-108, 20-109, or a rule adopted by the Division under this Article."

**SECTION 17.** G.S. 160A-300.1(c1) reads as rewritten:

"(c1) The duration of the yellow light change interval at intersections where traffic control photographic systems are in use shall be no less than the yellow light change interval duration specified ~~in the Design Manual developed by the Signals and Geometries Section of the North Carolina Department of Transportation~~ on the traffic signal plan of record signed and sealed by a professional engineer, licensed in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 89C of the General Statutes, and shall comply with the provisions of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices."

**SECTION 18.** G.S. 160A-300.2(e), as enacted by Section 3 of S.L. 2001-286, reads as rewritten:

"(e) The duration of the yellow light change interval at intersections where traffic control photographic systems are in use shall be no less than the yellow light change interval duration specified ~~in the Design Manual developed by the Signals and Geometries Section of the North Carolina Department of Transportation~~ on the traffic signal plan of record signed and sealed by a professional engineer, licensed in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 89C of the General Statutes, and shall comply with the provisions of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices."

**SECTION 19.** G.S. 160A-300.3(e), as enacted by Section 4 of S.L. 2001-286, reads as rewritten:

"(e) The duration of the yellow light change interval at intersections where traffic control photographic systems are in use shall be no less than the yellow light change interval duration specified ~~in the Design Manual developed by the Signals and Geometries Section of the North Carolina Department of Transportation~~ on the traffic signal plan of record signed and sealed by a professional engineer, licensed in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 89C of the General Statutes, and shall comply with the provisions of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices."

**SECTION 20.** G.S. 160A-303(b1)(4) reads as rewritten:

- "(4) Is left on any public street or highway for longer than seven ~~days~~ days or is determined by law enforcement to be a hazard to the motoring public."

**SECTION 21.** Section 25.10 of S.L. 2009-451, as added by Section 20 of S.L. 2009-575, reads as rewritten:

**"DMV TO MOVE EMISSIONS INSPECTION PROGRAM CALL CENTER TO NORTH CAROLINA**

**"SECTION 25.10.** The Department of Transportation, Division of Motor Vehicles, shall replace the current out-of-state contractors handling questions ~~from service station operators~~ about the State's ~~emissions inspection~~ program with State employees at an existing Division of Motor Vehicles call center within the State. The Department of Transportation, Division of Motor Vehicles, is authorized to create up to 15 new receipt-supported positions to replace the current out-of-state contractors."

**SECTION 22.** Sections 21 and 22 of this act are effective when it becomes law. The remainder of this act becomes effective December 1, 2010, and applies to offenses committed on or after that date.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 9<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2010.

---

Walter H. Dalton  
President of the Senate

---

Joe Hackney  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

---

Beverly E. Perdue  
Governor

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ .m. this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2010