

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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SENATE BILL 361

Short Title: Handicapped License Plates/Organizations. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Pate (Primary Sponsor).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

March 23, 2017

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES TO ISSUE A
DISTINGUISHING LICENSE PLATE FOR EACH MOTOR VEHICLE OWNED BY AN
ORGANIZATION THAT REGULARLY TRANSPORTS HANDICAPPED PERSONS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 20-37.6 reads as rewritten:

"§ 20-37.6. Parking privileges for handicapped drivers and passengers.

...

(b) ~~Handicapped Car Owners; Drivers and Passengers; Distinguishing License Plates.~~ – If the handicapped person is a registered owner of a vehicle, the owner may apply for and display a distinguishing license plate. ~~This~~ Any organization that, as determined and certified by the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, regularly transports handicapped persons may also apply for and display a distinguishing license plate. These organizations may receive one distinguishing license plate, free of charge, for each transporting vehicle. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, a distinguishing license plate issued under this subsection shall be issued for the normal fee applicable to standard license plates. Any vehicle owner who qualifies for a distinguishing license plate shall be notified by the Division at the time the plate is issued that the applicant is also eligible to receive one removable windshield placard and, upon request, shall be issued a placard at that time.

(c) ~~Handicapped Drivers and Passengers; Distinguishing Placards.~~ – Handicapped Drivers and Passengers; Distinguishing Placards. – A handicapped person may apply for the issuance of a removable windshield placard or a temporary removable windshield placard. Upon request, one additional placard may be issued to applicants who do not have a distinguishing license plate. Any organization ~~which, that,~~ as determined and certified by the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, regularly transports handicapped persons may also apply. These organizations may receive one removable windshield placard for each transporting vehicle. When the removable windshield or temporary removable windshield placard is properly displayed, all parking rights and privileges extended to vehicles displaying a distinguishing license plate issued pursuant to subsection (b) shall apply. The removable windshield placard or the temporary removable windshield placard shall be displayed so that it may be viewed from the front and rear of the vehicle by hanging it from the front windshield rearview mirror of a vehicle using a parking space allowed for handicapped persons. When there is no inside rearview mirror, or when the placard cannot reasonably be hung from the rearview mirror by the handicapped person, the placard shall be displayed on the driver's side of the dashboard. A removable windshield placard placed on a motorized wheelchair or similar vehicle shall be displayed in a clearly visible location. The Division shall establish procedures



1 for the issuance of the placards and may charge a fee sufficient to pay the actual cost of
2 issuance, but in no event less than five dollars (\$5.00) per placard. The Division shall issue a
3 placard registration card with each placard issued to a handicapped person. The registration
4 card shall bear the name of the person to whom the placard is issued, the person's address, the
5 placard number, and an expiration date. The registration card shall be in the vehicle in which
6 the placard is being used, and the person to whom the placard is issued shall be the operator or
7 a passenger in the vehicle in which the placard is displayed.

8 (c1) Application and Renewal; Physician's Certification. – ~~The~~ Except for organizations
9 applying in accordance with subsection (b) or (c) of this section, the initial application for a
10 distinguishing license plate, removable windshield placard, or temporary removable windshield
11 placard shall be accompanied by a certification of a licensed physician, a licensed
12 ophthalmologist, a licensed optometrist, or the Division of Services for the Blind that the
13 applicant is handicapped or by a disability determination by the United States Department of
14 Veterans Affairs that the applicant is handicapped. The initial application submitted by an
15 organization in accordance with subsection (b) or (c) of this section shall include certification
16 in a form acceptable to the Division that the organization is certified by the State Vocational
17 Rehabilitation Agency. The application for a temporary removable windshield placard shall
18 contain additional certification to include the period of time the certifying authority determines
19 the applicant will have the disability. Distinguishing license plates shall be renewed annually,
20 but subsequent applications shall not require a medical certification that the applicant is
21 handicapped. Removable windshield placards shall be renewed every five years, and, except
22 for an organization that received a placard in accordance with subsection (c) of this section or a
23 person certified as totally and permanently disabled at the time of the initial application or a
24 prior renewal under this subsection, the renewal shall require a medical recertification that the
25 person is handicapped. Renewal for an organization that received a placard in accordance with
26 subsection (c) of this section shall require recertifying in a form acceptable to the Division that
27 the organization is still certified by the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency. Temporary
28 removable windshield placards shall expire no later than six months after issuance.

29"

30 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2017.