



Ohio Revised Code

Section 4503.44 Windshield placards, license plates, parking cards for persons with disabilities; registration of altered vehicles.

Effective: October 3, 2023

Legislation: House Bill 33 (GA 135)

(A) As used in this section and in section 4511.69 of the Revised Code:

(1) "Person with a disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk" means any person who, as determined by a health care provider, meets any of the following criteria:

(a) Cannot walk two hundred feet without stopping to rest;

(b) Cannot walk without the use of, or assistance from, a brace, cane, crutch, another person, prosthetic device, wheelchair, or other assistive device;

(c) Is restricted by a lung disease to such an extent that the person's forced (respiratory) expiratory volume for one second, when measured by spirometry, is less than one liter, or the arterial oxygen tension is less than sixty millimeters of mercury on room air at rest;

(d) Uses portable oxygen;

(e) Has a cardiac condition to the extent that the person's functional limitations are classified in severity as class III or class IV according to standards set by the American heart association;

(f) Is severely limited in the ability to walk due to an arthritic, neurological, or orthopedic condition;

(g) Is blind, legally blind, or severely visually impaired.

(2) "Organization" means any private organization or corporation, or any governmental board, agency, department, division, or office, that, as part of its business or program, transports persons with disabilities that limit or impair the ability to walk on a regular basis in a motor vehicle that has not been altered for the purpose of providing it with accessible equipment for use by persons with



disabilities. This definition does not apply to division (I) of this section.

(3) "Health care provider" means a physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse, optometrist, or chiropractor as defined in this section except that an optometrist shall only make determinations as to division (A)(1)(g) of this section.

(4) "Physician" means a person licensed to practice medicine or surgery or osteopathic medicine and surgery under Chapter 4731. of the Revised Code.

(5) "Chiropractor" means a person licensed to practice chiropractic under Chapter 4734. of the Revised Code.

(6) "Advanced practice registered nurse" means a certified nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, certified registered nurse anesthetist, or certified nurse-midwife who holds a certificate of authority issued by the board of nursing under Chapter 4723. of the Revised Code.

(7) "Physician assistant" means a person who is licensed as a physician assistant under Chapter 4730. of the Revised Code.

(8) "Optometrist" means a person licensed to engage in the practice of optometry under Chapter 4725. of the Revised Code.

(9) "Removable windshield placard" includes a standard removable windshield placard, a temporary removable windshield placard, or a permanent removable windshield placard, unless otherwise specified.

(B)(1) An organization, or a person with a disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk, may apply for the registration of any motor vehicle the organization or person owns or leases. When a motor vehicle has been altered for the purpose of providing it with accessible equipment for a person with a disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk, but is owned or leased by someone other than such a person, the owner or lessee may apply to the registrar of motor vehicles or a deputy registrar for registration under this section. The application for registration of a motor vehicle owned or leased by a person with a disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk shall be accompanied



by a signed statement from the applicant's health care provider certifying that the applicant meets at least one of the criteria contained in division (A)(1) of this section and that the disability is expected to continue for more than six consecutive months. The application for registration of a motor vehicle that has been altered for the purpose of providing it with accessible equipment for a person with a disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk but is owned by someone other than such a person shall be accompanied by such documentary evidence of vehicle alterations as the registrar may require by rule.

(2) When an organization, a person with a disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk, or a person who does not have a disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk but owns a motor vehicle that has been altered for the purpose of providing it with accessible equipment for a person with a disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk first submits an application for registration of a motor vehicle under this section and every fifth year thereafter, the organization or person shall submit a signed statement from the applicant's health care provider, a completed application, and any required documentary evidence of vehicle alterations as provided in division (B)(1) of this section, and also a power of attorney from the owner of the motor vehicle if the applicant leases the vehicle. Upon submission of these items, the registrar or deputy registrar shall issue to the applicant appropriate vehicle registration and a set of license plates and validation stickers, or validation stickers alone when required by section 4503.191 of the Revised Code. In addition to the letters and numbers ordinarily inscribed thereon, the license plates shall be imprinted with the international symbol of access. The license plates and validation stickers shall be issued upon payment of the regular license fee as prescribed under section 4503.04 of the Revised Code and any motor vehicle tax levied under Chapter 4504. of the Revised Code, and the payment of a service fee equal to the amount established under section 4503.038 of the Revised Code.

(C)(1) A person with a disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk may apply to the registrar for a removable windshield placard by completing and signing an application provided by the registrar.

(2) The person shall include with the application a prescription from the person's health care provider prescribing such a placard for the person based upon a determination that the person meets at least one of the criteria contained in division (A)(1) of this section. The health care provider shall state on the prescription the length of time the health care provider expects the applicant to have the disability



that limits or impairs the person's ability to walk. If the length of time the applicant is expected to have the disability is six consecutive months or less, the applicant shall submit an application for a temporary removable windshield placard. If the length of time the applicant is expected to have the disability is permanent, the applicant shall submit an application for a permanent removable windshield placard. All other applicants shall submit an application for a standard removable windshield placard.

(3) In addition to one placard or one or more sets of license plates, a person with a disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk is entitled to one additional placard, but only if the person applies separately for the additional placard, states the reasons why the additional placard is needed, and the registrar, in the registrar's discretion determines that good and justifiable cause exists to approve the request for the additional placard.

(4) An organization may apply to the registrar of motor vehicles for a standard removable windshield placard by completing and signing an application provided by the registrar. The organization shall comply with any procedures the registrar establishes by rule. The organization shall include with the application documentary evidence that the registrar requires by rule showing that the organization regularly transports persons with disabilities that limit or impair the ability to walk.

(5) The registrar or deputy registrar shall issue to an applicant a standard removable windshield placard, a temporary removable windshield placard, or a permanent removable windshield placard, as applicable, upon receipt of all of the following:

(a) A completed and signed application for a removable windshield placard;

(b) The accompanying documents required under division (C)(2) or (4) of this section;

(c) Payment of a service fee equal to the amount established under section 4503.038 of the Revised Code for a standard removable windshield placard or a temporary removable windshield placard, or payment of fifteen dollars for a permanent removable windshield placard.

(6) The removable windshield placard shall display the date of expiration on both sides of the placard, or the word "permanent" if the placard is a permanent removable windshield placard, and



shall be valid until expired, revoked, or surrendered. Except for a permanent removable windshield placard, which has no expiration, a removable windshield placard expires on the earliest of the following two dates:

- (a) The date that the person issued the placard is expected to no longer have the disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk, as indicated on the prescription submitted with the application for the placard;
- (b) Ten years after the date of issuance on the placard.

In no case shall a removable windshield placard be valid for a period of less than sixty days.

(7) Standard removable windshield placards shall be renewable upon application and upon payment of a service fee equal to the amount established under section 4503.038 of the Revised Code. The registrar shall provide the application form and shall determine the information to be included thereon.

(8) The registrar shall determine the form and size of each type of the removable windshield placard, the material of which it is to be made, any differences in color between each type of placard to make them readily identifiable, and any other information to be included thereon, and shall adopt rules relating to the issuance, expiration, revocation, surrender, and proper display of such placards. A temporary removable windshield placard shall display the word "temporary" in letters of such size as the registrar shall prescribe. Any placard issued after October 14, 1999, shall be manufactured in a manner that allows the expiration date of the placard to be indicated on it through the punching, drilling, boring, or creation by any other means of holes in the placard.

(9) At the time a removable windshield placard is issued to a person with a disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk, the registrar or deputy registrar shall enter into the records of the bureau of motor vehicles the last date on which the person will have that disability, as indicated on the accompanying prescription. For a standard removable windshield placard, not less than thirty days prior to that date and any renewal dates, the bureau shall send a renewal notice to that person at the person's last known address as shown in the records of the bureau, informing the person that the person's removable windshield placard will expire on the indicated date, and that the person is



required to renew the placard by submitting to the registrar or a deputy registrar another prescription, and by complying with the renewal provisions. If such a prescription is not received by the registrar or a deputy registrar by that date, the placard issued to that person expires and no longer is valid, and this fact shall be recorded in the records of the bureau.

(10) At least once every year, on a date determined by the registrar, the bureau shall examine the records of the office of vital statistics, located within the department of health, that pertain to deceased persons, and also the bureau's records of all persons who have been issued removable windshield placards. If the records of the office of vital statistics indicate that a person to whom a removable windshield placard has been issued is deceased, the bureau shall cancel that placard, and note the cancellation in its records.

The office of vital statistics shall make available to the bureau all information necessary to enable the bureau to comply with division (C)(10) of this section.

(11) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a person or organization to apply for a removable windshield placard or accessible license plates if the accessible license plates issued to the person or organization under prior law have not expired or been surrendered or revoked.

(D) Any active-duty member of the armed forces of the United States, including the reserve components of the armed forces and the national guard, who has an illness or injury that limits or impairs the ability to walk may apply to the registrar or a deputy registrar for a temporary removable windshield placard. With the application, the person shall present evidence of the person's active-duty status and the illness or injury. Evidence of the illness or injury may include a current department of defense convalescent leave statement, any department of defense document indicating that the person currently has an ill or injured casualty status or has limited duties, or a prescription from any health care provider prescribing the placard for the applicant. Upon receipt of the application and the necessary evidence, the registrar or deputy registrar shall issue the applicant the temporary removable windshield placard without the payment of any service fee.

(E) If an applicant for a removable windshield placard is a veteran of the armed forces of the United States whose disability, as defined in division (A)(1) of this section, is service-connected, the registrar or deputy registrar, upon receipt of the application, presentation of a signed statement from



the applicant's health care provider certifying the applicant's disability, and presentation of such documentary evidence from the department of veterans affairs that the disability of the applicant meets at least one of the criteria identified in division (A)(1) of this section and is service-connected as the registrar may require by rule, but without the payment of any service fee, shall issue the applicant a removable windshield placard that is valid until expired, surrendered, or revoked.

(F)(1) Upon a conviction of a violation of division (H) or (I) of this section, the court shall report the conviction, and send the placard, if available, to the registrar, who thereupon shall revoke the privilege of using the placard and send notice in writing to the placardholder at that holder's last known address as shown in the records of the bureau, and the placardholder shall return the placard if not previously surrendered to the court, to the registrar within ten days following mailing of the notice.

(2) Whenever a person to whom a removable windshield placard has been issued moves to another state, the person shall surrender the placard to the registrar; and whenever an organization to which a placard has been issued changes its place of operation to another state, the organization shall surrender the placard to the registrar.

(3) If a person no longer requires a permanent removable windshield placard, the person shall notify and surrender the placard to the registrar or deputy registrar within ten days of no longer requiring the placard. The person may still apply for a standard removable windshield placard or temporary removable windshield placard, if applicable.

(G) Subject to division (F) of section 4511.69 of the Revised Code, the operator of a motor vehicle displaying a removable windshield placard or the accessible license plates authorized by this section is entitled to park the motor vehicle in any accessible parking location reserved for persons with disabilities that limit or impair the ability to walk.

(H) No person or organization that is not eligible for the issuance of license plates or any placard under this section shall willfully and falsely represent that the person or organization is so eligible.

No person or organization shall display license plates issued under this section unless the license plates have been issued for the vehicle on which they are displayed and are valid.



(I) No person or organization to which a removable windshield placard is issued shall do either of the following:

(1) Display or permit the display of the placard on any motor vehicle when having reasonable cause to believe the motor vehicle is being used in connection with an activity that does not include providing transportation for persons with disabilities that limit or impair the ability to walk;

(2) Refuse to return or surrender the placard, when required.

(J) If a removable windshield placard or parking card is lost, destroyed, or mutilated, the placardholder or cardholder may obtain a duplicate by doing both of the following:

(1) Furnishing suitable proof of the loss, destruction, or mutilation to the registrar;

(2) Paying a service fee equal to the amount paid when the placardholder obtained the original placard.

Any placardholder who loses a placard and, after obtaining a duplicate, finds the original, immediately shall surrender the original placard to the registrar.

(K)(1) The registrar shall pay all fees received under this section for the issuance of removable windshield placards or duplicate removable windshield placards into the state treasury to the credit of the public safety - highway purposes fund created in section 4501.06 of the Revised Code.

(2) In addition to the fees collected under this section, the registrar or deputy registrar shall ask each person applying for a removable windshield placard or duplicate removable windshield placard or license plate issued under this section, whether the person wishes to make a two-dollar voluntary contribution to support rehabilitation employment services. The registrar shall transmit the contributions received under this division to the treasurer of state for deposit into the rehabilitation employment fund, which is hereby created in the state treasury. A deputy registrar shall transmit the contributions received under this division to the registrar in the time and manner prescribed by the registrar. The contributions in the fund shall be used by the opportunities for Ohioans with



disabilities agency to purchase services related to vocational evaluation, work adjustment, personal adjustment, job placement, job coaching, and community-based assessment from accredited community rehabilitation program facilities.

(L) For purposes of enforcing this section, every peace officer is deemed to be an agent of the registrar. Any peace officer or any authorized employee of the bureau of motor vehicles who, in the performance of duties authorized by law, becomes aware of a person whose removable windshield placard or parking card has been revoked pursuant to this section, may confiscate that placard or parking card and return it to the registrar. The registrar shall prescribe any forms used by law enforcement agencies in administering this section.

No peace officer, law enforcement agency employing a peace officer, or political subdivision or governmental agency employing a peace officer, and no employee of the bureau is liable in a civil action for damages or loss to persons arising out of the performance of any duty required or authorized by this section. As used in this division, "peace officer" has the same meaning as in division (B) of section 2935.01 of the Revised Code.

(M) All applications for registration of motor vehicles and removable windshield placards issued under this section, all renewal notices for such items, and all other publications issued by the bureau that relate to this section shall set forth the criminal penalties that may be imposed upon a person who violates any provision relating to accessible license plates issued under this section, the parking of vehicles displaying such license plates, and the issuance, procurement, use, and display of removable windshield placards issued under this section.

(N) Whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree.

The Legislative Service Commission presents the text of this section as a composite of the section as amended by multiple acts of the General Assembly. This presentation recognizes the principle stated in R.C. 1.52(B) that amendments are to be harmonized if reasonably capable of simultaneous operation.