



Ohio Revised Code

Section 4505.101 Certificate of title to unclaimed motor vehicle.

Effective: April 7, 2023

Legislation: House Bill 507

(A)(1) Any repair garage or place of storage in which a motor vehicle with a value of less than three thousand five hundred dollars has been left unclaimed for fifteen days or more following completion of the requested repair or the agreed term of storage shall send a notice to remove the motor vehicle to the last known address of any owner and any lienholder of the motor vehicle. The repair garage or place of storage shall send the notice by certified or express mail with return receipt requested, by certified mail with electronic tracking, or by a commercial carrier service utilizing any form of delivery requiring a signed receipt. In order to identify any owner or lienholder, prior to sending a notice, the repair garage or place of storage shall cause a search to be made of the records of an applicable entity listed in division (F)(1) of section 4513.601 of the Revised Code. Any notice to a lienholder shall state where the motor vehicle is located and the value of the vehicle. If the person who requested the repair or who agreed to the storage of the motor vehicle is not the owner or a lienholder of the motor vehicle as indicated in the title records, the repair garage or place of storage also shall notify the sheriff of the county or the law enforcement agency of the municipal corporation, township, port authority, conservancy district, or township or joint police district in which the repair garage or place of storage is located that the repair garage or place of storage is in possession of the vehicle.

(2) The repair garage or place of storage may obtain a certificate of title to the motor vehicle if all of the following apply:

(a) The motor vehicle remains unclaimed by any owner or lienholder of the vehicle for fifteen days after the sending of the required notice.

(b) For the notice, the repair garage or place of storage has either received the signed receipt or has been notified that the delivery was not possible. Unless the lienholder claims the motor vehicle within fifteen days from the sending of the notice, the lienholder's lien is invalid.

(c) An agent of the repair garage or place of storage that sent the notice executes an affidavit, in a



form established by the registrar of motor vehicles by rule, affirming that all of the requirements of this section necessary to authorize the issuance of a certificate of title for the motor vehicle have been met. The affidavit shall set forth an itemized statement of the value of the motor vehicle; the length of time that the motor vehicle has remained unclaimed; that a notice to remove the vehicle has been sent to any titled owner or lienholder in a manner authorized by division (A)(1) of this section; and that a search of title records has been made in accordance with division (A)(1) of this section.

(B) A towing service or storage facility that is in possession of a vehicle may obtain a certificate of title to the vehicle as provided in division (C) of this section if all of the following apply:

- (1) The vehicle was towed under division (B) of section 4513.601 of the Revised Code.
- (2) The vehicle has a value of less than three thousand five hundred dollars.
- (3) The vehicle has been left unclaimed for sixty days after the date the earliest notice required by division (F) of section 4513.601 of the Revised Code is received, as evidenced by a receipt signed by any person, or the towing service or storage facility has been notified that the delivery was not possible.
- (4) An agent of the towing service or storage facility executes an affidavit, in a form established by the registrar of motor vehicles by rule, affirming that all of the requirements of this section necessary to authorize the issuance of a certificate of title for the motor vehicle have been met. The affidavit shall set forth an itemized statement of the value of the motor vehicle; that notices to remove the vehicle have been sent to the owner and any lienholder as required under division (F) of section 4513.601 of the Revised Code; the length of time that the motor vehicle has remained unclaimed after the date the earliest notice required under division (F) of section 4513.601 of the Revised Code was received or the towing service or storage facility was notified that delivery was not possible; and that a search of the records of the applicable entity has been made for outstanding liens on the motor vehicle.

(C)(1) The clerk of courts shall issue a certificate of title, free and clear of all liens and encumbrances as follows:



(a) To a repair garage or place of storage that presents an affidavit that complies with all of the requirements of division (A) of this section;

(b) To a towing service or storage facility that presents an affidavit in compliance with division (B) of this section.

(2) A repair garage or place of storage may use the process established under division (A) of this section in order to take title to a motor vehicle even if the person who requested the repair or who agreed to the storage of the motor vehicle is not the owner or a lienholder of the motor vehicle as indicated in the title records.

(3) Upon receipt of the certificate of title, a repair garage or place of storage, or a towing service or storage facility, shall pay to the clerk of courts the value of the motor vehicle minus both of the following:

(a) If the motor vehicle was towed by the party seeking title to the motor vehicle under this section, a towing fee;

(b) Storage fees for the period of time the vehicle was stored without payment.

The clerk of courts shall deposit any money received under this section into the county general fund.

(D) Whoever violates this section shall be fined not more than two hundred dollars, imprisoned not more than ninety days, or both.

(E) As used in this section:

(1) "Repair garage or place of storage" means any business with which a person entered into an agreement for the repair of a motor vehicle or any business with which a person entered into an agreement for the storage of a motor vehicle.

(2) "Towing service or storage facility" means any for-hire motor carrier that removes a motor vehicle under the authority of section 4513.601 of the Revised Code and any place to which such a



for-hire motor carrier delivers a motor vehicle towed under that section.

(3) "Value" means the wholesale value for that make and model of motor vehicle at the time an affidavit is submitted under division (C) of this section, as provided in a vehicle valuation guide that is generally available and recognized by the motor vehicle industry, minus both of the following:

- (a) The estimated cost of repairs to restore the motor vehicle to the wholesale value for that make and model of motor vehicle;
- (b) The cost of any agreed-upon repairs.