AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #540184

Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 3745-26-12 Requirements for motor vehicle owners in the enhanced automobile inspection and maintenance program.

Effective: August 21, 2026

[Comment: For dates and availability of non-regulatory government publications, publications of recognized organizations and associations, federal rules, and federal statutory provisions referenced in this rule, see paragraph (AA) of rule 3745-26-01 of the Administrative Code titled "Referenced materials."]

(A) Motor vehicles subject to inspection.

(1) Beginning January 1, 1996, the director will implement and supervise an enhanced vehicle inspection and maintenance program in the counties that are necessary for the state to effectively comply with the Clean Air Act.

(2) Unless otherwise exempt pursuant to divisions (B)(3) and (B)(5) of section 3704.14 of the Revised Code, each twenty-five year-old or more recent motor vehicle whose owner or lessee resides in a county that is part of a designated program area, and each twenty-five year-old or more recent motor vehicle that is part of a fleet operated in a county that is part of a designated program area, is subject to biennial inspection for the enhanced vehicle inspection and maintenance program.

Unless otherwise exempt pursuant to divisions (B)(3) and (B)(5) of section 3704.14 of the Revised Code, each government vehicle that is owned or leased by the state, local government, or any political subdivision whose office is located within a county that is part of a designated program area, is subject to inspection in odd numbered years and shall report the inspection results to the director by December thirty-first of that year.

Pursuant to 40 CFR part 51.356, unless otherwise exempt pursuant to divisions (B)(3) and (B)(5) of section 3704.14 of the Revised Code, each government vehicle that is owned or leased by the federal government or its employees and is operated on a federal installation within a county that is part of a designated program area is subject to inspection. Vehicles owned or leased by the federal government will be required to have an inspection in odd numbered years and shall report the inspection results to the director by December thirty-first of that year.

(a) The county of residence of an owner is determined by the resident's or owner's address provided on the registration issued by the registrar of motor vehicles.

(b) A lessee's county of residence is determined by the resident's address listed on the lease agreement.

AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #540184

(c) Federal installations located in a designated program area provide documentation of proof of compliance with test requirements to the director of Ohio environmental protection agency. Documentation includes a list of subject vehicles and be updated biennially.

(3) With the exception of when vehicles are exempt from testing, owners or lessees shall comply with the following test frequency in a designated program area:

(a) An owner or lessee whose vehicle is an odd number model year is required to present a valid inspection certificate upon vehicle registration in odd numbered calendar years.

(b) An owner or lessee whose vehicle is an even number model year is required to present a valid inspection certificate upon vehicle registration in even numbered calendar years.

(4) An owner or lessee may have a vehicle inspected in any county in Ohio where the approved test is being offered.

(5) At the time of vehicle registration or registration renewal, the owner or lessee shall present to the registrar of motor vehicles an inspection certificate, an exemption certificate, an extension certificate, or a repair waiver certificate with an application for vehicle registration as determined under section 4503.10 of the Revised Code.

(6) With the exception of when vehicles are exempt from testing, vehicles that have been transferred to a new owner or lessee or those issued a thirty-day temporary tag as defined in section 4503.182 of the Revised Code is required to have an emissions inspection performed unless a valid inspection certificate from the previous owner is transferred to the new owner or a duplicate inspection certificate as prescribed in paragraph (D)(10) of this rule is obtained. Repair waivers and all types of exemption and extension certificates are not transferable.

(7) Foreign imported gray market vehicles that have been issued documents of exemption from emission requirements by the United States environmental protection agency are not exempt from testing in Ohio.

(8) Vehicles subject to inspection that have been rebuilt or that have had engine exchanges are required to meet inspection requirements for the model year of the motor vehicle chassis.

(9) For a kit car or self-assembled car whose engine year can be confirmed by the director or the director's designee, the vehicle will be tested based on

AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #540184

the standards for the confirmed engine year. If the engine year cannot be confirmed, the motor vehicle will be tested on the standard for the year the vehicle was titled.

(10) A passing vehicle inspection certificate issued to an owner or lessee is valid for three hundred sixty-five days from the date of the inspection and can be transferred to a subsequent owner or lessee of that vehicle.

(11) All vehicle inspection certificates shall contain the following statement: "This automobile inspection is a result of requirements under the Clean Air Act as enacted by the United States Congress and enforced by U.S. EPA. Any questions or concerns on the need of the testing program can be directed to U.S. EPA at Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Transportation and Air Quality, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20460. www.epa.gov/aboutepa/forms/contact-epa."

(B) Non-permanent exemptions and extensions.

(1) Pursuant to divisions (B)(3) and (B)(5) of section 3704.14 of the Revised Code, new vehicles are exempt from the inspection requirements as follows:

(a) New motor vehicles (non-hybrids) are exempt from the inspection requirements for six years in the enhanced vehicle inspection and maintenance program. New vehicle exemptions commence beginning with the first model year of the vehicle and expire at the end of the sixth year, for example, a 2019 model year's exemption expires December 31, 2024. An exemption certificate is not required for an owner or lessee of new vehicles.

(b) New hybrid motor vehicles are exempt from the inspection requirements for seven years in the enhanced vehicle inspection and maintenance program. New hybrid motor vehicle exemptions commence beginning with the first model year of the vehicle and expire at the end of the seventh year, for example, a 2018 model year's exemption expires December 31, 2024. An exemption certificate is not required for an owner or lessee of new hybrid motor vehicle. Hybrid motor vehicles resume the normal even or odd model year testing by testing again the following year.

(2) Consistent with the intent of this chapter, the director may grant exemptions for or extensions of the time during which any motor vehicle required to be tested pursuant to section 3704.14 of the Revised Code and the rules adopted thereunder is exempt from testing, if circumstances indicate such an exemption or extension is warranted.

AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #540184

(3) Any application for a non-permanent exemption or extension shall be submitted on a form prescribed by the director. Copies of this form may be obtained free of charge from the Ohio environmental protection agency, from the bureau of motor vehicles, from any test station, or from the website www.ohioecheck.org.

(4) Any owner or lessee receiving a non-permanent exemption or extension shall comply with any terms and conditions specified by the director on the extension certificate. If the recipient of an extension certificate fails to comply with the terms and conditions, that owner or lessee is not be eligible for future exemptions or extensions.

(5) Extensions may be issued at the discretion of the director, for the purpose of allowing for a delay in the testing requirement for a period of up to six months. The following are the types of extensions and the requirements and documentation necessary to qualify for an extension:

(a) A repair extension may be granted for a motor vehicle that is undergoing repair at the time of the registration or registration renewal. In addition to the application, an extension request based upon repair shall include a copy of the repair order or parts order, or both when available, from the facility performing the repairs, and a copy of the current vehicle registration.

(b) An out of state extension may be granted for a motor vehicle that is located in another state provided law enforcement verifies the vehicle location as requested in the application or by another verification method approved by the director on a case-by-case basis.

(c) A readiness extension may be granted for a motor vehicle that is having readiness issues related to testing. The documentation shall include a failed inspection report or customer notice indicating not able to test due to readiness.

(d) A hardship extension for any motor vehicle may be granted to an owner or lessee that meets the following criteria:

(i) The motor vehicle fails any part of the emission test, except the gas cap test.

(ii) The owner or lessee completes and submits an application for a hardship extension.

(iii) The applicant certifies that the applicant's income qualifies as "low income," as defined in rule 3745-26-01 of the Administrative Code.

AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #540184

(iv) The owner or lessee provides a written estimate of one hundred-twenty-five dollars or more for vehicle emission repairs, parts or services, including diagnostic fees, related to the failure. If an owner or lessee intends to perform the necessary services or repairs themself, the written estimate shall include only the cost of emission related parts. The written estimate shall not include any costs associated with any motor vehicle emission related recall that has been or is to be paid by a manufacturer or dealer.

(e) A director's discretionary extension may be granted as the director determines is necessary and appropriate for very unique circumstances not addressed in this paragraph.

(6) A non-permanent exemption for a motor vehicle may be issued if one of the following criteria is met by the owner or lessee:

(a) For motor vehicles owned or operated by military personnel stationed outside Ohio.

If a motor vehicle is registered in an Ohio designated program area, but is owned or operated by a member of the military who is stationed outside Ohio, the application for non-permanent exemption shall include a copy of that person's current military orders, a copy of the vehicle registration and a completed exemption application.

(b) For motor vehicles owned or operated by students attending schools outside the state of Ohio that are not within another state's designated program area.

If a motor vehicle registered in an Ohio designated program area is owned or operated by a person attending school outside the state of Ohio but which is not in another state's designated program area, the application for non-permanent exemption shall include a statement from the registrar of the school attesting to the student's registration and the effective dates of that registration, a copy of the vehicle registration and a completed exemption application.

(c) For motor vehicles operated outside Ohio in another state's designated program area but not operated by a person eligible for a military or student exemption.

If a motor vehicle registered in an Ohio designated program area is owned or operated by a person in another state's designated program area, the

AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #540184

application for non-permanent exemption shall include a valid inspection certificate from the motor vehicle inspection program in that area, a copy of the vehicle registration and a completed exemption application.

(C) Permanent exemptions.

(1) Effective January 1, 1996, the following motor vehicles are permanently exempt from the emissions inspection required in the designated program area:

(a) Vehicles that are older than twenty-five years, as determined by vehicle model year.

(b) Motor vehicles with gross vehicle weight ratings of more than ten thousand pounds. Any motor vehicle registered as noncommercial with a gross vehicle weight rating of more than ten thousand pounds will receive a permanent exemption certificate after a visual verification of the gross vehicle weight rating and inspection of the emissions systems by an Ohio environmental protection agency representative. This exemption certificate is not transferable.

(c) Historical vehicles registered under section 4503.181 of the Revised Code. Owners of historical vehicles are not required to obtain exemption certificates.

(d) Collector's vehicles registered under section 4501.01 of the Revised Code. Owners of collector's vehicles are not required to obtain exemption certificates.

(e) Parade and exhibition vehicles registered under section 4503.18 of the Revised Code. Owners of parade and exhibition vehicles are not required to obtain exemption certificates.

(f) Motorcycles as defined in section 4511.01 of the Revised Code. Owners or lesses of motorcycles are not required to obtain exemption certificates.

(g) Vehicles, the district of registration of which is located in a designated program area, that are leased to a lessee whose county taxing district code, as designated on the vehicle registration, is outside a designated program area. The lessees of such vehicles are not required to obtain exemption certificates as long as the lessee's county taxing district remains outside a designated program area.

AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #540184

(h) Vehicles for which salvage certificates of title have been issued under division (C) of section 4505.11 of the Revised Code. Owners or lessees of salvaged vehicles are not required to obtain exemption certificates.

(i) Recreational vehicles and motor homes as defined in section 4501.01 of the Revised Code. Owners or lessees of recreational vehicles and motor homes are not required to obtain exemption certificates.

(j) Vehicles operating on an alternative fuel such as primarily one hundred per cent propane, butane, alcohol or natural gas. Experimental vehicles and vehicles operating on other alternative fuels may be exempted at the director's discretion. Such vehicles shall have a one-time verification inspection performed on the vehicle prior to receiving an exemption certificate.

(k) Vehicles that are registered according to sections 4511.214 and 4511.215 of the Revised Code as defined in section 4501.01 of the Revised Code and rule 3745-26-01 of the Administrative Code. These types of vehicles include but are not limited to utility vehicles, low-speed vehicles, under-speed vehicles and mini-trucks.

(2) Effective June 30, 2025, the following motor vehicles are permanently exempt from the emissions inspection required in the designated program area:

(a) Battery electric motor vehicles

(b) Plug-in hybrid electric motor vehicles.

(D) Inspection procedures and repair requirements.

(1) All inspections shall be performed at a designated and approved inspection station. If required, the owner or lessee shall present the vehicle registration, an application for registration renewal, a vehicle registration expiration notice, or the vehicle title, or copy thereof, at the time of inspection so as to verify the vehicle identification number and that the vehicle is registered in a testing county or the owner or lessee resides in a testing county.

(2) Vehicles shall receive a visual check. Vehicles found to be in an unsafe condition will not receive an emission inspection but will be issued a rejection report indicating items that need to be repaired. This rejection does not count as a failure for purposes of paragraph (F) of this rule. Any vehicle may be rejected where fuel, engine oil, coolant or transmission oil leaks are present in or around engine, or where fuel tank or lines cause a visible pooling of fluid onto floor.

AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #540184

(3) A vehicle known to be on an emission related recall or that has an unresolved emission related recall repair will not be inspected until the recall repair is completed and documented with proof of the work performed. After such proof has been presented, an emission test may be performed on the vehicle. Recall repair costs, whether conducted by the manufacturer or dealer, are not counted toward a waiver.

(4) Any vehicle subject to this rule shall have a tampering inspection to ensure that the vehicle contains the emissions control equipment and that the equipment properly operates. Vehicles that are missing a gas cap, when required, will fail the gas cap test and vehicle inspection.

Each tampering inspection will be performed on the basis of the vehicle's original emission control system configuration at the time of manufacture, or on a United States environmental protection agency certified emission control configuration for an engine of the same or newer model year and weight class of that of the vehicle. After market replacement parts and add-on and modified parts meeting the performance criteria specified in 40 CFR part 85, subpart V, or meeting the requirements of the United States environmental protection agency memorandum 1A policy document, or which have not otherwise been found in violation of the anti-tampering provisions of the Clean Air Act as amended are considered to be in compliance with this chapter.

Vehicles that fail the tampering inspection will be considered to have failed the emission test and will be issued a vehicle inspection report indicating the failure items. The owner or lessee shall have the vehicle repaired to pass the initial tampering test.

(5) If a vehicle passes the tampering inspection, the vehicle is then required to be tested and pass an on board diagnostic test, unless an alternative test is determined to be required.

(6) If the vehicle passes the required emission inspection, the contractor shall provide the owner or lessee with a vehicle inspection report that includes an inspection certificate indicating compliance.

If a vehicle fails the required emission inspection, the contractor shall provide the owner or lessee with a vehicle inspection report and inspection certificate indicating which items failed the inspection. This report shall list diagnostic trouble codes that will assist in making the necessary repairs to emissions components or systems.

AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #540184

(7) Upon receipt of the vehicle inspection report indicating failure, the owner or lessee shall do the following:

(a) Have emission related repairs performed on the vehicle.

(b) Have the necessary repairs performed so that the vehicle can pass a subsequent reinspection. Only new original or new aftermarket catalytic converters or recertified used catalytic converters meeting the emission reduction requirements and criteria set by the United States environmental protection agency are acceptable for catalytic converter replacement required under this chapter.

(c) Have the vehicle reinspected after the required repairs have been performed.

(8) Any owner or lessee may perform repairs necessary to prepare the vehicle for reinspection, however, only actual costs of emissions related parts, not labor costs, incurred by an owner or lessee in performing self repairs upon vehicles will be applied towards a waiver.

(9) If a vehicle failing the enhanced emission inspection is covered by a valid and unexpired emission performance warranty as provided under section 207 (B) of the Clean Air Act the vehicle owner or lessee may have any repairs necessary for the vehicle to pass inspection performed on the vehicle under that warranty. Such a vehicle is not eligible for a waiver under this rule. Costs incurred under warranty repairs cannot be applied towards a waiver.

(10) If an owner or lessee loses an inspection certificate and a valid vehicle inspection identification number does not appear on the bureau of motor vehicles' registration data file, the vehicle owner or lessee may obtain a duplicate inspection certificate from a designated inspection station.

(11) Emission inspections shall incorporate the on-board diagnostic computer link feature mandated by the Clean Air Act when the feature is available.

(E) Repair waivers.

(1) To qualify for a waiver certificate, an owner or lessee shall provide all of the following:

(a) The most recent failed VIR. Emission related repairs performed prior to the vehicle's initial inspection can be included in calculating whether the owner or lessee has met the "waiver limit" as provided in paragraph (E)

AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #540184

(2) of this rule, if the repairs were performed within sixty days of that initial inspection.

(b) Emission-related repair receipts including itemized costs from a repair facility, or costs of parts if repairs are performed by an owner or lessee, to bring the vehicle into compliance with the required emission inspection. This amount cannot include the cost of repairing or replacing tampered emissions control equipment, and can only include the cost of parts if the repairs are performed by the owner or lessee themself.

For a vehicle registered in a county subject to the enhanced vehicle inspection and maintenance program, the owner or lessee shall satisfy paragraphs (E)(2) to (E)(4) of this rule.

(2) The owner or lessee shall demonstrate that an amount equal to or greater than the "waiver limit" as defined in rule 3745-26-01 of the Administrative Code has been spent on emission-related repairs and diagnostic fees. This amount cannot include the cost of repairing or replacing tampered emissions control equipment and can only include the cost of parts if the repairs are performed by the vehicle owner or lessee themself. If the owner or lessee demonstrates that the "waiver limit" has been spent, the vehicle shall be inspected and the documentation reviewed to establish the following:

(a) For all vehicles, the motor vehicle shows no sign of tampering with the emission control equipment.

(b) For all vehicles attempting to qualify for a repair waiver and to the extent possible, the repair waiver inspection will verify the emission-related repairs or replaced parts were made to that vehicle and as itemized on the repair receipt.

(3) An owner or lessee can only receive two consecutive repair waiver certificates for any repeating diagnostic codes. If the same diagnostic codes repeats for a third consecutive inspection, the vehicle shall be repaired for those diagnostic codes. For a third consecutive failed inspection for the same diagnostic codes where repairs exceed nine hundred dollars, the owner or lessee may request an extension certificate for more time to make repairs.

(4) A waiver certificate is valid for three hundred sixty-five days from its date of issuance or until the next required vehicle emission test. A waiver is not transferable to a subsequent owner or lessee.

(F) Inspection fees.

AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #540184

(1) The contractor shall refund the costs for one passing emission inspection per vehicle incurred by a motor vehicle dealer. This refund applies to vehicles that become registered in a county that is subject to the motor vehicle inspection and maintenance program.

(2) For an owner or lessee, the contractor shall provide for one free passing emission inspection or a total of three emissions inspections for a motor vehicle in any three-hundred-sixty-five day period. The owner or lessee of a motor vehicle is responsible for inspection fees that are related to emission inspections beyond one free passing emissions inspection or three total emission inspections in any rolling three-hundred-sixty-five day period.

(3) Inspection fees that are charged by a contractor conducting emission inspections under a motor vehicle inspection and maintenance program shall be appproved by the director.

(G) Appeal procedures.

An owner or lessee may appeal the results of an emissions inspection if the owner or lessee believes the inspection was not administered according to rules or procedures of this chapter. The owner or lessee may appeal the inspection results to the director within fourteen days of failing an emissions inspection.

(1) Upon notice of request for an appeal, the director shall contact the owner or lessee and will reinspect the vehicle at a place and time of the director's convenience.

(2) The director's determination of the vehicle's compliance or noncompliance with inspection standards is final upon reinspection by the director.