



Ohio Revised Code

Section 3704.16 Prohibiting tampering with motor vehicle emission control systems.

Effective: April 9, 2025

Legislation: House Bill 403 - 135th General Assembly

(A) As used in sections 3704.16 to 3704.162 of the Revised Code:

(1) "Tamper with" means to remove permanently, bypass, defeat, or render inoperative, in whole or part, any emission control system that is installed on or in a motor vehicle.

(2) "Motor vehicle" has the same meaning as in section 4501.01 of the Revised Code.

(3) "Emission control system" means any system designated by the United States environmental protection agency as an emission control system under Title II of the "Clean Air Act Amendments." "Emission control system" includes any device or element of design of the system.

(4) "Clean Air Act Amendments" has the same meaning as in section 3704.14 of the Revised Code.

(5) Notwithstanding section 3704.01 of the Revised Code, "person" has the same meaning as in section 1.59 of the Revised Code.

(B) No person shall do any of the following:

(1) Sell, offer for sale, possess for sale, advertise, manufacture, install, or use any part or component intended for use with or as part of any motor vehicle when the primary effect is to bypass, defeat, or render inoperative, in whole or part, the emission control system;

(2) Introduce a leaded fuel into a motor vehicle that is designed, manufactured, or certified by the United States environmental protection agency to use only unleaded fuels;

(3) Tamper with any emission control system installed on or in a motor vehicle prior to its sale and delivery to the ultimate purchaser;



(4) Violate any rule or order the director of environmental protection adopts or issues under section 3704.161 of the Revised Code;

(5) Refuse to permit the director or the director's designee to inspect any motor vehicle or documents as provided in division (A) of section 3704.161 of the Revised Code.

The sale, offering for sale, possession for sale, advertisement, manufacture, installation, and use of a part or component in violation of division (B)(1) of this section all constitute separate offenses.

(C) No person shall knowingly do any of the following:

(1) Operate a motor vehicle that has been tampered with if the motor vehicle or motor vehicle engine has been certified by the United States environmental protection agency as meeting federal or California emission control standards;

(2) Sell, lease, rent, or offer to sell, lease, or rent, or transfer or offer to transfer title or a right to possession of a motor vehicle that has been tampered with;

(3) Tamper with any emission control system installed on or in a motor vehicle after sale, lease, or rental and delivery of the vehicle to the ultimate purchaser, lessee, or renter.

The sale, lease, rental, and offer to sell, lease, or rent, and other transfer or offer to transfer of title or a right to possession of a motor vehicle in violation of division (C)(2) of this section all constitute separate offenses.

(D) Division (C)(2) of this section does not apply to any of the following:

(1) Any person who sells, leases, rents, or offers to sell, lease, or rent, or transfers or offers to transfer title or a right to possession of a motor vehicle that has been tampered with if the person is acting as a motor vehicle auction owner, a special auctioneer, or a salvage motor vehicle auction and if the person holds a current and appropriate license to engage in those activities issued under Chapter 4517., 4707., or 4738. of the Revised Code;



(2) The sale, lease, rental, or offer to sell, lease, or rent, or transfer or offer to transfer title or right to possession of a motor vehicle that has been tampered with if the vehicle is titled with a salvage certificate of title issued under section 4505.11 of the Revised Code;

(3) A motor vehicle dealer who sells or offers to sell, or transfers or offers to transfer title to, a motor vehicle that has been tampered with to another motor vehicle dealer through a motor vehicle auction if all of the following occur:

(a) The dealer discloses to the auction that the vehicle has been tampered with.

(b) The auction announces during, or as part of, the vehicle auction process that the vehicle has been tampered with.

(c) The auction identifies the vehicle as having been tampered with in any written description of the vehicle.

(d) The auction provides the buyer and seller of the vehicle with a receipt or other written documentation after the sale that identifies the vehicle as having been tampered with.

(E) Notwithstanding divisions (B)(1) and (3) and (C)(3) of this section, it is not a violation of those divisions if either of the following conditions is met:

(1) The action is taken for the purpose of repair or replacement of the emission control system or is a necessary and temporary procedure to repair or replace any other item on the motor vehicle and the action results in the system's compliance with the "Clean Air Act Amendments";

(2) The action is for the purpose of converting a motor vehicle to use a clean alternative fuel, as defined in Title II of the "Clean Air Act Amendments," the motor vehicle complies with the applicable standard adopted under Section 202 of that act when operating on the fuel, an emission control system is installed or replaced upon completion of the conversion, and the action results in the system's compliance with that act when the motor vehicle operates on the fuel for which it originally was designed.