



Ohio Revised Code

Section 4503.44 Windshield placards, license plates and parking cards for walking-impaired persons - registration of altered vehicles.

Effective: March 24, 2021

Legislation: Senate Bill 110 - 131st General Assembly

(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 special 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.

(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 special 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 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 special 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 special 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 specified in division (D) or (G) of section 4503.10 of the Revised Code.

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

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.

(2) An organization may apply to the registrar of motor vehicles for a 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.

(3) Upon receipt of a completed and signed application for a removable windshield placard, the accompanying documents required under division (C)(1) or (2) of this section, and payment of a service fee equal to the amount specified in division (D) or (G) of section 4503.10 of the Revised Code, the registrar or deputy registrar shall issue to the applicant a removable windshield placard, which shall bear the date of expiration on both sides of the placard and shall be valid until expired, revoked, or surrendered. Every removable windshield placard expires as described in division (C)(4) of this section, but in no case shall a removable windshield placard be valid for a period of less than sixty days. Removable windshield placards shall be renewable upon application as provided in division (C)(1) or (2) of this section and upon payment of a service fee equal to the amount specified in division (D) or (G) of section 4503.10 of the Revised Code for the renewal of a removable windshield placard. The registrar shall provide the application form and shall determine the information to be included thereon. The registrar also shall determine the form and size of the removable windshield placard, the material of which it is to be made, 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. 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.

(4) 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. Not less than thirty days prior to that date and all removable windshield placard 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 not to exceed five years from the date



of issuance, and that the person is required to renew the placard by submitting to the registrar or a deputy registrar another prescription, as described in division (C)(1) or (2) of this section, and by complying with the renewal provisions prescribed in division (C)(3) of this section. 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.

(5) 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 and temporary removable windshield placards. If the records of the office of vital statistics indicate that a person to whom a removable windshield placard or temporary 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)(5) of this section.

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

(D)(1)(a) A person with a disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk may apply to the registrar or a deputy registrar for a temporary removable windshield placard. The application for a temporary removable windshield placard shall be accompanied by a prescription from the applicant's health care provider prescribing such a placard for the applicant, provided 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 six consecutive months or less. 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 applicant's ability to walk, which cannot exceed six months from the date of the prescription. Upon receipt of an application for a temporary removable windshield placard, presentation of the prescription from the applicant's health care provider, and payment of a service fee equal to the amount specified in division (D) or (G) of section 4503.10 of the Revised Code, the



registrar or deputy registrar shall issue to the applicant a temporary removable windshield placard.

(b) 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.

(2) The temporary removable windshield placard shall be of the same size and form as the removable windshield placard, shall be printed in white on a red-colored background, and shall bear the word "temporary" in letters of such size as the registrar shall prescribe. A temporary removable windshield placard also shall bear the date of expiration on the front and back of the placard, and shall be valid until expired, surrendered, or revoked, but in no case shall such a placard be valid for a period of less than sixty days. The registrar shall provide the application form and shall determine the information to be included on it, provided that the registrar shall not require a health care provider's prescription or certification for a person applying under division (D)(1)(b) of this section. The registrar also shall determine the material of which the temporary removable windshield placard is to be made and any other information to be included on the placard and shall adopt rules relating to the issuance, expiration, surrender, revocation, and proper display of those placards. Any temporary removable windshield placard issued after October 14, 1999, shall be manufactured in a manner that allows for 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.

(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) 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.

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.

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

(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 or temporary 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, temporary 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 specified in division (D) or (G) of section 4503.10 of the Revised Code.

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

(K)(1) The registrar shall pay all fees received under this section for the issuance of removable windshield placards or temporary removable windshield placards or duplicate removable windshield placards or cards into the state treasury to the credit of the state bureau of motor vehicles fund created in section 4501.25 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 temporary 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 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, removable windshield placards, and temporary 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 special 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 and temporary removable windshield placards issued under this section.

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