



Ohio Revised Code

Section 4505.08 Issuance of physical certificate of title.

Effective: December 27, 2025

Legislation: House Bill 54

(A) When the clerk of a court of common pleas issues a physical certificate of title, the clerk shall issue the certificate of title on a form and in a manner prescribed by the registrar of motor vehicles. The clerk shall file a copy of the physical evidence for the creation of the certificate of title in a manner prescribed by the registrar. A clerk may retain digital images of documents used as evidence for issuance of a certificate of title. Certified printouts of documents retained as digital images shall have the same evidentiary value as the original physical documents. The record of the issuance of the certificate of title shall be maintained in the automated title processing system. The clerk shall sign and affix the clerk's seal to the original certificate of title and, if there are no liens on the motor vehicle, shall deliver the certificate to the applicant or the selling dealer. If there are one or more liens on the motor vehicle, the certificate of title shall be delivered to the holder of the first lien or the selling dealer, who shall deliver the certificate of title to the holder of the first lien.

The registrar shall prescribe a uniform method of numbering certificates of title, and such numbering shall be in such manner that the county of issuance is indicated. The clerk shall assign numbers to certificates of title in the manner prescribed by the registrar. The clerk shall file all certificates of title according to rules to be prescribed by the registrar, and the clerk shall maintain in the clerk's office indexes for the certificates of title.

The clerk need not retain on file any current certificates of title, current duplicate certificates of title, current memorandum certificates of title, or current salvage certificates of title, or supporting evidence of them covering any motor vehicle or manufactured or mobile home for a period longer than seven years after the date of its filing; thereafter, the documents and supporting evidence may be destroyed. The clerk need not retain on file any inactive records, including certificates of title, duplicate certificates of title, or memorandum certificates of title, or supporting evidence of them, including the electronic record described in division (A) of section 4505.06 of the Revised Code, covering any motor vehicle or manufactured or mobile home for a period longer than five years after the date of its filing; thereafter, the documents and supporting evidence may be destroyed.



The automated title processing system shall contain all active records and an index of the active records, a record and index of all inactive titles for ten years, and a record and index of all inactive titles for manufactured and mobile homes for thirty years. If the clerk provides a written copy of any information contained in the database, the copy shall be considered the original for purposes of the clerk certifying the record of the information for use in any legal proceeding.

(B)(1) If the clerk issues a certificate of title for a motor vehicle that was last previously registered in another state, the clerk shall record verbatim, where practicable, in the space on the title described in division (B)(19) of section 4505.07 of the Revised Code, the words that appear as a notation to the vehicle on the title issued by the previous state. These notations may include, but are not limited to, words to the effect that the vehicle was considered or was categorized by the state in which it was last previously registered to be a law enforcement vehicle or a taxicab or was once in a flood.

(2) If the clerk, while issuing a certificate of title for a motor vehicle that was last previously registered in another state, receives information from the automated title processing system indicating that a title to the vehicle previously was issued by this state and that the previous title contained notations that appeared in the space described in division (B)(19) or (20) of section 4505.07 of the Revised Code, the clerk shall enter the notations that appeared on the previous certificate of title issued by this state on the new certificate of title in the space described in division (B)(19) or (20) of section 4505.07 of the Revised Code, irrespective of whether the notations appear on the certificate of title issued by the state in which the vehicle was last previously registered.

(3) If the clerk, while issuing a certificate of title for a motor vehicle that was last previously registered in another state, receives information from the automated title processing system indicating that the vehicle was previously issued a title by this state and that the previous title bore the notation "REBUILT SALVAGE" as required by division (E) of section 4505.11 of the Revised Code, or the previous title to the vehicle issued by this state was a salvage certificate of title, the clerk shall cause the certificate of title the clerk issues to bear the notation "REBUILT SALVAGE" in the location prescribed by the registrar pursuant to that division.

(4) If the clerk, while issuing a certificate of title for a motor vehicle that was last previously registered in another state, receives information from the automated title processing system indicating that the vehicle was previously issued a title by this state and that the previous title



included the notation "REPLICA" in accordance with section 4505.072 of the Revised Code, or the previous title to the vehicle issued by another state indicates that the vehicle is a replica motor vehicle, the clerk shall cause the certificate of title the clerk issues to display the notation "REPLICA" in the location prescribed by the registrar pursuant to that section.

(C) When the clerk issues a certificate of title for a motor vehicle that was last previously registered in this state and was a law enforcement vehicle or a taxicab or was once in a flood, the clerk shall record that information in the space on the title described in division (B)(20) of section 4505.07 of the Revised Code. The registrar, by rule, may prescribe any additional uses of or happenings to a motor vehicle that the registrar has reason to believe should be noted on the certificate of title as provided in this division.

(D) The clerk shall use reasonable care in recording or entering onto titles the clerk issues any notation and information the clerk is required by divisions (B) and (C) of this section to record or enter and in causing the titles the clerk issues to bear any notation required by those divisions, but the clerk is not liable for any of the clerk's errors or omissions or those of the clerk's deputies, or the automated title processing system, in the performance of the duties imposed on the clerk by this section.

(E) The clerk may issue a duplicate title, when duly applied for, of any title that has been destroyed as herein provided.

(F) Except as provided in section 4505.021 of the Revised Code, the clerk shall issue a physical certificate of title to an applicant unless the applicant specifically requests the clerk not to issue a physical certificate of title and instead to issue an electronic certificate of title. The fact that a physical certificate of title is not issued for a motor vehicle does not affect ownership of the vehicle. In that case, when the clerk completes the process of entering certificate of title application information into the automated title processing system, the effect of the completion of the process is the same as if the clerk actually issued a physical certificate of title for the motor vehicle.

(G) An electronic motor vehicle dealer who applies for a certificate of title on behalf of a customer who purchases a motor vehicle from the dealer may print a non-negotiable evidence of ownership for the customer if the customer so requests. The authorization to print the non-negotiable evidence of



ownership shall come from the clerk with whom the dealer makes application for the certificate of title for the customer, but the printing by the dealer does not create an agency relationship of any kind between the dealer and the clerk.

(H) The owner of a motor vehicle may apply at any time to a clerk of a court of common pleas for a non-negotiable evidence of ownership for the motor vehicle.

(I) In accordance with rules adopted by the registrar, a clerk may issue a certificate of title applied for by an agent of a licensed motor vehicle dealer when that agent has a properly executed power of attorney from the dealer.