



Ohio Revised Code

Section 4737.04 Scrap metal and merchandise container dealers; exertion of control over certain articles; record keeping.

Effective: October 06, 2026

Legislation: House Bill 210 - 136th General Assembly

(A) As used in this section and sections 4737.041, 4737.042, 4737.043, 4737.044, 4737.045, 4737.046, and 4737.99 of the Revised Code:

(1) "Scrap metal dealer" means the owner or operator of a business that purchases or receives scrap metal for the purpose of sorting, grading, and shipping metals to third parties for direct or indirect melting into new products.

(2) "Special purchase article" means all of the following:

(a) Beer kegs;

(b) Cable, wire, electrical components, and other equipment used in providing cable service or any utility service, including, but not limited to, copper or aluminum coverings, housings, or enclosures related thereto;

(c) Grave markers, sculptures, plaques, and vases made out of metal, the appearance of which suggests that the articles have been obtained from a cemetery;

(d) Guard rails for bridges, highways, and roads; highway and street signs; street light poles and fixtures; worker access hole covers, water meter covers, and other similar types of utility access covers; traffic directional and control signs and light signals, metal marked with the name of a political subdivision of the state, and other metal articles that are purchased and installed for use upon authorization of the state or any political subdivision of the state;

(e) Historical, commemorative, and memorial markers and plaques made out of metal;

(f) Four-wheel metal carts, commonly referred to as "grocery carts," that are generally used by individuals to collect and transport consumer goods while shopping;

(g) Four-wheel metal carts, commonly referred to as "metal bossies," that are used to transport or merchandise food products that are stored in crates, shells, or trays;

(h) Railroad material, including journal brasses, rail spikes, rails, tie plates, frogs, and communication wire;

(i) Metal trays, merchandise containers, or similar transport containers used by a product producer, distributor, retailer, or an agent of a product producer, distributor, or retailer as a



means for the bulk transportation, storage, or carrying of retail containers of milk, baked goods, eggs, or bottled beverage products;

(j) "Burnt wire," which is any coated metal wire that has been smelted, burned, or melted thereby removing the manufacturer's or owner's identifying marks.

(3) "Bulk merchandise container" has the same meaning as in section 4737.012 of the Revised Code.

(4) "Bulk merchandise container dealer" means a dealer who is subject to section 4737.012 of the Revised Code.

(5) "Catalytic converter" includes a catalytic converter core, diesel particulate filter, and diesel oxidation catalyst.

(6) "Common recycled matter" means bottles and other containers made out of steel, tin, or aluminum and other consumer goods that are metal that are recycled by individual consumers and not in the bulk or quantity that could be supplied or recycled by large business establishments. "Common recycled matter" does not include a metal tray used by a product producer, distributor, retailer, or agent of a product producer, distributor, or retailer as a means for the bulk transportation, storage, or carrying of retail containers of milk, baked goods, eggs, or bottled beverage products.

(7) "Consumer goods" has the same meaning as in section 1309.102 of the Revised Code.

(8) "Recyclable materials" means the metal materials described in division (C)(5) of this section, on the condition that those metal materials are not special purchase articles.

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

(B)(1) No person shall engage in the business of scrap metal dealing or act as a bulk merchandise container dealer without first registering with the director of public safety in accordance with section 4737.045 of the Revised Code.

(2) No person shall receive, purchase, or sell a special purchase article or a bulk merchandise container except as in accordance with sections 4737.012 and 4737.04 to 4737.046 of the Revised Code.

(C) Every scrap metal dealer shall maintain a record book or electronic file, in which the dealer shall keep an accurate and complete record of all articles purchased or received by the dealer in the course of the dealer's daily business. The record shall include a copy of any check or other traceable payment device issued pursuant to division (A)(4) of section 4737.041 of the Revised Code. On and after September 11, 2008, every entry in the record book or electronic file shall be numbered consecutively and, on or after September 28, 2012, shall be maintained for inspection in numerical order. Until the registry developed by the



director pursuant to section 4737.045 of the Revised Code is operational, a dealer shall maintain the record for each article purchased or received for a minimum period of one year after the date the dealer purchased or received the article, except that the dealer shall maintain the photograph required under division (I) of this section only for a period of sixty days after the dealer purchased or received the article. Beginning on the date the registry is operational, a dealer shall maintain the record for each article purchased or received only for a period of sixty days after the date the dealer purchased or received the article. The director shall adopt rules for the format and maintenance of the records required under this division.

The records shall contain all of the following:

- (1) The name and residence of the person from whom the articles were purchased or received, a copy of that person's personal identification card, and a photograph of the person taken pursuant to division (I) of this section;
- (2) The date and time the scrap metal dealer purchased or received the articles and the weight of the articles as determined by a licensed commercial scale;
- (3) If the seller or provider of the articles arrives at the dealer's place of business in a motor vehicle, the license plate number of that motor vehicle along with the state that issued the license plate;
- (4) For metal articles that are not recyclable materials, a full and accurate description of each article purchased or received by the dealer that includes identifying letters or marks written, inscribed, or otherwise included on the article and the name and maker of the article if known;
- (5) For recyclable materials that are not special purchase articles, the following category codes to identify the recyclable materials that the dealer receives:
 - (a) "Number one copper," which includes clean copper pipe, clean copper wire, or other number one copper that does not have solder, paint, or coating;
 - (b) "Number two copper," which includes unclean copper pipe, unclean copper wire, or other number two copper;
 - (c) "Sheet copper," which includes copper roofing, copper gutters, copper downspouts, and other sheet copper;
 - (d) "Insulated copper wire";
 - (e) "Aluminum or copper radiators," which includes aluminum radiators, aluminum copper radiators, and copper radiators;
 - (f) "Red brass," which includes red brass valves and other red brass;



(g) "Yellow brass," which includes yellow brass fixtures, yellow brass valve and fitting, ornamental brass, and other yellow brass;

(h) "Aluminum sheet";

(i) "Aluminum extrusions," which includes aluminum bleachers, aluminum benches, aluminum frames, aluminum pipe, and other aluminum extrusions;

(j) "Cast aluminum," which includes aluminum grills, lawnmower decks made of aluminum, aluminum motor vehicle parts and rims, and other cast aluminum;

(k) "Clean aluminum wire";

(l) "Unclean aluminum wire";

(m) "Aluminum exteriors," which includes aluminum siding, aluminum gutters and downspouts, aluminum shutters, aluminum trim, and other aluminum exterior items;

(n) "Contaminated aluminum";

(o) "Stainless steel," which includes, sinks, appliance housing, dishes, pots, pans, pipe, and other items made out of stainless steel;

(p) "Large appliances," which includes consumer and other appliances;

(q) "Steel structural," which includes all structural steel such as I-beams, trusses, channel iron, and similar steel from buildings;

(r) "Miscellaneous steel," which includes steel grates, steel farm machinery, steel industrial machinery, steel motor vehicle frames, and other items made out of steel;

(s) "Sheet irons," which includes bicycles, motor vehicle body parts made of iron, and other items made using sheet iron;

(t) "Motor vehicle nonbody parts," which includes motor vehicle batteries, radiators, and other nonbody motor vehicle parts;

(u) "Catalytic converters";

(v) "Lead";

(w) "Electric motors";

(x) "Electronic scrap," which includes any consumer or commercial electronic equipment such as computers, servers, routers, video displays, and similar products.

(6) For recyclable materials that are special purchase articles, the relevant category provided in division (A)(2) of this section.



(D) Railroad material, including journal brasses, rail spikes, rails, tie plates, frogs, and communication wire, other than purchases and sales under sections 4973.13 to 4973.16 of the Revised Code, shall be held by a scrap metal dealer for a period of thirty days after being purchased or acquired.

(E)(1) The records required under division (C) of this section or under section 4737.012 of the Revised Code shall be open for inspection by the representative of any law enforcement agency, railroad police officers, and the director of public safety or the director's designated representative during all business hours. A scrap metal dealer or bulk merchandise container dealer shall do all of the following:

(a) Provide a copy of those records to any law enforcement agency or railroad police officer that requests the records or to the director or director's representative, upon request;

(b) Prepare a daily electronic report, the content and format of which shall be established in rules adopted by the director, listing all retail transactions that occurred during the preceding day and containing the information described in division (C) of this section or division (A) of section 4737.012 of the Revised Code, as applicable. The dealer shall electronically transfer, by twelve noon eastern standard time, the report to the director of public safety for inclusion in the registry created pursuant to division (E) of section 4737.045 of the Revised Code.

(2) A law enforcement agency may inspect any photographic records collected and maintained by a scrap metal dealer of either yard operations or individual transactions. Records submitted to any law enforcement agency pursuant to this section are not public records for purposes of section 149.43 of the Revised Code.

(3) Records submitted to any law enforcement agency, railroad police officer, or the director of public safety or the director's designated representative as required by section 4737.012 of the Revised Code and sections 4737.04 to 4737.046 of the Revised Code shall not be public records for the purposes of section 149.43 of the Revised Code.

(4) Notwithstanding division (E)(3) of this section, the names and addresses of scrap metal dealers and bulk merchandise container dealers shall be made available to the public by the director upon request.

(5) A person who claims to own a stolen article that may be identified in those records, or an agent of that person, who provides proof of having filed a stolen property report with the appropriate law enforcement agency, may request those records. The law enforcement agency shall provide those records upon a request made by such a person or that person's agent, but the law enforcement agency shall redact information that reveals the name of the seller of any article and the price the dealer paid for any article the dealer purchased or the estimated value of any article the dealer received. The law enforcement agency shall



determine which records to provide, based upon the time period that the alleged theft is reported to have taken place. A law enforcement agency may charge or collect a fee for providing records as required by this section.

(6) The director of public safety shall impose a civil penalty of five hundred dollars on a person who violates division (E)(1)(b) of this section, including any person who concurrently violates division (E)(2) of section 4737.046 of the Revised Code. The director shall impose an additional fine of five hundred dollars for each day the violation continues. The director shall deposit the fine into the state treasury to the credit of the infrastructure protection fund created under section 4737.045 of the Revised Code.

(7) The director of public safety shall suspend, in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code, the registration of a person that violates division (E)(1)(b) of this section until such time as the director determines that the person has taken necessary steps to comply with that division. A person whose registration is suspended under this division may petition the director for reinstatement not more than once every ninety days. The director's determination as to whether to grant such a petition and reinstate the person's registration is subject to appeal under section 119.12 of the Revised Code.

(F)(1) No scrap metal dealer shall purchase or receive any metal articles, and no bulk merchandise container dealer shall purchase or receive any bulk merchandise containers, from a person who refuses to show the dealer the person's personal identification card, or who refuses to allow the dealer to take a photograph of the person as required under division (I) of this section or of the person or container as required under division (B) of section 4737.012 of the Revised Code.

(2) The law enforcement agency that serves the jurisdiction in which a scrap metal dealer or a bulk merchandise container dealer is located shall provide to the scrap metal dealer or bulk merchandise container dealer a searchable, electronic list prepared in accordance with rules adopted by the director, as that agency determines appropriate, of the names and descriptions of persons known to be thieves or receivers of stolen property. The law enforcement agency may request the appropriate clerk of courts to provide the list. No scrap metal dealer or bulk merchandise container dealer shall purchase or receive articles from any person who is either identified on the list the dealer receives from the law enforcement agency, or who appears on the lists made available by the director pursuant to division (E) of section 4737.045 of the Revised Code. The law enforcement agency also shall provide the list, in an electronic format, to the director for inclusion in the registry created under division (E) of section 4737.045 of the Revised Code.



(3) A law enforcement agency shall submit all records of any investigation into a scrap metal dealer or bulk merchandise container dealer related to the practice of buying and selling scrap to the registry created pursuant to division (E) of section 4737.045 of the Revised Code.

(4) No scrap metal dealer or bulk merchandise container dealer shall purchase or receive any special purchase articles or bulk merchandise containers from any person who is under eighteen years of age.

(5) No scrap metal dealer shall purchase or receive any special purchase article without complying with division (C) and (I) of this section and divisions (A)(2), (3), or (4) of section 4737.041 of the Revised Code.

(6) No scrap metal dealer shall purchase or receive more than one catalytic converter per day from the same person except from a motor vehicle dealer as defined in section 4517.01 of the Revised Code.

(7) No scrap metal dealer shall purchase or receive a beer keg that is marked with a company name or logo except from a manufacturer of beer as described in section 4303.02 of the Revised Code or an agent authorized by the manufacturer to dispose of damaged kegs.

(8) No scrap metal dealer shall treat a transaction as exempt from section 4737.04 or 4737.041 of the Revised Code unless the scrap metal dealer provides evidence of satisfying one or more of the exceptions described in division (A) of section 4737.043 of the Revised Code.

(G)(1) Every scrap metal dealer and bulk merchandise container dealer shall post a notice in a conspicuous place on the dealer's premises notifying persons who may wish to transact business with the dealer of the penalties applicable to any person who does any of the following:

(a) Provides a false personal identification card to the dealer;

(b) With purpose to defraud, provides any other false information to the dealer in connection with the dealer's duty to maintain the records required under division (C) of this section or under section 4737.012 of the Revised Code;

(c) Violates section 2913.02 of the Revised Code.

(2)(a) Every scrap metal dealer and bulk merchandise container dealer shall post a copy of its registration in a conspicuous place on the dealer's premises.

(b) The director of public safety shall impose a civil penalty of five hundred dollars on any person who violates division (G)(2)(a) of this section and shall deposit that penalty into the state treasury to the credit of the infrastructure protection fund created under section 4737.045 of the Revised Code.



(H)(1) Except as otherwise provided in division (F)(2) of this section, a clerk of courts or an employee of a clerk of courts; a chief of police, marshal, or other chief law enforcement officer; a sheriff, constable, or chief of police of a township police department or police district police force; a deputy, officer, or employee of the law enforcement agency served by the marshal or the municipal or township chief, the office of the sheriff, or the constable; and an employee of the department of public safety is immune from liability in a civil action, including an action for defamation, libel, or slander, to recover damages for injury, death, or loss to persons or property or reputation allegedly caused by an act or omission in connection with compiling and providing the list required by division (F)(2) of this section.

(2) The immunity described in division (H)(1) of this section does not apply to a person described in that division if, in relation to the act or omission in question, any of the following applies:

(a) The act or omission was manifestly outside the scope of the person's employment or official responsibilities.

(b) The act or omission was with malicious purpose, in bad faith, or in a wanton or reckless manner.

(c) Liability for the act or omission is expressly imposed by a section of the Revised Code.

(I) Every scrap metal dealer shall take a photograph, in accordance with rules adopted by the director, of each person who sells or otherwise gives the dealer an article for which the dealer must make record under division (C) of this section.

The dealer shall take the required photograph at the time the dealer purchases or receives the article and shall keep the photograph as part of the record in accordance with division (C) of this section.

(J)(1) An individual listed as a known thief or receiver of stolen property on a list prepared pursuant to division (F)(2) of this section may request that the individual's name be removed from the list by filing an application with the law enforcement agency responsible for preparing the list.

(2) A law enforcement agency receiving an application in accordance with division (J)(1) of this section shall remove the applicant's name from the list of known thieves and receivers of stolen property if the individual has not been convicted of or pleaded guilty to either a misdemeanor that is a theft offense, as defined in section 2913.01 of the Revised Code, within three years immediately prior to the date of the application or a felony that is a theft offense within six years immediately prior to the date of the application.