

# Just bought a new vehicle?

## A guide for obtaining a tag and title in Mobile County

### What should I bring when applying for my vehicle license?

Vehicles older than 1975 are not required to be titled. This flier includes a simple list of requirements for titling and purchasing a tag for vehicles 1975 and newer or vehicles 1974 and older. If your title has been lost, you must apply for a duplicate certificate from the state of issuance.

#### 1975 AND NEWER – DEALER SALE

If vehicle purchased from a dealer in Alabama, bring the following:

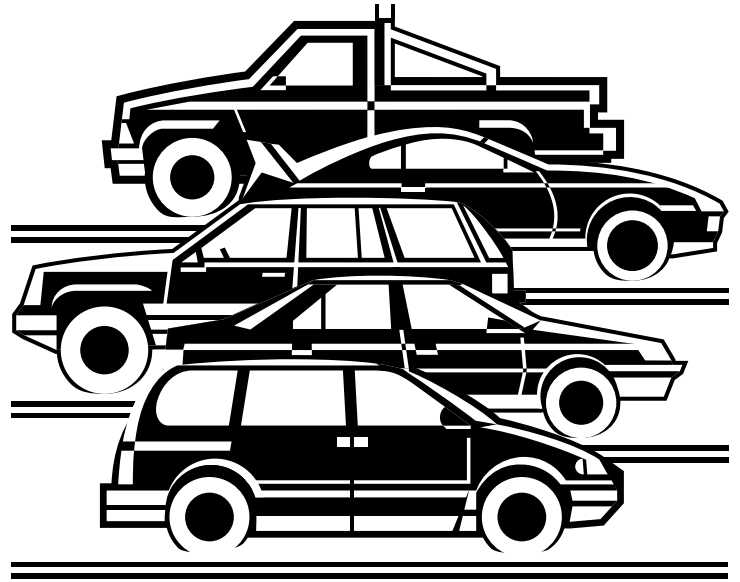
1. Alabama Department of Revenue title application, or original title or Manufacturer's Certificate of Origin (MCO).
2. If vehicle purchased has out-of-state title, Alabama title application requires name of surrendering state and title number.
3. Bill of sale or invoice (no buyer's order or purchase agreement will be accepted). Sales tax must be itemized.
4. Dealer's affidavit, if dealer brought vehicle in from another state.
5. If you have an Alabama plate that is to be placed on the newly acquired vehicle, bring it or the matching tag registration receipt. Only the registered owner may apply for the transfer, unless a notarized power of attorney is provided.
6. If your vehicle was purchased from an **out-of state dealer**, who did not apply for an Alabama title, you **MUST** bring the vehicle to be inspected by personnel at the motor vehicle office in order to verify that the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) on the vehicle matches the title or registration documents. Designated parking spaces for title inspection are available at each office.
7. Valid Alabama Driver's License with Mobile County address.
8. If a power of attorney form is used, a **copy** of the **owner's** Alabama driver's license is required.
9. By law, the specific individual(s) who has purchased a vehicle must personally apply for his/her Alabama title certificate and license plates. Unless a power of attorney form is completed by the legal owner and notarized, no other person (not a spouse or other family member) may complete these transactions. If two people are named on the title and their names are joined by "and," both must come in or give the other person a notarized power of attorney; if the names are joined by "or" either may come in. If two people are listed on the title and the words ("and" "or") are omitted, both must come in person or give the other person notarized power of attorney.

If your vehicle is leased, bring the notarized power of attorney form and a copy of the lease agreement provided by your leasing company. The power of attorney form gives you authority to register on behalf of the leasing company.

#### 1975 AND NEWER – CASUAL SALE

If purchased from an individual with Alabama title, bring the following:

1. Title completely filled out and signed over by the seller including the odometer reading if the vehicle is less than ten years old and under 16,000 lbs.GVW. If your title has been lost, you must apply for a duplicate certificate from the state of issuance. Disclosure may be entered on the title if there is space for it.
2. Bill of Sale (must be notarized or have two witnesses that are not related to buyer or seller). Bill of Sale must have both buyer and seller address.



#### 3. Bring in a legible copy of most recent tag registration receipt from previous owner.

4. If you have an Alabama plate that is to be placed on the newly acquired vehicle, bring it or the matching tag registration receipt. Only the registered owner may apply for the transfer, unless a notarized power of attorney is provided.
5. By law, the specific individual(s) who has purchased a vehicle must personally apply for his/her Alabama title certificate and license plates. Unless a power of attorney form is completed by the legal owner and notarized, no other person (not a spouse or other family member) may complete these transactions. If two people are named on the title and their names are joined by "and," both must come in or give the other person a power of attorney; if the names are joined by "or" either may come in. If two people are listed on the title and the words ("and" "or") are omitted, both must come in person or give the other person power of attorney.
6. Valid Alabama Driver's License with Mobile County address.
7. If a power of attorney form is used, a **copy** of the **owner's** Alabama driver's license is required.

If you purchased your vehicle from an individual with an **out-of-state title**, you **MUST** bring the vehicle to be inspected by personnel at the motor vehicle office in order to verify that the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) on the vehicle matches the title or registration documents. Designated parking spaces for title inspection are available at each office.

#### 1974 AND OLDER – DEALER SALE

If purchased from a dealer in-state or out-of-state, bring the following:

1. The vehicle for inspection
2. Bill of Sale
3. Dealer's Affidavit (if dealer brought vehicle in from another state)
4. Valid Alabama Driver's License with Mobile County address
5. If you have an Alabama plate to be placed on the newly acquired vehicle, bring it or the matching tag registration receipt.

**The registered owner has to apply for the transfer.**

## 1974 AND OLDER – CASUAL SALE

If purchased from an individual in-state or out-of-state, bring the following:

1. The vehicle for inspection
2. Bill of Sale (must be notarized or have two (2) witnesses not related to the buyer or seller). **Both the buyer and seller's addresses must be shown on the Bill of Sale.**
3. Valid Alabama Driver's License with Mobile County address
4. **Bring in legible copy of the most recent tag registration receipt from the previous owner.**
5. If you have an Alabama plate to be placed on the newly acquired vehicle, bring it or the matching tag registration receipt. **The registered owner has to apply for the transfer.**

## Why do I need a bill of sale?

We require a bill of sale to determine sales tax liability.

## Why do I need a title?

Alabama is a title state. A title is a document which proves ownership. State law requires an Alabama resident who owns a motor vehicle to obtain a title for that motor vehicle if it is a 1975 or newer model. A new Alabama resident is required to title and register his vehicle within thirty (30) days of moving into the state. Boats are not titled. The registering of boat trailers is optional.

**Utility trailers** – As of July 1, 2009, the law provides that utility trailers are no longer titled in Alabama. However, all utility trailers must be inspected by motor vehicle personnel and tagged.

You may apply for an Alabama title at any motor vehicle office in Mobile County. Titles are issued in Montgomery and mailed to the vehicle owners or lienholders. The fee for a title application is \$18.00.

Effective January 1, 2010, the title fee for manufactured homes will increase to **\$23.00**.

## How does a handicapped person obtain special plates for parking privileges?

**Handicapped License Plates:** Applications for handicapped license plates may be obtained from any office of the License Commissioner or on line at [www.LicenseMobile.com](http://www.LicenseMobile.com). Application must be signed by a local physician and vehicle must be titled in the name of the person making application.

**Handicapped Placards:** Handicapped placards may be obtained by submitting the above application. Vehicle does not have to be titled in name of the handicapped person and the placards may be displayed in any vehicle in which the handicapped person is a passenger.

**Please Note:** Placards may be ordered by mail through our customer service department or in person at the Michael Square office.

## What about personalized specialized plates?

There are many specialized license plates too numerous to list. For additional information you may visit our web site at [www.LicenseMobile.com](http://www.LicenseMobile.com) and click on Specialized Tags or Personalized Tags.

## When are tags renewed?

Motor vehicle registrations for private passenger vehicles (10,000 lbs. or less), motorcycles, trailers and personally leased vehicles with option to purchase are renewed annually through staggered registration. In Alabama, annual renewal is scheduled according to the first letter of your last name as follows:

A,D	January	M,I	June
B	February	P,L	July
C,E	March	J,K,R	August
F,G,N	April	Q,S,T	September
H,O	May	U,V,W,X,Y,Z	October
Company Vehicles: October/November			

Most renewals can be handled by mail. A courtesy renewal notice is mailed to you at the beginning of your renewal month. You may also renew online with your MasterCard or Visa by logging on to [www.LicenseMobile.com](http://www.LicenseMobile.com). You may also renew your tag by calling 251-574-5555.

## Important State Requirements

The property tax due at the time of registration on a **new motor vehicle registered for the first time with a manufacturer's certificate of origin where the motor vehicle meets the definition of Class IV property** (private passenger automobiles and pickup trucks with GVW of 8,000 lbs. or less owned and operated by an individual for personal and private use and not for hire, rent, or compensation) **will be deferred until the first renewal or other subsequent registration, whichever comes first.** Vehicles purchased during a customer's renewal month will **not** have their property tax deferred. The first renewal or other subsequent registration shall include the property tax that would have been due at the time of the first registration and the next year's property tax to be paid in advance. Taxes on motorcycles, recreational vehicles, commercial vehicles and trailers cannot be deferred.

Assessing taxes due on the purchase of a **used vehicle is more complicated and must be addressed on a case by case basis.** The License Commissioner's office shall determine the amount of property tax due on a used vehicle from information provided on the most recent tag registration receipt from the previous owner. Therefore, **it is important that the new owner bring a legible copy of the previous owner's tag receipt to the License Commissioner's office.**

State law requires that you keep your tag when you sell, trade or transfer ownership of your vehicle. This applies to all vehicles except the vintage vehicle tag. It remains with the vehicle. The fee charged when transferring a registration is \$1.25, plus applicable taxes. Any registrant who fails to register his/her motor vehicle within twenty calendar days shall pay a penalty of fifteen dollars (\$15.00) plus interest and taxes. An owner who trades vehicles must remove the license plate from the previously owned vehicle and bring it to an office of the License Commissioner to be properly recorded in the county and state database. A new tag registration receipt will be issued to the customer with the correct vehicle data to be kept in the vehicle.

In addition, you must keep your tag receipt or legible copy thereof, in your vehicle. This proof of ownership requirement applies to all vehicles (including leased vehicles) except trailers. Law enforcement may request that you produce your registration receipt (or copy). If you do not have it, you could be issued a citation, which under Alabama law provides for a \$50 minimum fine. During the first 20 days after purchase/acquisition, the following documents may be used in place of the registration receipt:

- Legible copy of the bill of sale (for vehicles not required to be titled in Alabama).
- Owner's copy of the application for certificate of title or legible copy of the bill of sale for vehicles required to be titled in Alabama; or
- Current and valid temporary registration receipt.

A vehicle owner can receive a Receipt for Credit/Credit Voucher for prepaid taxes if vehicle is sold, traded, stolen without recovery, totaled or permanently removed from the state before owner's renewal date. Documentation is required. Credit Voucher or Receipt for Credit may only be applied for by registered owner (not a spouse or other family member) unless a notarized power of attorney is provided.

- Credit Voucher to be redeemed immediately at the time a customer registers a vehicle if property taxes are due.
- If the Credit Voucher exceeds the amount of tax due or cannot be applied to a tag bill, any balance can be refunded to the customer through a Receipt for Credit. Checks for credit are processed by the 20th of the following month. The law calls for the issuing office to collect a \$2.00 redemption fee on Credit Voucher and all checks issued.
- Credit Voucher can only be used on the tax portion of the tag bill.
- Credit Voucher must be redeemed in the county where the tax was originally paid.
- If a customer has moved to another Alabama county and sold a vehicle, a receipt for credit will be issued for any unapplied pre-paid taxes.
- If a customer moves and registers his or her vehicle in another Alabama county, no credit is issued.
- If a customer moves out of state and registers his or her vehicle, credit will be issued.
- A Credit Voucher can be transferred to an immediate family member.

## Mandatory Liability Insurance

Alabama's mandatory insurance law requires owners to carry proof of insurance in their vehicles. All license plate issuing officials are required to obtain the Alabama driver's license number or an Alabama non-driver ID number of the owner when processing motor vehicle registrations. For commercial vehicles, owners must provide the Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN). In addition, the owner must affirm that they are in compliance with the MLI requirement when applying for new registrations or renewals, but actual proof of insurance is not necessary for the transaction. Verification of insurance is required if your registration has been suspended by the State Department of Revenue in Montgomery. For more details regarding mandatory liability insurance, please visit our web site at [www.LicenseMobile.com](http://www.LicenseMobile.com).

## What are Vehicle Property Taxes?

Alabama law requires motor vehicles, both new and used, to be assessed for property taxes; and if due, the property taxes to be paid before license plates can be lawfully issued or transferred. Property tax is an ownership tax and not a sales or use tax. Therefore, unlike registration fees, taxes accumulate even when a vehicle is not used on the highways and are calculated based on the make, model and age of the vehicle.

## Method of payment

The Mobile County License Commissioner's Office will accept cash, checks, money orders and VISA/MasterCard for payment. Checks MUST have an IMPRINTED name and Mobile address. Presentation of a valid Alabama driver's license will be required. Credit card payments are accepted only if the presenter is the registered owner and his/her name is on the card. **Additional restrictions may apply.**

## Locations and Hours

The Mobile County License Commissioner operates locations throughout the county.

### MICHAEL SQUARE

3925 Michael Boulevard, Suite F • Mobile, Alabama 36609  
(Corner of Azalea Road and Michael Boulevard)  
7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday

### THEODORE

Theodore Oaks Shopping Center  
5808 US Highway 90 West, Suite D  
Theodore, Alabama 36582  
7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday

### EIGHT MILE

Eight Mile Shopping Center  
4557 St. Stephens Road • Eight Mile, Alabama 36613  
7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday

### GOVERNMENT CENTER ANNEX

151 Government Street, Mobile, AL 36602  
7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday

### CITRONELLE

19135 South Main Street • Citronelle, Alabama 36522  
9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday

## Avoid the lines!

Our offices are less crowded during:

- (a) 2nd and 3rd week of the month
- (b) 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Save time by calling ahead (251-574-8551) if you have questions about materials you will need to complete your transaction. You may also check details and download forms for your transaction at our web site: [www.LicenseMobile.com](http://www.LicenseMobile.com).

**Please remember that many tag and license transactions can be handled by mail after the initial registration.**

**You can renew your tag, boat and manufactured home online using your MasterCard or VISA by logging on to [www.LicenseMobile.com](http://www.LicenseMobile.com) or calling 251-574-5555 Renew Your Tag by Phone.**

**CAUTION! Register BEFORE putting a tag on a new vehicle! Do not put a tag on a vehicle until that vehicle has been properly registered with the License Commissioner's office. Information on your tag registration receipt and vehicle identification number (VIN) MUST match the VIN on the vehicle.**

**CAUTION! The new owner of a motor vehicle must, within twenty calendar days from the date of vehicle purchase or acquisition, make application to record the registration of the vehicle by the transfer to or the purchase of a license plate for the newly acquired vehicle with the Office of the License Commissioner. Any person failing to register a motor vehicle within twenty calendar days shall pay a penalty of fifteen dollars (\$15). If the 20th day falls on a weekend or holiday, vehicle can be registered the next business day following the weekend or holiday without penalty.**



Kim Hastie,

Mobile County License Commissioner

Michael Square • 3925-F Michael Boulevard • Mobile, Alabama 36609

(251) 574-8566 • FAX (251) 574-4819

Get information and forms @ [www.LicenseMobile.com](http://www.LicenseMobile.com)