

Motor Vehicle Procedure Manual
Registration
Trailers

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Legal Authority

[Chapter 320](#), Florida Statutes, provides the registration requirements for all types of trailers.

[Section 320.08](#), Florida Statutes, provides the registration tax structure for all types of trailers.

[Section 320.0659\(1\)](#), Florida Statutes, provides that a permanent license plate may be issued for any semi-trailer classified under [320.08\(5\)\(a\)2](#). All such license plates shall be of a distinctive color and

shall be imprinted with the words "Permanent Trl" at the bottom. Such license plate is to be displayed as required by [s. 316.605, Florida Statutes](#), and shall be removed upon the sale of the trailer or upon the trailer's removal from service.

Description And Use

This procedure provides information and instructions to assist tax collector employees, license plate agents and Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles in establishing Information and Instructions for issuance of trailer license plates.

Definitions

The following definitions are for different types of trailers, including the specific statutory reference:

- A. [Section 320.01\(1\)\(b\)\(1\), Florida Statutes](#), travel trailer means a vehicular portable unit, mounted on wheels, of such a size or weight as not to require special highway movement permits when drawn by a motorized vehicle. It is primarily designed and constructed to provide temporary living quarters for recreational, camping or travel use. It has a body width of no more than 8 ½ feet and an overall body length of no more than 40 feet when factory-equipped for the road. Registrations fees are calculated on the length of the trailer (including the hitch).
- B. [Section 320.01\(1\)\(b\)\(2\), Florida Statutes](#), camping trailer means a vehicular portable unit mounted on wheels and constructed with collapsible partial sidewalls which fold for towing by another vehicle and unfold at the campsite to provide temporary living quarters for recreational, camping or travel use. Registrations fees are calculated on the length of the trailer (including the hitch).
- C. [Section 320.01\(1\)\(b\)\(7\), Florida Statutes](#), park trailer means a transportable unit which has a body width not exceeding 14 feet and which is built on a single chassis and is designed to provide seasonal or temporary living quarters when connected to utilities necessary for operation of installed fixtures and appliances. The total area of the unit in a setup mode, when measured from the exterior surface to the exterior stud walls at the level of maximum dimensions, not including any bay window, does not exceed 400 square feet when constructed to ANSI A-119.5 standards, and 500 square feet when constructed to United States Department of Housing and Urban

Development Standards. The length of a park trailer means the distance from the exterior of the front of the body (nearest to the drawbar and coupling mechanism) to the exterior of the rear of the body (at the opposite end of the body), including any protrusions. Registrations fees are calculated on the length of the trailer (including the hitch).

- D. [s. 320.01\(1\)\(b\)\(8\), Florida Statutes](#), Fifth-Wheel Travel Trailer means a vehicular unit mounted on wheels designed to provide temporary living quarters for recreational, camping or travel use, of such size or weight as not to require a special highway movement permit, of a gross trailer area not to exceed 400 square feet in the setup mode, and designed to be towed by a motorized vehicle that contains a towing mechanism that is mounted above or forward of the tow vehicle's rear axle. Registration fees are calculated on the length of the trailer (including the hitch). Use class code 77 or 78 for fifth-wheel trailers.
- E. [s. 320.01\(4\), Florida Statutes](#), Trailer means any vehicle without motive power designed to be coupled to or drawn by a motor vehicle and constructed so that no part of its weight or that of its load rests upon the towing vehicle. For trailers having a ball hitch with living and storage space, use class code 78.

1. Motorcycle size license plates are permitted on trailers (TL) with a net weight of 1,999 pound or less.
2. Equipment without motive power that is mounted on wheels, designed to be drawn by a motor vehicle such as a cement mixer, tar pot, stump grinder, air compressor, polecat, etc.

must be registered as a trailer by weight. If the weight is not available, a certified weight slip will be required.

- F. [s. 320.01\(5\), Florida Statutes](#), Semi-trailer means any vehicle without motive power designed to be coupled to or drawn by a motor vehicle and constructed so that some part of its weight and that of its load rests upon or is carried by another vehicle.
1. A regular or permanent registration may be issued to the semi-trailer. However, to qualify for a permanent registration, the semi-trailer must be drawn by a GVW truck tractor by means of a 5th wheel arrangement, as stated in [s. 320.08\(5\)\(a\)\(2\), Florida Statutes](#). A permanent license plate may be issued using class code 103. The permanent license plate is not renewed and is non-transferable. It may only be used/displayed on the trailer it is issued to and is not included in the forced replacement program; therefore, no Advance Replacement Fee is collected.

- G. Office trailer is a mobile building, used to conduct normal office duties, duly approved as meeting applicable codes, may or may not be affixed permanently to a foundation and may be removed after completion of a task for which it was installed. The weight of an office trailer is determined by multiplying length X width X 20 pounds. For-hire office trailers are class code 54. Office trailers require a license plate when transferring ownership and when an office trailer is moved on the roads. However, when an office trailer is parked on private property, a valid registration is not required.
- H. (Department Definition): Tow Dolly is a type of hitch not intended to be used to carry a load, but only manufactured to pull another motor vehicle. A tow dolly does not require registration nor does the vehicle it is transporting. However, the towing vehicle must be currently registered.
- I. Converter Gear is a coupling device of one or two axles and a fifth wheel by which a semi-trailer can be coupled to the rear of a tractor-trailer combination forming a double rig. A converter gear does not require registration; however, both vehicles coupled to the gear must be registered.

General Information

- A. Slide in campers for pick-up trucks do not require registration.
- B. If recreational vehicles are in this state for 6 months or longer, as listed in [s. 320.37\(2\)\(c\), Florida Statutes](#), proof of registration must be displayed. This applies to nonresidents. Florida residents are subject to registration upon moving to this state and becoming a resident or from the date the recreational vehicle was acquired.
- C. Trailers owned, leased, or used by a "government" entity are issued the appropriate government license plate, which must be physically displayed on the trailer (even if the trailer is not moved on the roads).
- D. Trailers owned by an eligible non-profit organization as listed in [s. 320.10, Florida Statutes](#), may be issued an X-Series license plate. If the customer requests a regular license plate, the class code will be 53.
- E. A "Frequently Asked Questions" page is attached as Exhibit A.

Registration Requirements

All license plates may be purchased from any county license plate agency.

- A. If a trailer is required to be titled, it must be currently titled in the customer's name as owner, or the customer must submit application for title along with the certificate of title accurately completed for transfer to them as purchaser.
- B. If a trailer has a net weight of 1,999 pounds or less, it is not required to be titled or insured, and is exempt from the initial registration fee. There must be a complete chain of ownership. The following would be required to prove ownership in lieu of a title:
 - 1. When the vehicle is a new trailer, a copy of the MCO and/or a bill of sale, showing a complete chain of ownership, is required. The clerk should return these documents to the customer after viewing them; however, a copy of the MCO or bill of sale should be retained for a period of at least 12 months.
 - 2. When the vehicle is a used trailer (homemade or manufactured) having a net weight of 1,999 pounds or less, a bill of sale, which includes a complete description of the trailer and the previous owner's Florida license plate number, is required. The clerk should return the bill of sale to the customer after viewing it; however, a copy of the bill of sale should be retained for a period of at least 12 months.
 - 3. If the used trailer (homemade or manufactured) has never been registered in Florida, a certified weight slip is also required, unless the documentation submitted shows a net weight. When processing a registration to a trailer with no vehicle identification number (VIN), the motor vehicle issuance system will generate a trailer identification number (TIN) and a license plate will be issued. The TIN number is not a VIN number and is not required (however, is recommended) to be die cut or affixed to the trailer.

When processing a registration for a trailer with a net weight of 1,999 pounds or less, a blank bill of sale will print on the registration. When the customer sells the trailer, he/she may use this area to transfer ownership to the new purchaser.

C. Fees:

Refer to form [HSMV 83140](#), License plate Rate Chart, for applicable fees.

Replacement License Plates

Applications for replacement license plates may be processed by any county license plate agents by submitting the following:

- A. Form [Application for Replacement License Plate, Validation Decal or Parking Permit -HSMV 83146](#), accurately completed. Refer to DMS Procedure [RS-06](#) for additional information.
- B. When a customer reports a license plate or decal as stolen to a law enforcement agency and attests that the license plate or decal has been reported as stolen on form [HSMV 83146](#) and provides a police report or law enforcement agency card, no fee should be charged for the replacement license plate or decal.

Marine Boat Trailer Owned by A Nonprofit

This transaction is governed by [Section 320.102, Florida Statutes](#)

General Information:

The marine boat trailer information is found in [RS-04](#) for those trailers that are 1,999 pounds or less and are required to have a registration only. The same marine boat trailer information is also included in [RS-63](#) for those trailers weighing 2,000 pounds or more and are required to have a title and registration issued.

The registration or renewal of a registration of any marine boat trailer is exempt from the payment of most registration fees, taxes, surcharges, and charges if it is owned and operated by a nonprofit organization, exempt from federal income tax under s. 501(c)(3) of current Internal Revenue Service code, and the marine boat trailer is used exclusively in carrying out its customary nonprofit activities.

To comply with the new legislation, a new vehicle class code of “55 – Marine Trailer Nonprofit” has been added to the vehicle class code table. A new registration uses of “NP – Marine Trailer Nonprofit” has been added to the registration use table.

If the clerk selects registration use “REG USE” “NP” during a transaction for an individual customer, motor vehicle issuance system will return an error message “Registration Use of NP is restricted to business customers only. Please select a different customer or registration use.”

Class Code 55 – Marine Trailer Nonprofit, is restricted to regular series license plates (RGR, RGS, RMR, MCR, TDL and TEM) to receive the full fee exemption. However, an organization may request an eligible specialty license plate or personalized plate. Specialty license plates and personalized license plates are not exempt and thus the customer must pay these fees. Some specialty license plates require certain requirements be met and are not allowed to be issued to organizations (i.e., Combat Action Badge). A biennial registration is allowed for a marine boat trailer with a registration use of “NP”.

Proof of Eligibility Required for an Original Registration

An original or copy of an original Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Determination Letter.
The tax collector or license plate agent must keep a copy of the letter on file in the office for a period of 12 months.

Issuance of an Original Registration

Clerk must verify that the Federal Employee Identification Number (FEIN) that is shown on the IRS Determination Letter is the same as what is attached to the nonprofit organization’s motor vehicle issuance system customer record.

If the motor vehicle issuance system customer record does not reflect an FEIN, the clerk must add the FEIN shown on the letter to the customer record using Customer Maintenance before starting the original registration issuance.

If the motor vehicle issuance system customer record reflects an FEIN that is not the same as what is shown on the letter, the clerk must correct the FEIN to read the same as the number on the letter. The correction is made using Customer Maintenance in motor vehicle issuance system.

Renewal of Registration

Once the marine boat trailer owned by a nonprofit organization has been identified in motor vehicle issuance system as a Class Code 55 – Registration Use NP, it may be renewed in person, by mail and at a future date the renewal will be available through Virtual Office.

Revision

6/28/22 removed “The Department” from the procedure and changed it to “Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicle”.

6/23/22 Added the procedure to the new format.

Historical Revisions: 07/10/17- Added information for marine boat trailers owned by nonprofit organizations to pages 5 and 6.

EXHIBIT A

Frequently Asked Questions

Question 1: Can someone sell a non-titled trailer without registering it in their name first?

Answer: Yes. An owner of a non-titled trailer does not have to register it in their name before selling it. However, they must be able to prove to the purchaser that they are the owner by way of a “complete chain” of ownership.

The purchaser must submit all ownership documents that make up the “complete chain” of ownership to the tax collector’s office or license plate agent.

Example: John purchases a trailer from Sally. John then sells it to Alex, who sells it to Mark. Mark must submit the following to the agent, which constitutes a

“complete chain” of ownership, to register the trailer:

- Sally’s Florida registration (or current motor vehicle issuance system record in her name)
- Bill of Sale from Sally to John
- Bill of Sale from John to Alex
- Bill of Sale from Alex to Mark (the customer)

Question 2: Who do I contact when I have built a homemade trailer (TL) or assembled a trailer (TL) from parts, which weighs 2,000 pounds or more?

Answer: The customer must contact the Division of Motorist Services Regional office serving the area where they reside. A temporary license plate may be issued by the regional office for the customer to transport the trailer to be weighed or inspected. If found to be in order, a division Compliance Examiner/Inspector will assign an "FLT" number to the trailer. The "FLT" number must be either die-cut (1/4-inch stamp) or welded to the trailer in a permanent and visible location, usually on the tow hitch or near the front portion of the trailer. The die-cut or welded number must include the prefix "FLT". The placement of the "FLT" identification number on all ASPT trailers

must be inspected by a Division of Motorist Services Compliance Examiner/Inspector.

If the trailer identification number is not legible, the certification will not be approved.

See DMS Procedure [TL-43](#) for additional information.

Question 3: Do trailer dealers need a dealer license?

Answer: Trailer dealers who sell trailers which weigh 1,999 or less do not need a dealer license, regardless of the number of trailers they sell within a year. However, trailer dealers who sell trailers which weigh 2,000 lbs or more are required to obtain a dealer license when they sell 25 or more trailers per year.