

**5200.** (a) When two license plates are issued by the department for use upon a **vehicle**, they shall be attached to the **vehicle** for which they were issued, one in the front and the other in the rear.

(b) When only one license plate is issued for use upon a **vehicle**, it shall be attached to the rear thereof, unless the license plate is issued for use upon a truck tractor, in which case the license plate shall be displayed in accordance with Section 4850.5.

**5201.** License plates shall at all times be securely fastened to the **vehicle** for which they are issued so as to prevent the plates from swinging, shall be mounted in a position so as to be clearly visible, and shall be maintained in a condition so as to be clearly legible. The rear license plate shall be mounted not less than 12 inches nor more than 60 inches from the ground, and the front license plate shall be mounted not more than 60 inches from the ground, except as follows:

(a) The rear license plate on a tow truck may be mounted on the left-hand side of the mast assembly at the rear of the cab of the **vehicle**, not less than 12 inches nor more than 90 inches from the ground.

(b) The rear license plate on a tank **vehicle** hauling hazardous waste, as defined in Section 25117 of the Health and Safety **Code**, or asphalt material may be mounted not less than 12 inches nor more than 90 inches from the ground.

(c) The rear license plate on a truck tractor may be mounted at the rear of the cab of the **vehicle**, but not less than 12 inches nor more than 90 inches from the ground.

(d) The rear license plate of a **vehicle** designed by the manufacturer for the collection and transportation of garbage, rubbish, or refuse that is used regularly for the collection and transportation of that material by any person or governmental entity employed to collect, transport, and dispose of garbage, rubbish, or refuse may be mounted not less than 12 inches nor more than 90 inches from the ground.

(e) The rear license plate on a two-axle livestock trailer may be mounted 12 inches or more, but not more than 90 inches, from the ground.

(f) No covering may be used on license plates except as follows:

(1) The installation of a cover over a lawfully parked **vehicle** to protect it from the weather and the elements does not constitute a violation of this subdivision. Any peace officer or other regularly salaried employee of a public agency designated to enforce laws, including local ordinances, relating to the parking of vehicles may temporarily remove so much of the cover as is necessary to inspect any license plate, tab, or indicia of registration on a **vehicle**.

(2) The installation of a license plate security cover is not a violation of this subdivision if the device does not obstruct or impair the recognition of the license plate information, including, but not limited to, the issuing state, license plate number, and registration tabs, and the cover is limited to the area directly over the top of the registration tabs. No portion of a license plate security cover shall rest over the license plate number.

(g) No casing, shield, frame, border, or other device that obstructs or impairs the reading or recognition of a license plate by a remote emission sensing device, as specified in Sections 44081 and 44081.6 of the Health and Safety **Code**, shall be installed on, or affixed to, a **vehicle**.

- (h) (1) It is the Legislature's intent that an accommodation be made to persons with disabilities and to those persons who regularly transport persons with disabilities, to allow the removal and relocation of wheelchair lifts and wheelchair carriers without the necessity of removing and reattaching the **vehicle's** rear license plate. Therefore, it is not a violation of this section if the reading or recognition of a rear license plate is obstructed or impaired by a wheelchair lift or wheelchair carrier and all of the following requirements are met:
- (A) The owner of the **vehicle** has been issued a special identification license plate pursuant to Section 5007, or the person using the wheelchair that is carried on the **vehicle** has been issued a distinguishing placard under Section 22511.55.
  - (B) (i) The operator of the **vehicle** displays a decal, designed and issued by the department, that contains the license plate number assigned to the **vehicle** transporting the wheelchair.
  - (ii) The decal is displayed on the rear window of the **vehicle**, in a location determined by the department, in consultation with the Department of the California Highway Patrol, so as to be clearly visible to law enforcement.
- (2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if a decal is displayed pursuant to this subdivision, the requirements of this **code** that require the illumination of the license plate and the license plate number do not apply.
- (3) The department shall adopt regulations governing the procedures for accepting and approving applications for decals, and issuing decals, authorized by this subdivision.
- (4) This subdivision does not apply to a front license plate.

5202. Every license plate issued by this State or any other jurisdiction within or without the United States shall remain attached during the period of its validity to the **vehicle** for which it is issued while being operated within this State or during the time the **vehicle** is being held for sale in this State, or until such time as a **vehicle** with special or identification plates is no longer entitled to such plates and no person shall operate, nor shall an owner knowingly permit to be operated, upon any highway any **vehicle** unless the license plate is so attached. Special permits issued in lieu of plates shall be attached and displayed on the **vehicle** for which issued during the period of their validity.

5203. This chapter does not apply to plates which the department pursuant to law has ordered to be surrendered, transferred to another **vehicle**, or removed.

5204. (a) Except as provided by subdivisions (b) and (c), a tab shall indicate the year of expiration and a tab shall indicate the month of expiration. Current month and year tabs shall be attached to the rear license plate assigned to the **vehicle** for the last preceding registration year in which license plates were issued, and, when so attached, the license plate with the tabs shall, for the purposes of this **code**, be deemed to be the license plate, except that truck

tractors, and commercial motor vehicles having a declared gross **vehicle** weight of 10,001 pounds or more, shall display the current month and year tabs upon the front license plate assigned to the truck tractor or commercial motor **vehicle**. Vehicles that fail to display current month and year tabs or display expired tabs are in violation of this section.

- (b) The requirement of subdivision (a) that the tabs indicate the year and the month of expiration does not apply to fleet vehicles subject to Article 9.5 (commencing with Section 5300) or vehicles defined in Section 468.
- (c) Subdivision (a) does not apply when proper application for registration has been made pursuant to Section 4602 and the new indicia of current registration have not been received from the department.
- (d) This section is enforceable against any motor **vehicle** that is driven, moved, or left standing upon a highway, or in an offstreet public parking facility, in the same manner as provided in subdivision (a) of Section 4000.