

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019**

**SESSION LAW 2019-227
HOUSE BILL 211**

AN ACT TO MAKE VARIOUS CHANGES TO MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS OF THE STATE.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

ELECTRIC VEHICLE DEFINITION CLARIFICATIONS

SECTION 1.(a) G.S. 20-4.01(12a) reads as rewritten:

"(12a) Fuel cell electric vehicle. – A four-wheeled motor vehicle that does not have the ability to be propelled by a gasoline engine and that meets each of the following requirements:

- a. Is made by a manufacturer primarily for use on public streets, roads, and highways and meets National Highway Traffic Safety Administration standards included in 49 C.F.R. § 571.
- b. Has not been modified from original manufacturer specifications with regard to power train or any manner of powering the vehicle.
- c. Uses hydrogen and a fuel cell to produce electricity on board to power an electric motor to propel the vehicle.
- d. Is rated at not more than 8,500 pounds unloaded gross vehicle weight.
- e. Has a maximum speed capability of at least 65 miles per hour."

SECTION 1.(b) G.S. 20-4.01(28a) reads as rewritten:

"(28a) Plug-in electric vehicle. – A four-wheeled motor vehicle that does not have the ability to be propelled by a gasoline engine and that meets each of the following requirements:

- a. Is made by a manufacturer primarily for use on public streets, roads, and highways and meets National Highway Traffic Safety Administration standards included in 49 C.F.R. § 571.
- b. Has not been modified from original manufacturer specifications with regard to power train or any manner of powering the vehicle.
- c. Is rated at not more than 8,500 pounds unloaded gross vehicle weight.
- d. Has a maximum speed capability of at least 65 miles per hour.
- e. Draws electricity from a battery that has all of the following characteristics:
 1. A capacity of not less than four kilowatt hours.
 2. Capable of being recharged from an external source of electricity."

MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION CARD SIGNATURE LINE REMOVAL

SECTION 2. G.S. 20-57(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) The registration card shall be delivered to the owner and shall contain upon the face thereof the name and address of the owner, ~~space for the owner's signature,~~ the registration number assigned to the vehicle, and a description of the vehicle as determined by the Commissioner, provided that if there are more than two owners the Division may show only two owners on the registration card and indicate that additional owners exist by placing after the



names listed "et al." An owner may obtain a copy of a registration card issued in the owner's name by applying to the Division for a copy and paying the fee set in G.S. 20-85."

REMOTE CONVERSION OF FULL PROVISIONAL LICENSES

SECTION 3.(a) G.S. 20-7(f)(1) reads as rewritten:

"(1) Duration of license for persons under age 18. – A full provisional license issued to a person under the age of 18 expires ~~on the~~ 60 days following the person's twenty-first birthday."

SECTION 3.(b) G.S. 20-7(f)(6) reads as rewritten:

"(6) Remote ~~renewal.~~ renewal or conversion. – Subject to the following requirements and limitations, the Division may offer remote renewal of a drivers license or remote conversion of a full provisional license issued by the Division:

- a. Requirements. – To be eligible for remote renewal or conversion under this subdivision, a person must meet all of the following requirements:
 1. The license holder possesses either (i) a valid, unexpired valid Class C drivers license that was issued when the person was at least 18 years old. license or (ii) a valid full provisional license and is at least 18 years old at the time of the remote conversion.
 2. The license holder's current license includes no restrictions other than a restriction for corrective lenses.
 3. The license holder attests, in a manner designated by the Division, that (i) the license holder is a resident of the State and currently resides at the address on the license to be ~~renewed,~~ renewed or converted, (ii) the license holder's name as it appears on the license to be renewed or converted has not changed, and (iii) all other information required by the Division for an in-person renewal under this Article has been provided completely and truthfully. If the license holder does not currently reside at the address on the license to be renewed or converted, the license holder may comply with the address requirement of this sub-sub-subdivision by providing the address at which the license holder resides at the time of the remote renewal or conversion request.
 4. ~~The~~ For a remote renewal, the most recent renewal was an in-person renewal and not a remote renewal under this subdivision.
 5. The license holder is otherwise eligible for renewal or conversion under this subsection.
- b. Waiver of requirements. – When renewing or converting a drivers license pursuant to this subdivision, the Division may waive the examination and photograph that would otherwise be required for the ~~renewal.~~ renewal or conversion.
- c. Duration of remote ~~renewal.~~ renewal or conversion. – A ~~renewed~~ drivers license issued to a person by remote renewal or conversion under this subdivision expires according to the following schedule:
 1. For a person at least 18 years old but less than 66 years old, on the birthday of the licensee in the eighth year after issuance.
 2. For a person at least 66 years old, on the birthday of the licensee in the fifth year after issuance.
- d. Rules. – The Division shall adopt rules to implement this subdivision.

- e. Federal law. – Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to supersede any more restrictive provisions for renewal or conversion of drivers licenses prescribed by federal law or regulation.
- f. Definition. – For purposes of this subdivision, "remote ~~renewal~~ renewal or conversion" means renewal of a drivers license or conversion of a full provisional license by mail, telephone, electronic device, or other secure means approved by the Commissioner."

LIABILITY INSURANCE LAPSE PENALTY WAIVER FOR VEHICLES SUBSEQUENTLY REGISTERED OUT-OF-STATE

SECTION 4. G.S. 20-311 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(g1) Out-of-State Waiver. – Notwithstanding the penalty and restoration fee provisions of this section, any monetary penalty or restoration fee shall be waived for any person who meets all of the following requirements:

- (1) The owner has become a resident of another state and has registered the owner's vehicle in that state within 30 days of the cancellation or expiration of the owner's North Carolina motor vehicle liability policy.
- (2) The owner has submitted a copy of their current out-of-state registration card to the Division.
- (3) The owner has returned the North Carolina registration plate or has submitted an affidavit indicating that the North Carolina registration plate has been lost, stolen, or destroyed."

LICENSE PLATE REFLECTIVITY STANDARDS

SECTION 5.(a) G.S. 20-63.1 reads as rewritten:

"§ 20-63.1. Division ~~may~~ shall cause plates to be reflectorized.

(a) Registration Plate Standards. – The Division of Motor Vehicles is hereby authorized to cause vehicle license plates for 1968 and future years to be completely treated with reflectorized materials designed to increase visibility and legibility of license plates at night. The Division of Motor Vehicles shall develop standards for reflectivity that use the most current technology available while maintaining a competitive bid process.

(b) Registration Plate Mandatory Replacement. – All registration plates shall be replaced every seven years."

SECTION 5.(b) The Division, in coordination with the Department of Information Technology, shall implement a registration plate production platform that (i) integrates the State registration and titling system with the on-demand production of the registration plates and (ii) provides for the direct shipping of the registration plate to the owner of the vehicle or to the license plate agency.

SECTION 5.(c) This section becomes effective July 1, 2020, and applies to registration plates issued or renewed on or after that date. For replacement of plates required by G.S. 20-63.1(b), as enacted by this section, the Division shall replace special registration plates beginning on July 1, 2021, and shall replace other registration plates beginning on the effective date of this section. Existing plates must be replaced with new registration plates if, upon the date of renewal, the plate is seven or more years old or will become seven or more years old during the registration period.

AUTOCYCLE HELMET EXCEPTION

SECTION 6.(a) G.S. 20-140.4(a)(2) reads as rewritten:

"(a) No person shall operate a motorcycle or moped upon a highway or public vehicular area:

...

- (2) Unless the operator and all passengers thereon wear on their heads, with a retention strap properly secured, safety helmets of a type that complies with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) 218. This subdivision shall not apply to an operator of, or any passengers within, an autocycle that has completely enclosed ~~seating~~seating or is equipped with a roll bar or roll cage."

SECTION 6.(b) This section is effective October 1, 2019. Prosecutions for offenses committed before the effective date of this section are not abated or affected by this section, and the statutes that would be applicable but for this section remain applicable to those prosecutions.

STUDY DIGITAL LICENSE PLATES

SECTION 7. The Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight Committee shall study the feasibility of making digital license plates available to the public as an alternative to traditional physical registration plates currently issued by the Division of Motor Vehicles. The Committee shall report its findings, together with any recommended legislation, to the 2020 Regular Session of the 2019 General Assembly.

EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 8. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 18th day of September, 2019.

s/ Rick Gunn
Presiding Officer of the Senate

s/ Tim Moore
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Roy Cooper
Governor

Approved 3:35 p.m. this 27th day of September, 2019