

§ 20-54. Authority for refusing registration or certificate of title.

The Division shall refuse registration or issuance of a certificate of title or any transfer of registration upon any of the following grounds:

- (1) The application contains a false or fraudulent statement, the applicant has failed to furnish required information or reasonable additional information requested by the Division, or the applicant is not entitled to the issuance of a certificate of title or registration of the vehicle under this Article.
- (2) The vehicle is mechanically unfit or unsafe to be operated or moved upon the highways.
- (3) The Division has reasonable ground to believe that the vehicle is a stolen or embezzled vehicle, or that the granting of registration or the issuance of a certificate of title would constitute a fraud against the rightful owner or another person who has a valid lien against the vehicle.
- (4) The registration of the vehicle stands suspended or revoked for any reason as provided in the motor vehicle laws of this State, except in such cases to abide by the ignition interlock installation requirements of G.S. 20-17.8.
- (5) The required fee has not been paid, including any additional registration fees or taxes due pursuant to G.S. 20-91(c).
- (6) The vehicle is not in compliance with the inspection requirements of Part 2 of Article 3A of this Chapter or a civil penalty assessed as a result of the failure of the vehicle to comply with that Part has not been paid.
- (7) The Division has been notified that the motor vehicle has been seized by a law enforcement officer and is subject to forfeiture pursuant to G.S. 20-28.2, et seq., or any other statute. However, the Division shall not prevent the renewal of existing registration prior to an order of forfeiture.
- (8) The vehicle is a golf cart. If the vehicle is an all-terrain vehicle or utility vehicle, the Division shall refuse registration or any transfer of registration but shall issue a certificate of title as provided by G.S. 20-53.6.
- (9) The applicant motor carrier is subject to an order issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration or the Division. The Division shall deny registration of a vehicle of a motor carrier if the applicant fails to disclose material information required, or if the applicant has made a materially false statement on the application, or if the applicant has applied as a subterfuge for the real party in interest who has been issued a federal out-of-service order, or if the applicant's business is operated, managed, or otherwise controlled by or affiliated with a person who is ineligible for registration, including the applicant entity, a relative, family member, corporate officer, or shareholder. The Division shall deny registration for a vehicle that has been assigned for safety to a commercial motor carrier who has been prohibited from operating by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration or a carrier whose business is operated, managed, or otherwise controlled by or affiliated with a person who is ineligible for registration, including the owner, a relative, family member, corporate officer, or shareholder.
- (10) The North Carolina Turnpike Authority has notified the Division that the owner of the vehicle has not paid the amount of tolls, fees, and civil penalties the owner owes the Authority for use of a Turnpike project.
- (11) The Division has been notified (i) pursuant to G.S. 20-217(g2) that the owner of the vehicle has failed to pay any fine imposed pursuant to G.S. 20-217 or (ii) pursuant to G.S. 153A-246(b)(14) that the owner of the vehicle has failed to pay a civil penalty due under G.S. 153A-246.

- (12) The owner of the vehicle has failed to pay any penalty or fee imposed pursuant to G.S. 20-311.
- (13) The Division has been notified by the State Highway Patrol that the owner of the vehicle has failed to pay any civil penalty and fees imposed by the State Highway Patrol for a violation of Part 9 of Article 3 of this Chapter.
- (14) The Division has been notified (i) pursuant to G.S. 153A-246.1(d)(6) that the owner of the vehicle has failed to pay any penalty imposed under G.S. 153A-246.1 or (ii) pursuant to G.S. 160A-300.4(d)(6) that the owner of the vehicle has failed to pay any penalty imposed under G.S. 160A-300.4. (1937, c. 407, s. 19; 1975, c. 716, s. 5; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 754, s. 7; 1998-182, s. 9; 2001-356, s. 3; 2002-152, s. 1; 2007-164, s. 5; 2008-225, s. 7; 2009-319, s. 1; 2013-293, s. 4; 2015-241, s. 29.31(b); 2016-87, s. 4; 2017-188, s. 3; 2019-196, s. 2; 2024-46, s. 1(b); 2025-47, s. 13(e).)