

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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HOUSE BILL 853

Short Title: Special License Plate After Revocation. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Pike, Echevarria, Penny, and Greene (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

April 10, 2025

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO REQUIRE PERSONS WHOSE LICENSES HAVE BEEN REVOKED TO HAVE
3 A SPECIAL LICENSE PLATE OF A DIFFERENT COLOR.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 20-19 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

6 "(l) Special Registration Plate Restriction. – When the Division restores a person's drivers
7 license which was revoked pursuant to any provision of this Chapter, in addition to any other
8 restriction or condition, it shall require the person to agree to and shall indicate on the person's
9 drivers license a restriction that the person may operate only a vehicle that displays a special
10 registration plate as described in G.S. 20-82.1.

11 A person subject to this subsection shall obtain a special registration plate for all registered
12 vehicles owned by that person that the person operates or intends to operate. The person shall not
13 operate any vehicle that does not have the special registration plate.

14 Notwithstanding the requirements of this subsection, a person subject to this subsection may
15 operate a vehicle that is owned by the person's employer and that does not display a special
16 registration plate only if (i) the person is required to operate that vehicle in the course and scope
17 of the person's employment, (ii) the employer has been notified that the person is subject to a
18 license restriction requiring the person to drive only vehicles displaying a special registration
19 plate, and (iii) the person has proof of the employer's notification in the person's possession while
20 operating the employer's vehicle for normal business duties. A person shall be subject to this
21 subsection for the following period:

22 (1) Seven years if the person is also subject to a restriction in subsection (c3) of
23 this section.

24 (2) Three years in all other cases.

25 A violation of a restriction imposed under this subsection shall result in a one-year revocation.
26 If the period of revocation was imposed pursuant to subsection (d) or (e) of this section, or
27 G.S. 20-138.5(d), any remaining period of the original revocation, prior to its reduction, shall be
28 reinstated and the one-year revocation begins after all other periods of revocation have
29 terminated."

30 **SECTION 2.** Part 5 of Article 3 of Chapter 20 of the General Statutes is amended
31 by adding a new section to read:

32 "**§ 20-82.1. Special license plate after revocation.**

33 Notwithstanding G.S. 20-63(a), the Division shall issue to any person subject to the
34 restriction set forth in G.S. 20-19(l), 20-179.3(h1), 20-16.1(b)(1), and 20-20.1(i)(2a), a special
35 registration plate that is a different color from those regularly issued and that may be readily



1 identified by law enforcement officers. The Commissioner shall designate the color to be used
2 on the special registration plate, which shall remain the same from year to year and shall not be
3 displayed on any other motor vehicles.

4 No person operating a motor vehicle displaying a special registration plate described in this
5 section shall knowingly disguise or obscure the color of the special registration plate.

6 Special registration plates issued pursuant to this section are subject to the regular motor
7 vehicle registration fee in G.S. 20-87 or G.S. 20-88 plus an additional fee in the amount of ten
8 dollars (\$10.00), which shall be credited by the Division to the Special Registration Plate Account
9 (SRPA)."

10 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 20-179.3 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

11 "(h1) Special Registration Plate. – A judge shall include in any limited driving privilege
12 order issued under this section a special registration plate requirement pursuant to G.S. 20-82.1.
13 A person subject to this subsection shall obtain a special registration plate for all registered
14 vehicles owned by that person that the person operates or intends to operate. The person shall not
15 operate any vehicle that does not have the special registration plate.

16 Notwithstanding the requirements of this subsection, the person may operate a vehicle that is
17 owned by the person's employer and that does not display a special registration plate only if (i)
18 the person is required to operate that vehicle in the course and scope of the person's employment,
19 (ii) the employer has been notified that the person is subject to a license restriction requiring the
20 person to drive only vehicles displaying a special registration plate, and (iii) the person has proof
21 of the employer's notification in the person's possession while operating the employer's vehicle
22 for normal business duties."

23 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 20-16.1(b)(1) reads as rewritten:

24 "(b) (1) Upon a first conviction only of violating subsection (a), the trial judge may
25 when feasible allow a limited driving privilege or license to the person
26 convicted for proper purposes reasonably connected with the health, education
27 and welfare of the person convicted and ~~his~~ the person's family. For purposes
28 of determining whether conviction is a first conviction, no prior offense
29 occurring more than seven years before the date of the current offense shall
30 be considered. The judge may impose upon such limited driving privilege any
31 restrictions as in ~~his~~ the judge's discretion are deemed advisable including, but
32 not limited to, conditions of days, hours, types of vehicles, routes,
33 geographical boundaries and specific purposes for which limited driving
34 privilege is allowed. For any limited driving privilege issued pursuant to this
35 subdivision, the judge must impose a special registration plate requirement
36 pursuant to G.S. 20-179.3(h1). Any such limited driving privilege allowed and
37 restrictions imposed thereon shall be specifically recorded in a written
38 judgment which shall be as near as practical to that hereinafter set forth and
39 shall be signed by the trial judge and shall be affixed with the seal of the court
40 and shall be made a part of the records of the said court. A copy of said
41 judgment shall be transmitted to the Division of Motor Vehicles along with
42 any driver's license in the possession of the person convicted and a notice of
43 the conviction. Such permit issued hereunder shall be valid for 30 days from
44 the date of issuance by trial court. Such permit shall constitute a valid license
45 to operate motor vehicles of the class or type that would be allowed by the
46 person's license if it were not currently revoked upon the streets and highways
47 of this or any other state in accordance with the restrictions noted thereon and
48 shall be subject to all provisions of law relating to driver's license, not by their
49 nature, rendered inapplicable."

50 **SECTION 5.** G.S. 20-20.1(i) reads as rewritten:

1 "(i) Restrictions. – A limited driving privilege that is not authorized by this section or that
2 does not contain the restrictions required by law is invalid. A limited driving privilege issued
3 under this section is subject to the following conditions:

4 (1) Financial responsibility. – A person applying for a limited driving privilege
5 under this section must provide the court proof of financial responsibility
6 acceptable under G.S. 20-16.1(g) and must maintain the financial
7 responsibility during the period of the limited driving privilege.

8 (2) Alcohol restrictions. – A person who received a limited driving privilege
9 under this section may not consume alcohol while driving or drive at anytime
10 while the person has remaining in the person's body any alcohol or controlled
11 substance previously consumed, unless the controlled substance was lawfully
12 obtained and taken in therapeutically appropriate amounts.

13 (2a) Special plate. – A judge shall include in any limited driving privilege order
14 issued under this section a special registration plate requirement pursuant to
15 G.S. 20-82.1. A person subject to this subsection shall obtain a special
16 registration plate for all registered vehicles owned by that person that the
17 person operates or intends to operate. The person shall not operate any vehicle
18 that does not have the special registration plate. Notwithstanding the
19 requirements of this subsection, the person may operate a vehicle that is
20 owned by the person's employer and that does not display a special registration
21 plate only if (i) the person is required to operate that vehicle in the course and
22 scope of the person's employment, (ii) the employer has been notified that the
23 person is subject to a license restriction requiring the person to drive only
24 vehicles displaying a special registration plate, and (iii) the person has proof
25 of the employer's notification in the person's possession while operating the
26 employer's vehicle for normal business duties.

27 (3) Others. – The court may impose any other reasonable restrictions or
28 conditions necessary to achieve the purposes of this section."

29 **SECTION 6.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2025, and applies to licenses
30 revoked and limited driving privileges issued on or after that date.