

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 26-24—sSB 413
Transportation Committee

**AN ACT REVISING VARIOUS MOTOR VEHICLE STATUTES,
IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT
OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND CONCERNING YOUTH INSTRUCTION
PERMITS, AUTOMOBILE DEALERS AND MANUFACTURERS AND
THE TOWING AND STORAGE OF MOTOR VEHICLES**

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Modifies towing rate setting procedures by (1) requiring DMV to give at least 14 days' notice before holding a public hearing on towing rates; (2) adding an additional comment period when the commissioner amends the rates proposed by the POTC beyond certain parameters; (3) requiring that towing rates be adjusted for inflation in years two and three of the rate-setting cycle; and (4) allowing anyone aggrieved by a rate setting decision to appeal to the Superior Court

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Adds a consumer advocate to the POTC and requires the council to study operational considerations of towing and storing EVs and the cost of doing so

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Limits the timeframe for filing customer complaints about police-ordered towing to two years after the date the vehicle was towed

[§ 34 — NOTICE OF DMV TOWING-RELATED CHANGES](#)

Requires DMV to (1) give 60 days' written or electronic notice to towers before implementing applicable new or modified internal policies, procedures, or forms and (2) consult with the Towing Advisory Council before making these changes

[§§ 35 & 36 — TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT \(TIM\) TRAINING FOR TOWING COMPANIES](#)

Requires owners and employees of towing companies on the state or a municipal tow rotation list to take DOT-provided traffic incident management training

[§ 37 — UNCLAIMED VEHICLE DISPOSAL PROCESS](#)

Modifies procedures for disposing of unclaimed vehicles, including by (1) allowing garage owners to start the process 30 days after towing a vehicle, rather than after 15 or 45 days (depending on value); (2) requiring vehicles less than 15 model years old (rather than those worth more than \$1,500) to be initially offered at public auction; and (3) modifying when and how garage owners must send notices of a vehicle's sale

[§§ 38, 41 & 42 — NOTICE OF TOW REQUIREMENTS](#)

Generally requires notices of tow to (1) include the towing bill of rights and an itemized towing bill and (2) be sent by regular mail, in addition to certified mail as existing law requires; eliminates the requirement that towing companies that store vehicles towed under certain police or parking authority orders send a notice of tow (but the department or authority must send the notice and upload vehicle information to the portal)

[§§ 39 & 40 — TOWING ADVISORY COUNCIL](#)

Creates a Towing Advisory Council to advise DMV on laws and best practices for motor vehicle towing and storage and the redemption and sale of unclaimed vehicles

SUMMARY: This act makes various changes to motor vehicle and transportation laws. A section-by-section analysis follows.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Various, see below.

[§§ 1 & 2 — ACCESSIBLE PARKING PLACARDS](#)

Requires DMV to redesign placards so the expiration date is prominent; specifies that the Accessible Parking Advisory Council's duty to make educational materials includes videos or online trainings; and generally requires that people who certify eligibility for placards select which criterion an applicant meets

The act modifies laws on accessible parking application forms, placard design, and the duties of the Accessible Parking Advisory Council.

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EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026, except the provision on council educational materials is effective upon passage.

Placard Design

The act requires the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), in consultation with the Accessible Parking Advisory Council, to redesign the accessible parking windshield placard so the placard's expiration date is in bold font, prominent, and clearly visible from outside the vehicle. Starting January 1, 2027, DMV must only issue placards in the redesigned format, but previously issued placards that are otherwise valid remain so until they expire.

Advisory Council Duties

Under existing law, the Accessible Parking Advisory Council must make educational materials for medical professionals, law enforcement officers, and the general public about proper placard issuance and use. The act specifies that these materials include videos or online trainings.

Placard Application Form

By law, applicants for accessible parking placards must submit DMV's application form, which generally must be signed by a qualified person (such as a licensed physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse) to certify that the applicant meets the federal definition of a person with a disability that limits his or her ability to walk and, consequently, is eligible for a placard. In practice, the application form lists the criteria contained in this definition and requires the person certifying the applicant's eligibility to sign under the criteria.

The act (1) codifies the requirement that the form list each eligibility criterion in this definition and (2) requires the form to also instruct the person certifying eligibility to initial which criterion the applicant meets. It also requires the form to have a QR (quick response) code or something similar that allows health professionals and others who use it to access educational materials the advisory council develops on eligibility requirements.

As under existing law, certifications are signed under penalty of false statement, and those provided by health care professionals must be based on their professional opinion after completing a medically reasonable assessment of the applicant's medical history and current condition in the context of a bona fide health care professional-patient relationship.

Background — Disability That Limits or Impairs Ability to Walk

By law, a person has a disability that limits or impairs their ability to walk if the person:

1. cannot walk 200 feet without resting;
2. cannot walk without (a) the use of a cane, brace, crutch, prosthetic device,

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- wheelchair, or other assistive device or (b) help from another person;
- 3. is restricted by lung disease based on certain measures;
- 4. uses portable oxygen;
- 5. has a heart condition that creates functional limitations falling within the American Heart Association's Class III or IV severity classification; or
- 6. is severely limited in walking ability due to an arthritic, neurological, or orthopedic condition (23 C.F.R. § 1235.2).

§ 3 — RECIPROCITY FOR Q ENDORSEMENT

Requires DMV to waive the skills test requirement for a Q endorsement to operate a fire apparatus for people with an out-of-state credential that is substantially equivalent, as determined by the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control

By law, a Q license endorsement indicates that a person is qualified to operate a fire apparatus (fire truck). To get an endorsement, a person generally must pass a skills test, but the test is waived for people with qualifying military training and experience.

The act requires DMV to also waive the skills test requirement and issue a Q endorsement to out-of-state license holders that have a substantially equivalent credential from that state. The Commission on Fire Prevention and Control determines which states' credentials have standards that meet or exceed Connecticut's licensing standards and so qualify for reciprocity.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2027

§ 4 — E-SCOOTER WEIGHT LIMIT

Increases prior law's e-scooter weight limit from 100 pounds to 110 pounds

The act increases prior law's weight limit for "electric scooters" (e-scooters) from 100 pounds to 110 pounds. In addition to meeting the weight limit, existing law defines an e-scooter as a device that (1) has two or three wheels and handlebars; (2) is designed to be ridden in an upright or seated position; (3) is powered by an electric motor and human power; and (4) has a maximum speed of up to 20 mph, with or without human propulsion on a paved level surface. E-bikes and one-wheeled vehicles are not considered e-scooters.

Existing law excludes e-bikes and e-scooters from the definition of a motor-driven cycle. (E-bikes and e-scooters are regulated more similarly to bicycles.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§ 5 — VEHICLE RENTALS

Adds open air all-terrain, sport, and convertible to the list of vehicle categories for which a short-term car rental company may require a customer to provide proof of a credit card before renting

Existing law generally prohibits short-term car rental companies from requiring customers to show proof of a credit card as a condition for renting a vehicle.

However, it allows them to require this proof for (1) passenger motor vehicles ACRISS (formerly, the Association of Car Rental Industry System Standards) or a successor organization classify as full-size elite, premium, premium elite, luxury, luxury elite, oversize, or special or (2) sport utility vehicles designed to transport six or more people.

The act additionally allows these car rental companies to require proof of a credit card to rent vehicles ACRISS classifies as open air all-terrain, sport, or convertible.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§ 6 — LOCAL BRIDGE PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Modifies the definition of “eligible bridges” that may receive grants under the state’s Local Bridge Program

The Local Bridge Program gives grants to municipalities to remove, replace, reconstruct, rehabilitate, or improve local bridges. By law, the Department of Transportation (DOT) commissioner makes a priority list of eligible bridges, based on their physical condition, and may generally award grants to municipalities in the order of priority (CGS § 13a-175s).

Prior law defined an “eligible bridge” under the Local Bridge Program as a bridge located in one or more Connecticut municipalities that must be removed, replaced, reconstructed, rehabilitated, or improved due to its physical condition, as determined by the DOT commissioner. The act modifies this “eligible bridge” definition by (1) specifying it applies to vehicular bridges, (2) expanding it to include “vehicular structures,” and (3) expressly requiring that these bridges and structures be municipally owned.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§§ 7-11 — VESSEL RECORD PRIVACY

Generally subjects records relating to vessels and vessel titles to the privacy protections that apply to personal information in DMV records under existing law, but allows the disclosure of certain information to a vessel owner

Existing law generally prohibits DMV from disclosing personal information in its records unless the disclosure is specifically authorized by state law. The prohibition applies to records related to any DMV-issued document, including driver’s licenses, learner’s permits, identity cards, registrations, and title certificates, but prior law specifically excluded records relating to vessels or vessel titles. (Although boating and vessel regulation generally falls under the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), DMV handles vessel registration and titles.)

The act eliminates this exclusion and, in doing so, prohibits DMV from disclosing personal information in vessel-related records unless it is disclosed for a purpose authorized in law. It also (1) specifies that DMV may disclose the name and address of the person who last registered a vessel to anyone who proves they

currently own it and (2) specifically allows DEEP to do the same.
EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§§ 12-14 — DEFINITION OF “COMMISSIONER” IN CERTAIN LAWS REQUIRING BACKGROUND CHECKS

Specifies that “commissioner” refers only to the commissioner or a DMV employee acting on his behalf in several statutes with national background check requirements

Generally, for the purposes of motor vehicle laws, the term “commissioner” refers to the DMV commissioner and any assistant to the commissioner who is designated and authorized by the commissioner and is acting for the commissioner under a designation.

The act specifies that “commissioner” refers only to the DMV commissioner or DMV employees acting on his behalf for the purposes of statutes on electronic issuance licenses (§ 12), dealer and repairer licenses (§ 13), and driving instructor licenses (§ 14). Each of these statutes require applicants to undergo a fingerprint-based national criminal records check. Under P.L. 92-544, the FBI requires state laws requiring national criminal records checks to meet several criteria before the state may receive criminal history record information from the FBI. Among other things, statutes requiring these records checks may not authorize the receipt of criminal history record information by a private entity.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 15 — REPLACEMENT TITLES

Requires DMV, before issuing a replacement title, to check the VIN against certain databases

By law, before issuing an original title certificate, DMV must check the vehicle identification number (VIN) against DMV’s title records and its records of stolen, recovered, unclaimed, and abandoned vehicles. (In practice, DMV implemented the National Motor Vehicle Titling Information System, which is a consolidated database of vehicle title information submitted by states that helps identify vehicle fraud and theft.)

The act additionally requires DMV to run this check before issuing a replacement title certificate.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§ 16 — ACCESSIBLE PARKING AWARENESS DAY

Requires the governor to proclaim the second Monday in July each year as Accessible Parking Awareness Day

The act requires the governor to proclaim the second Monday in July each year as Accessible Parking Awareness Day. He must do so to promote accessible parking’s value, encourage responsible use, and strengthen public education and collaboration. The act allows suitable observance exercises to be held in the State

Capitol and other locations, as the governor designates.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 17 — YOUTH INSTRUCTION PERMIT HOLDERS AND PASSENGER RESTRICTIONS

Allows youth instruction permit holders to have their sibling as a passenger during driving instruction if the sibling also holds a learner's permit

The act allows youth instruction permit holders to have their sibling as a passenger during driving instruction if the sibling also holds a youth instruction permit. By law, these learner's permit holders may drive only if they have a licensed driving instructor or licensed driver meeting certain requirements riding with and instructing them. The licensed driver must be at least age 20 with (1) at least four years of licensure and (2) no license suspensions during the prior four years.

Unchanged by the act, these permit holders may also have their parents or legal guardians in the vehicle during instruction (in addition to the person instructing). The passenger limitations do not apply if they are being instructed by a licensed driving instructor (for example, as a part of a driver's education course).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§§ 18 & 19 — DEALER CONVEYANCE FEES

Requires car dealers to include their dealer conveyance fee or processing fee, if any, in the price they advertise or quote for a motor vehicle and prohibits them from pre-printing vehicle orders and invoices with the dealer conveyance fee amount

The act modifies requirements related to dealer conveyance fees and motor vehicle prices, generally aligning these requirements with those that apply to fees for add-on consumer goods and services under existing law. By law, a "dealer conveyance fee" or "processing fee" is a fee dealers charge to recover reasonable costs for processing all documentation and performing services related to closing a sale, including registration and transferring vehicle ownership.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Advertisements

Under prior law, dealers had to (1) exclude conveyance or processing fees from a vehicle's advertised price and (2) separately state the fee amount next to the phrase "Dealer Conveyance Fee." The act instead requires dealers to include these fees in the advertised price but keeps the requirement to also separately state the fee amount.

By law, dealers similarly must include fees for any add-on consumer good or service in the advertised price of the vehicle and also separately state the amount of these fees next to the phrase "Additional Fees, Charges and Costs."

By law, and unchanged by the act, dealers who violate these laws are subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 and may have their license suspended or revoked.

Quoted Price

When quoting a selling price to prospective buyers, prior law required dealers to include, separately stated, the amount of any dealer conveyance fee. The act requires dealers to both (1) include the dealer conveyance fee in the quoted amount and (2) separately state the amount. As under existing law, the latter must also state that the conveyance fee is negotiable.

By law, dealers must include fees for any optional add-on consumer good or service in the quoted price and also separately state (1) the amount of each fee and (2) that it is optional.

Under existing law, and unchanged by the act, a dealer must give a buyer a written statement and prominently display a sign specifying (1) the conveyance fee or processing fee amount; (2) the included services; (3) that the fee is negotiable; (4) that the fee is not payable to the state; and (5) that the buyer may choose, where appropriate, to submit registration and title documents to DMV themselves, in which case the dealer will reduce the fee by a proportional amount (CGS § 14-62(c)).

Pre-Printed Order and Invoice Forms

For each motor vehicle sale, state law requires dealers to give buyers an order and an invoice that contain the vehicle's cash selling price and other specified vehicle information and offer terms. Existing law prohibits dealers from pre-printing the vehicle order and invoice with fees for any optional, add-on consumer good or service before discussions with a prospective buyer. The act extends this prohibition to dealer conveyance fees.

§§ 20-25 — DEALER FRANCHISE ACT CHANGES

Limits the circumstances under which manufacturers may require car dealers to construct, renovate, or substantially alter their dealerships; establishes new requirements related to consumer data sharing between dealers and manufacturers; entitles new vehicle dealers to compensation when used vehicles in their inventories are recalled and the necessary parts or remedies are not available for a while

Alterations to Dealerships (§§ 20, 21 & 25)

The act limits the circumstances under which manufacturers may require car dealers to construct, renovate, or substantially alter ("alter") their dealerships. Substantial alterations are generally those that majorly impact the architectural features, characteristics, appearance, or integrity of the dealership facility or lot.

Under the act, a manufacturer can only require dealers to alter their facilities if it (1) demonstrates the alteration is reasonable and justifiable based on a reasonable business consideration (such as economic condition projections) and (2) agrees to make a good faith effort to make new vehicles available to the dealer, at the dealer's option, to support the dealer's alteration costs. The new vehicles must be provided

in an amount and mix that is projected, based on a reasonable market analysis, to meet the sales level necessary to support these costs.

The act also prohibits a manufacturer from requiring a dealer to alter its dealership if it completed a manufacturer-required alteration to the same component of the facility within the last 10 years.

Exclusions. The act's limitations do not apply to:

1. routine maintenance reasonably necessary to keep the dealership in attractive condition,
2. changes to items protected by intellectual property rights, or
3. reasonable facility improvements and technological upgrades needed to support technology in a manufacturer's vehicles.

If a manufacturer requires improvements or upgrades to support vehicle technology and a dealer chooses not to make them, the act allows the manufacturer to refuse to give the dealer any vehicles that require them.

The act also specifies that it does not allow a dealer to (1) impair or eliminate a manufacturer's intellectual property or trademark rights or interests, including sign design and use, or (2) refuse to change the design or branding of any signs or other branded items, as long as the requirement applies to all dealers nationally.

Incentive Programs. Under the act, if a dealer alters its facility under an incentive program, the manufacturer may not deny a dealer any payment or benefits that were part of the program's terms when the dealer started participating in it. If a dealer alters its facility under an incentive program on or after October 1, 2026, and the program does not specify a time period during which the dealer will receive payments or benefits, manufacturers must provide them to the dealer for 10 years after the manufacturer made the program available to the dealer, even if the manufacturer changes or cancels the program. Manufacturers must do so under the terms of the incentive program, as it existed when the dealer began to perform under the program.

The act specifies that it does not prohibit manufacturers from denying payment or benefits if the dealer changes its facility (after manufacturer approval) in a way that makes it noncompliant with the manufacturer's standards or plans, regardless of whether or not the program changed. Facility changes needed because of damage from natural disasters or required safety upgrades cannot make a dealer noncompliant with a manufacturer's standards or plans, as long as the changes substantially restore the facility to compliance.

The act's provisions on facility-related incentives do not apply to (1) lump sum payments for facility upgrade costs and (2) any facility incentive program in effect on October 1, 2026.

Purchase of Goods, Building Materials, or Services. The act prohibits manufacturers from requiring dealers who are altering their dealerships to buy goods, building materials, or services (such as flooring and wall coverings) from a manufacturer-chosen vendor if the:

1. dealer can get, from other sources, goods, materials, and services that are substantially similar in appearance, function, design, and quality to the ones from the manufacturer's vendor and
2. manufacturer approves them.

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The act prohibits manufacturers from unreasonably delaying or withholding approval. If a manufacturer denies a dealer's request, it must give the dealer a detailed list of the reasons it did so in writing at the time of the denial.

Consumer Data (§§ 20 & 24)

The act establishes several requirements related to consumer data sharing between manufacturers (including third parties acting on their behalf) and their dealers. It requires manufacturers to comply with applicable state and federal restrictions on reusing or disclosing consumer data and prohibits them from causing a dealer to violate these restrictions.

Under the act, manufacturers must indemnify the dealer for any claims against the dealer, or damages it incurs, to the extent caused by the manufacturer's disclosure, access, or use of dealer-provided data in violation of the act.

Scope. The act's data protections apply to nonpublic, personally identifiable financial information that a dealer collects and gives directly to a manufacturer, factory branch, or third party acting on their behalf. It does not apply to data the manufacturer receives from another source, even if it is the same as or similar to data the dealer has.

Statement on Procedures for Safeguarding Consumer Data. The act requires manufacturers (or third parties acting on their behalf) to give dealers, upon request, a written statement describing the manufacturer's procedures to safeguard consumer data. These procedures must meet or exceed any federal or state requirements, including those in the federal Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, which requires companies that offer consumers financial products and services (such as loans) to explain their information-sharing practices to consumers and to safeguard personally identifiable information.

List of Parties With Whom Manufacturer Shared Data. Under the act, upon a dealer's written request, a manufacturer (or a third party acting on its behalf) must give the dealer a written list of all the consumer data it received from the dealer and all the parties the manufacturer gave the data to in the previous six months. Dealers may only request this information once every six months.

The act requires that this list indicate specific fields of consumer data that were given to each party. But it does not have to include any party (or the data given to that party) who:

1. was providing services for a manufacturer or dealer and received the data while doing so, as long as the parties had an agreement requiring the service provider to comply with federal and state data privacy requirements, or
2. was previously authorized by the dealer, in writing, to receive the data, as long as the dealer has not withdrawn the authorization in writing.

Access to Dealer's Data Management System. The act prohibits manufacturers from requiring dealers to allow them direct or indirect access to the dealer's data management system to get consumer data. However, under the act, manufacturers may get consumer data from the dealer's system if the dealer gives express consent in a written document, separate from the franchise agreement, that may be withdrawn with 30 days' written notice to the manufacturer. Manufacturers cannot

require this consent as a condition for participating in an incentive program that begins on or after October 1, 2026, unless the consent is necessary to get consumer data to implement the program.

If a dealer does not allow a manufacturer access to its system, the manufacturer must allow the dealer to give them consumer data in a widely accepted file format and through a third-party vendor the dealer chooses.

When Manufacturers May Require Data Sharing. Under the act, manufacturers may require dealers to give them, or allow them to use, customer information related solely to the manufacturer's vehicle makes to the extent necessary to:

1. satisfy manufacturers' legal notice obligations, including safety or recall notices;
2. complete vehicle sale and delivery;
3. validate and pay customer or dealer incentives;
4. submit claims for services supplied by the dealer for any claim for warranty parts or repairs;
5. analyze the market;
6. evaluate sales and customer satisfaction with the dealer (including surveys); or
7. achieve reasonable marketing purposes that benefit the dealer.

Compensation for Recalled Vehicles in Inventory (§§ 22 & 23)

The act generally entitles a new vehicle dealer to compensation from a manufacturer when used vehicles in its inventory are subject to a "stop-sale order" or a "do-not-drive order" because of a federal safety or emissions recall and the necessary parts or remedies are not available for a while.

Eligible Vehicles. Under the act, if the necessary parts or remedies are not available within 30 days after issuing the recall, a new vehicle dealer franchised to sell and service new vehicles from the manufacturer may file a claim for each recalled vehicle that (1) was in its used vehicle inventory on the date the stop-sale order or do-not-drive order was issued or (2) it took into its used car inventory as a consumer trade-in or a leased vehicle return after the date the order was issued. The claim must be filed in a way the manufacturer sets, and the manufacturer may specify how dealers must show eligibility for the compensation, but the requirements cannot be overly burdensome.

Compensation Amount. Under the act, the compensation must equal at least 1% of the used vehicles' value per month, starting 30 days after the recall is issued and ending when the (1) parts are, or remedy is, available to the dealer or (2) dealer sells, trades, or otherwise gets rid of the vehicle, whichever is sooner. Like other claims by dealers under existing law, the act requires manufacturers to pay these claims within 30 days after approving them.

Instead of compensation calculated as described above, a manufacturer may (1) compensate a dealer under a national recall compensation program, as long as the amount is at least equal to what a dealer would otherwise receive, or (2) enter into an agreement with a dealer for compensation in an alternate form or amount. Compensation provided to the dealer is otherwise exclusive and cannot be

combined with other state or federal recall remedies.

Under the act, a dealer is not entitled to compensation higher than the vehicle's value. The vehicle's value, for purposes of calculating compensation, is the average trade-in value for the vehicle determined with nationally recognized industry data or pricing guides.

The act prohibits manufacturers from offsetting or reducing the compensation they owe to dealers under the act, including (1) through a charge-back program, (2) any reduction in an amount owed to a dealer through an incentive program, or (3) the removal of a dealer from an incentive program if it is done because the dealer applied for compensation. These limitations do not apply to manufacturer actions that apply uniformly to all new vehicle dealers of the same line and make of vehicles in the state.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§§ 26 & 27 — E-BIKE AND MOTOR-DRIVEN CYCLE DEFINITIONS

Modifies the motor capacity limits for e-bikes and motor-driven cycles

The act makes bicycles with electric motors of exactly 750 watts e-bikes under the law. It does so by modifying the motor limit in the e-bike definition from less than 750 watts to 750 watts or less. As under existing law, e-bikes must also have operable foot pedals and meet the requirements applicable to a class 1, class 2, or class 3 e-bike.

The act also modifies the definition of motor-driven cycle by eliminating the five brake horsepower limit for these vehicles. It retains existing law's requirement that they have a motor capacity less than 50 cubic centimeters (cc) or a wattage of 3,700 watts or less, as applicable. As under existing law, motor-driven cycles are generally motorcycles, motor scooters, or bicycles with attached motors, that have a (1) seat height of at least 26 inches and (2) gasoline, electric, or hybrid motor.

Existing law excludes e-bikes and e-scooters from the definition of a motor-driven cycle. (E-bikes and e-scooters are regulated more similarly to bicycles.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§ 28 — WAIVER OF NEW PHOTO REQUIREMENT FOR CERTAIN ID CARDS

Gives the DMV commissioner discretion to waive this requirement for people age 65 or older or with certain disabilities or medical conditions who are (1) renewing an ID card or (2) replacing their driver's license with an ID card

Existing law generally requires someone to get a new picture taken in person every other time they renew a driver's license or non-driver ID card (generally, every 16 years). The act gives the DMV commissioner discretion to waive this requirement for people age 65 or older or with certain disabilities or medical conditions who are (1) renewing an ID card or (2) replacing their driver's license with an ID card.

Under the act, the commissioner can waive the new photo requirement and use

the picture the department has on file if he determines the person is age 65 or older or has a medical condition or disability that substantially impairs mobility or the ability to appear in person. The person requesting a waiver must meet all other requirements for renewing or receiving an ID card. The act specifies that it does not require the ID card to be compliant with the federal Real ID law. (Under this law, a person must have their photo updated at least every 16 years.)

The act (1) requires DMV, if it will give these waivers, to establish procedures to renew or issue the ID cards by mail or electronic communication and (2) allows the department to require any documentation necessary to determine eligibility for the waiver. It also specifies that it does not require the commissioner to grant any waiver that would compromise ID card integrity or facilitate fraud or misuse.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

§§ 29 & 41 — ELECTRONIC TOWED VEHICLE PORTAL

Requires DMV to create and maintain an electronic portal on its website, available 24 hours a day, to provide information on vehicles subject to nonconsensual towing; sets design requirements; generally requires towing companies to upload information on towed vehicles within 48 hours after the tow

Starting January 1, 2027, the act requires DMV to create and maintain an electronic portal on its website, available 24 hours a day, to provide information on vehicles subject to nonconsensual towing. The portal's goal is to help the public figure out if their vehicle was towed and, if so, where it is stored. The act specifies that the portal provisions do not apply to consensual towing or to repossession.

Portal Design and Features

The act requires the portal to be publicly accessible and searchable and prohibits it from requiring people to create an account to access the information. It must also (1) be easily operated and accessible, both when submitting and searching for information on towed and stored vehicles and (2) allow towing companies, garage owners, police departments, and parking authorities to submit information to the portal electronically.

When designing or significantly updating the portal, DMV must consult with the Towing Advisory Council the act establishes (see below) to ensure the portal meets these requirements. DMV must also consider whether the portal may be used to allow towing companies to electronically file DMV forms (such as a notice of tow) and whether doing so may substitute for mailing them.

Uploading to the Portal

Starting January 1, 2027, the act requires towing companies and garage owners to upload information to the portal within 48 hours after a vehicle is towed. The portal must require submission of enough information to identify the vehicle, the storage location, the towing company's or garage's identity and contact information, and any other information DMV, in consultation with the Towing Advisory Council, requires. Towing companies and garage owners must also

update the portal with changes in the vehicle's status, as DMV requires.

The act prohibits DMV from imposing a civil penalty for violating the uploading requirements if the towing company or garage owner (1) failed to upload information due to a documented technological issue with the portal or a temporary power or internet outage and (2) uploads the information as soon as possible after the issue is resolved or power or internet is restored.

Towing Bill of Rights

The act requires DMV, by January 1, 2027, to add a link to the portal on the towing bill of rights and a description of the information available on the portal.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026, except the provision on the towing bill of rights is effective October 1, 2026.

§§ 30 & 32 — TOWING RATES

Modifies towing rate setting procedures by (1) requiring DMV to give at least 14 days' notice before holding a public hearing on towing rates; (2) adding an additional comment period when the commissioner amends the rates proposed by the POTC beyond certain parameters; (3) requiring that towing rates be adjusted for inflation in years two and three of the rate-setting cycle; and (4) allowing anyone aggrieved by a rate setting decision to appeal to the Superior Court

By law, nonconsensual towing and storage rates are set every three years by the DMV commissioner, with different processes for (1) vehicle storage rates and private property trespass towing rates and (2) police-ordered towing rates. In the latter case, the commissioner's rates are based on recommendations from the Police-Ordered Towing Council (POTC). (In practice, the commissioner generally delegates his authority to make rate decisions to a hearing officer.)

The act modifies these rate setting processes by (1) requiring DMV to give at least 14 days' notice before holding a public hearing on police-ordered towing rates or private property trespass towing rates, (2) establishing an additional procedural step in the police-ordered towing rate process if the commissioner adjusts the rate schedule beyond certain parameters, (3) requiring that private property trespass towing rates and police-ordered towing rates be adjusted in years two and three of the three-year rate setting cycle, and (4) allowing anyone aggrieved by a towing rate decision to appeal to the Superior Court.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

Notice of Hearing

The act requires DMV to give at least 14 days' notice before any public hearing on police-ordered towing rates or private property trespass towing rates by (1) posting it on its website and (2) giving notice to each member of the Towing Advisory Council (see below) or POTC, as applicable.

Annual Adjustment

The act requires police-ordered towing rates and private property trespass towing rates to be automatically adjusted in years two and three of the three-year rate setting cycle. Specifically, in these years, the commissioner must (1) adjust the prior year's rates by a percentage equal to the average of the increase in the consumer price index for all urban consumers and the increase in the transportation producer price index and (2) post the new rates on DMV's website by December 1, which is one month before the adjusted rates take effect.

The adjustment applies immediately to police-ordered towing rates but not until the next three-year cycle (starting January 1, 2029) for private property trespass towing rates. (In practice, the private property trespass towing rates that took effect in January 2026 already include an annual adjustment.)

Police-Ordered Towing Rate Procedures

Under existing law, the DMV commissioner receives a recommended rate schedule from the POTC and, after holding a public hearing on the proposed schedule, may adjust any rate included on the schedule. The act establishes an additional comment period that is triggered when the commissioner (1) increases or reduces any rate or charge on the proposed schedule by more than 10% or (2) eliminates or adds any specialized equipment charge in the proposed schedule.

If he does either of these things, he must (1) issue a preliminary rate schedule, (2) post it on DMV's website and give notice to each POTC member, and (3) allow at least 15 days for public comment. After the comment period ends, DMV must review comments received, consider whether to modify the preliminary schedule, prepare a written response to the comments, and post it on DMV's website (and give a copy to POTC members). After he does these things, he must set and publish the final rate schedule.

The act also shortens, from within 90 days to within 60 days, the time period within which the commissioner must hold a hearing on the proposed POTC rate schedule and make a final decision.

Appeal

The act allows anyone aggrieved by any police-ordered towing or private property trespass towing rate setting action by the commissioner to appeal to the New Britain Superior Court.

§§ 31 & 43 — POLICE-ORDERED TOWING COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Adds a consumer advocate to the POTC and requires the council to study operational considerations of towing and storing EVs and the cost of doing so

Membership

By law, the POTC develops proposed rate schedules for police-ordered towing and advises DMV on policies affecting police-ordered towing.

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The act adds a consumer advocate to the POTC, increasing council membership from 12 to 13. As with other POTC appointees, the consumer advocate is appointed by the governor, who must make his initial appointment by October 15, 2026.

The act also specifies that the transportation, energy and environmental protection, emergency services and public protection, and insurance commissioners must each designate an agency employee with relevant experience to be a member of the POTC. Prior law made these commissioners members of the council but allowed them to appoint a designee in their place.

Under existing law, unchanged by the act, the other members of the POTC are:

1. three representatives from towing and recovery organizations,
2. two representatives from commercial trucking organizations,
3. one representative from a police chiefs' association and one from a fire chiefs' association, and
4. one representative of the insurance industry.

Study on EV Rates

The act requires the POTC to study the operational considerations of towing and storing electric vehicles (EVs), including (1) comparing the operating costs of towing an EV to those for towing a vehicle with an internal combustion engine and (2) determining whether the hourly police-ordered towing rates cover those costs. By January 1, 2027, the POTC must submit the report and any recommendations to the Transportation Committee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026, except the study provision is effective upon passage.

§ 33 — LIMITATION ON CONSUMER TOWING COMPLAINTS

Limits the timeframe for filing customer complaints about police-ordered towing to two years after the date the vehicle was towed

Under existing law, DMV receives, processes, and investigates customer complaints about licensed dealers and repairers. (By law, towing companies must be licensed as a dealer or repairer.) The act limits the timeframe for filing complaints about police-ordered towing to two years after the relevant tow.

By law, these complaints are generally handled by DMV through proceedings governed by the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§ 34 — NOTICE OF DMV TOWING-RELATED CHANGES

Requires DMV to (1) give 60 days' written or electronic notice to towers before implementing applicable new or modified internal policies, procedures, or forms and (2) consult with the Towing Advisory Council before making these changes

The act requires DMV to consult with the Towing Advisory Council the act creates (see below) before adopting new, or modifying existing, internal policies,

procedures, or forms that affect towing companies. It also requires the commissioner to give towing companies with a registered tow truck at least 60 days' written or electronic notice before implementing these new or modified policies, procedures, or forms.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§§ 35 & 36 — TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (TIM) TRAINING FOR TOWING COMPANIES

Requires owners and employees of towing companies on the state or a municipal tow rotation list to take DOT-provided traffic incident management training

The act requires individual owners and employees of towing companies that are included in the State Police's rotational system for summoning wreckers (tow rotation list) or a municipal tow rotation list to take TIM training provided by DOT. Individual owners must take the training by July 1, 2027, or prior to being placed on a rotation list (whichever is later). Employees who tow for the towing companies on these rotation lists must take the training by July 1, 2027, or within one year of the date of hire (whichever is later).

In practice, DOT provides this training, for free, on a regular basis. It is targeted to emergency management professionals, law enforcement, fire and emergency medical services, towing and recovery professionals, and transportation and public works employees. It covers (1) responder safety; (2) safe, quick clearance practices; and (3) communication and coordination between all those responding to traffic incidents.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§ 37 — UNCLAIMED VEHICLE DISPOSAL PROCESS

Modifies procedures for disposing of unclaimed vehicles, including by (1) allowing garage owners to start the process 30 days after towing a vehicle, rather than after 15 or 45 days (depending on value); (2) requiring vehicles less than 15 model years old (rather than those worth more than \$1,500) to be initially offered at public auction; and (3) modifying when and how garage owners must send notices of a vehicle's sale

Timeframe for Disposal

Under prior law, towing companies and garage owners (hereinafter collectively, "garage owners") could start the process of selling an unclaimed vehicle (such as by submitting required forms) after they had it for (1) 15 days, if the vehicle's market value was \$1,500 or less, or (2) 45 days, if the vehicle's market value was more than \$1,500. But they had to hold it for at least 30 days or 60 days, respectively, before they could complete the sale.

The act instead allows garage owners to start the process of selling unclaimed vehicles after 30 days, regardless of value. It correspondingly eliminates requirements related to valuing unclaimed vehicles and the specific amount of time a garage owner must hold a vehicle before completing the sale (based on value). However, as under existing law, garage owners must still wait until they receive

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required documentation from DMV (such as the affidavit of compliance) and meet all notice requirements and waiting periods (such as the minimum five-day waiting period after notifying the owner of the proposed sale) before selling the vehicle.

Auction Requirements

The act requires unclaimed vehicles that are less than 15 model years old, rather than those valued at more than \$1,500, to initially be offered for sale at a public auction at the garage owner's place of business. Vehicles 15 model years old or older (rather than those valued at \$1,500 or less) may be sold or scrapped by the garage owner without first being offered at auction.

The act also restores a provision eliminated in PA 25-55 allowing a garage owner to (1) set a minimum auction bid equal to the accumulated charges for the tow and storage and (2) sell or dispose of the vehicle if he or she does not get this bid.

The act also requires garage owners to give notice of each public auction by (1) submitting information to the portal the act creates (see § 29 above) and (2) publishing notice in a newspaper of general circulation or by prominently posting it on the garage owner's website.

Notice of Intent to Sell and Notice of Proposed Sale

By law, garage owners must send to vehicle owners, lienholders, and DMV a (1) notice of intent to sell and (2) notice of proposed sale. The notice of intent to sell starts the disposal process, providing information on the process to vehicle owners and lienholders and acting as an application to get the DMV documentation (affidavit of compliance) needed to sell the vehicle. The notice of proposed sale informs owners and lienholders that the vehicle will be sold (including date, time, and location).

When Notices are Not Required. In practice, garage owners send the notice of intent to sell and the notice of proposed sale to the address on file with DMV for the current or most recent registered owner. The act exempts garage owners from sending these notices to these individuals if (1) they notify the garage owner in writing that they do not currently own the vehicle or do not want to receive further notices about the vehicle's disposal or (2) the notice of tow was returned as undeliverable. In these cases, garage owners still must update the towed vehicle portal and keep records of the written notice or returned mail for three years.

Method of Mailing. Under prior law, garage owners had to send these notices by certified mail, return receipt requested. The act instead requires sending them through regular mail, postage prepaid.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§§ 38, 41 & 42 — NOTICE OF TOW REQUIREMENTS

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Generally requires notices of tow to (1) include the towing bill of rights and an itemized towing bill and (2) be sent by regular mail, in addition to certified mail as existing law requires; eliminates the requirement that towing companies that store vehicles towed under certain police or parking authority orders send a notice of tow (but the department or authority must send the notice and upload vehicle information to the portal)

Under the act, starting October 1, 2026, towing companies must include a copy of DMV's towing bill of rights (which generally outlines consumers' rights and obligations after a nonconsensual tow) and an itemized towing bill in each notice of tow it mails to vehicle owners and lien holders. The towing bill must include the (1) towing charges for towing the vehicle and (2) daily storage rate, with an explanation that storage charges will accumulate at that rate until the vehicle is redeemed. It must also explain that charges for necessary administrative services will be charged at the time of vehicle redemption.

The act generally requires that notices of tow be mailed by regular mail, postage prepaid, in addition to certified mail as existing law requires. This applies to notices of tow sent by wreckers, as well as those police departments and parking authorities must send. Generally, for vehicles with known owners, these notices must be sent within 48 hours after the vehicle is towed or taken into custody.

The act also eliminates prior law's requirement for towing companies that store vehicles taken into custody under an order by a police department or parking authority to (1) make a reasonable effort to identify vehicle owners and lienholders and (2) send a notice of tow. Under existing law, unchanged by the act, the department or authority is responsible for sending the notice of tow. The act additionally requires them to upload vehicle information to the towed vehicle portal.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§§ 39 & 40 — TOWING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Creates a Towing Advisory Council to advise DMV on laws and best practices for motor vehicle towing and storage and the redemption and sale of unclaimed vehicles

The act creates a Towing Advisory Council to advise DMV on laws, regulations, and best practices related to nonconsensual towing and towed vehicle storage, redemption, and sale.

Membership

The DMV commissioner must appoint to the council (1) two DMV employees with relevant experience; (2) three towing and recovery professionals in the state, with the advice and consent of an organization representing a majority of towing and recovery professionals in the state; (3) two consumer advocates; (4) two law enforcement officers; and (5) two insurance industry representatives.

Appointments must be made by August 1, 2026, and members serve for three-year terms and until a successor is appointed. The commissioner must fill any vacancy within 30 days.

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The commissioner must schedule the council's first meeting by September 1, 2026, and at the first meeting, the council must select a chairperson from its members. The council may consult with any other agencies, officials, or interested parties the council deems appropriate to complete its work.

Required Study

Under the act, the council must evaluate ways to:

1. make sure vehicle owners get notified when their vehicles are towed;
2. improve owners' ability to redeem their towed vehicles; and
3. modernize and improve the process of selling vehicles at public auction, including (a) evaluating the feasibility of online auctions and third-party auctions and (b) recommending changes to the law.

The council must submit to the Transportation Committee an interim report by January 1, 2027, and a final report by January 1, 2028.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026, for the provision establishing the council and October 1, 2026, for the study provision.