# 19-04 - Temporary Vehicle License Plates

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

**NEWSLETTER**

Field Operations Support Services

**TEMPORARY VEHICLE LICENSE PLATES**

Assembly Bill 516, which was signed into law on July 25, 2016, requires all vehicles sold by California licensed dealers and lessor-retailers after January 1, 2019, to display temporary paper license plates (TLPs) or permanent license plates issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

When consumers purchase a vehicle from a dealership:

- **The dealer will be required to generate a report of sale form and attach the temporary identification portion of the report of sale form to the windshield of the vehicle;**
- **If the vehicle does not already display the required number of permanent license plates, the dealer will also be required to print and issue TLPs and attach them to the vehicle before the vehicle is released from the dealership;**
- **The dealer must print TLPs on special paper which meets DMV specifications (water resistant and tear resistant). The special paper can vary due to it being provided by different contract vendors; and**
- **TLPs are required to be securely mounted to the front and rear of the vehicle where a permanent license plate would be, and the dealer must affix the plates at the time of sale.**

TLPs will display the temporary license plate number, vehicle identification number (VIN), vehicle year, vehicle make, report of sale (ROS), number and expiration date. The law only requires the listed information be printed on the TLP, but not the format/placement of the information on the TLP. Variations in laser printers (manufacturer, amount of ink, etc.) may account for additional discrepancies in the appearance of a TLP.

TLPs and registered owner information are uploaded from the dealership to the DMV once a day. A new TLP may appear as a “record not on file” during inquiries into the DMV database if the TLPs were issued within the previous 24-48 hours.

**Report of Sale Number (ROS)**




**-OR-**




**Explration Date, 90 days after the sale**

TLPs contain a number of security features:

- A **QR Code/Bar Code** with the corresponding TLP number and ROS is embedded on a TLP to make them difficult to counterfeit;
- The TLP displays the ROS number, which should match the temporary identification portion of the report of sale form attached to the windshield; and
- Legitimate TLPs are linked to the DMV through JDIC, CAD, and MDC interfaces. A "K" must be typed in the license code field of the vehicle screen and an "X" must be typed in the check box for the "work in process" field for a valid inquiry.

The vehicle sale information is reported by the dealer electronically and maintained by DMV in a database that is available to parking and toll agencies, law enforcement, and other entities authorized by law to obtain such information. Once a vehicle registration record is created for the vehicle and permanent license plates are issued, the database will be updated with the permanent license plate number and the authorized user querying the TLP information will be able to view the permanent license plate number.

**TLPs are valid for 90 days after the date of sale, or until the customer receives the permanent license plates and registration card, (whichever occurs first). This 90 day expiration date is printed on the TLP. After the 90 day expiration date, an inquiry into the DMV database will return a "record not on file," message. Any information on TLPs after the 90 day expiration may be obtained through one of the vendors listed below.**

TLPs may be used to enter a vehicle into the Stolen Vehicle System (SVS) by using a Vehicle Report form

(CHP-180). The phrase “temporary license plate” should be written in the narrative of the CHP-180. In addition, lost or stolen plates should be entered into SVS using a CHP-180. Once again, “temporary license plate” should be written in the narrative. TLPs can be entered into SVS by Department personnel using “TM” for the license code and the phrase “temporary license plate” in the miscellaneous field.

When TLPs are lost or stolen, the vehicle owner can return to the dealer to obtain new TLPs for their vehicle. Currently, dealers do not confiscate any remaining TLPs, nor do they require the vehicle owner to complete a lost or stolen TLP report prior to obtaining new TLPs. Once replacement TLPs are issued for a vehicle, any inquiry in the DMV database for the former TLPs will read, “record not on file.”

Investigations into the contract vendor’s database for records of where and whom printed a particular TLP can be made at the dealership level or by contacting the correct contract vendor. Requirements for a request of information vary by vendor.

Contact information for contract vendors are listed below:

- **DEALERTRACK**
  Contact: [REDACTED TEXT]
- **MOTOR VEHICLE SOFTWARE CORPORATION**
  Contact: [REDACTED TEXT]
- **AUTOMATED VEHICLE REGISTRATION SERVICES**
  Contact: [REDACTED TEXT]
- **AMERICAN DRIVING RECORDS**
  Contact: [REDACTED TEXT]

According to the DMV, TLP numbers will begin to be reused in approximately ten years (2029). Due to the fact vehicle license plate numbers only remain in SVS for five years, there should be no issues with reissued TLP numbers and previously stolen vehicles entered into SVS.

**This new law does not affect private party sales, and TLPs will not be required for these types of sales.**

The following California vehicle codes apply to TLPs, registration, and permanent license plates. Law enforcement officers should read the following sections to ensure they are using the appropriate code for enforcement purposes:

- 4460 CVC Authority to seize plates or documents;
- 4461(a) CVC Misuse of Registration (card, tabs, plates, TLPs, pink slip or permit) (Misdemeanor);
- 4462(a) CVC Present Registration card upon demand of peace officer;
- 4463(a)(1) CVC Counterfeit, Alter, Forge certificate of ownership, registration, plates, TLPs, stickers, and tabs with intent to defraud (Felony);
- 4463.5 CVC Fake or deceptive plates (Misdemeanor);
- 5200(a) CVC Plates required (includes after TLP 90 day expiration date);
- 5201(c) CVC License plate obstructed; and
- 5201.1(c) CVC Altering plate with spray or erasing reflective coating.

The Taskforce for Regional Auto theft Prevention (TRAP), the Department of Justice/Stolen Vehicle System (DOJ/SVS), the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), and the contract vendors were all contacted regarding TLPs. The information provided in this newsletter represents the most accurate and current information available regarding TLPs.

It is recommended law enforcement officers use their discretion based on the totality of the circumstances when conducting an investigation involving TLPs as procedures are still being standardized.

Questions regarding the content of this newsletter may be directed to Field Operations Support Services, at [REDACTED TEXT]