



Registering an Out-of-State Vehicle in North Carolina

Moving to North Carolina or buying a vehicle titled in another state? Use this checklist to register your out-of-state vehicle through the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles (NCDMV).

QUICK ANSWER

New North Carolina residents must register their vehicle at an NCDMV license plate agency within 30 days of establishing residency using Form MVR-1 (Application for Certificate of Title). A NC safety and emissions inspection is generally required. Highway Use Tax may apply — check the NCDMV website for the current rate and any exemptions.

KEY FACTS

State	North Carolina
Agency	North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles (NCDMV)
Process	See official source
Notary required	Not specified
Bill of sale	Not specified
Odometer disclosure	Not specified
Filing deadline	30 days
Last reviewed	May 10, 2026

QUICK REFERENCE

NOTARY
Not specified

BILL OF SALE
Not specified

ODOMETER
Not specified

INSPECTION
Yes

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Within 30 days
Register within 30 days of establishing North Carolina residence

PRINTABLE CHECKLIST

Required checklist

- ☐ **Out-of-state title (properly assigned to you, if purchased)** **REQUIRED**
The existing title from the other state. If you purchased the vehicle, it must be signed over to you.
- ☐ **Government-issued photo ID (current North Carolina address)** **REQUIRED**
Most states require proof of residency to register a vehicle.
- ☐ **Proof of North Carolina address** **REQUIRED**
Utility bill, lease agreement, or other proof of current residency.
- ☐ **Proof of insurance meeting North Carolina minimum requirements** **REQUIRED**
Insurance from an insurer licensed in North Carolina.
- ☐ **Odometer disclosure statement** **CONDITIONAL**
Required if the vehicle is under 10 years old.
- ☐ **VIN verification (may be required)** **CONDITIONAL**
Some states require a physical VIN inspection by law enforcement or a DMV inspector.
- ☐ **Safety and/or emissions inspection (if required)** **CONDITIONAL**
Check whether your state requires an inspection before registration.
- ☐ **Payment for title and registration fees** **REQUIRED**

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS



Inspection: Yes — North Carolina requires a safety and emissions inspection. Out-of-state vehicles must pass a NC inspection; the inspection is required before registration can be renewed.

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS

- 1 Obtain the out-of-state title (properly assigned to you).
- 2 Complete Form MVR-1 (Application for Certificate of Title).
- 3 Submit MVR-1, title, proof of NC insurance, proof of residency, and fees to an NCDMV license plate agency.
- 4 Pay title fee, Highway Use Tax (if applicable), and registration fee.
- 5 Get a NC safety/emissions inspection within the required timeframe.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Not scheduling a NC safety/emissions inspection within the required period.
- Waiting beyond 30 days after establishing NC residence.
- Forgetting the 3% Highway Use Tax if purchasing from a private seller.

OFFICIAL SOURCES

NCDMV — Vehicle Registration

<https://www.ncdot.gov/dmv/title-registration/registration/Pages/default.aspx>

NCDMV — Vehicle Inspections

<https://www.ncdot.gov/dmv/title-registration/emissions-safety/Pages/default.aspx>

North Carolina DMV

<https://www.ncdot.gov/dmv/>