

WASHINGTON STATE'S ARMED FORCES LICENSE PLATES

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I purchase an Armed Forces license plate for all of my vehicles?

Yes. DOL will issue plate(s) to any vehicle registered in your name. Plates are available for registered passenger vehicles, light duty pickups, trailers, motorcycles and campers.

Will the Armed Forces plate(s) be given out upon initial purchase?

Plates are mailed from the Olympia Headquarters Licensing Office within two business days of your application being processed in your local vehicle licensing office.

How much do the new Armed Forces plates cost?

The original cost to purchase a Special Background Armed Forces plate is \$72.75. When the vehicle registration becomes due, you will need to pay an additional \$30.00 to keep the Armed Forces plate(s) on your vehicle even if you have not had the plate(s) for a full year. The Department of Licensing highly recommends that you renew your vehicle registration at the same time you purchase your new special license plate or wait to purchase the plates when your registration is due. To determine the total cost due, contact your local vehicle licensing office. To locate your local vehicle licensing office visit <https://wws2.wa.gov/dol/vsagents/>.

Can I purchase a new plate even if my vehicle is not due to be renewed until months after the plate becomes available?

Yes. You can purchase a new plate at any point during your registration period. However, the Department of Licensing highly recommends that you renew your vehicle registration at the same time you purchase your new special license plate or wait to purchase the plates when your registration is due. Otherwise, your initial special plate fee will be valid for less than one year.

Do I need anything special to purchase this plate?

You must provide your Washington State Driver's License or Identification card with your current vehicle registration. You may also be required to complete an Address Verification form, if the department has not previously verified your current vehicle record address. In addition, you will need to **either** provide proof of service (military ID card, DD214, etc.) **or** sign an affidavit verifying your military service/veteran or family member status.

Can I buy an Armed Forces plate as a gift for someone else?

Only registered owners of the vehicle may purchase a plate.

What happens to the special plates when I sell my vehicle?

The special plates are issued to the individual and are not transferable to another person. If you sell your vehicle and purchase a new vehicle, you may pay a transfer fee and transfer the plates to your new vehicle.

If I purchase Armed Forces plates, how are the special plate fees used?

\$28.00 of the initial and annual plate renewal fee will benefit the Veterans programs including maintaining the Washington State Veterans Cemetery in Medical Lake and programs and services for homeless veterans.

When will I know what Armed Forces plate number I will be issued?

Once you have paid for your new plate, a new registration will be printed that will identify your new license plate number. Plate numbers are assigned sequentially and automatically by the Department of Licensing computer system. No vehicle licensing agent can override the Department of Licensing's computer system to give a specific number.

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Can I personalize my special license plate?

Yes, as of October 1, 2007, you can personalize special background plates.

Are there any restrictions when personalizing a special background plate?

Yes. You may get personalized license plates with 1–7 characters (letters, numbers, hyphens, or spaces). Motorcycle and small trailer plates may have up to 6 characters. License plates cannot contain unusual characters (#, %, &, @, +, !, etc.). Plates suggesting vulgar, racial, ethnic, or indecent messages will not be issued.

To see if the plate configuration you want is available, [look up personalized plates](#).

How much does it cost to personalize a special background plate?

The fee to purchase a special background plate with a personalized message is \$124.75. If you already have a personalized plate, and you just want to change the background you are required to pay \$72.75.

If you do not have a personalized or special background plate yet, you will pay \$72.75.

How much will I pay each year to keep my personalized special plate when I renew my tabs?

In addition to your registration tab fees, each year you must pay the personalized plate and special plate renewal fees. *Example:* If you have the personalized plate 'VETERAN' on an Armed Forces Plate background, you will pay:

- Annual registration tab fees.
 - \$42 personalized plate renewal fee.
 - \$30 special plate background renewal fee.
- \$72 for a personalized plate with a special background**

If I already have a personalized plate, can I put that message on a special background plate?

Yes. If you already have a personalized plate you can pay the appropriate fees and add your message to a special background plate design.

If I already have a special plate, what additional fees do I have to pay to get it personalized?


You will have to pay the fee for a personalized plate and the fee for the special background. There is no refund or credit if you've already purchased a special plate with a system assigned number.

Where can I purchase a personalized special plate?

If you already have standard personalized plates:

Visit your local [vehicle licensing office](#) to add a special background design.

If you do not have a personalized plate or already have special background plate:

- [Check to make sure the personalized plate you want is available](#) and that the [combination of characters is acceptable](#).
- Complete a  [Personalized License Plate Application Form](#).
- Complete a [Military License Plate Form](#).
- Submit your applications and licensing fees to:
DOL Vehicle Licensing
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