

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 127

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE VEIT.

0691H.02I

DANA RADEMAN MILLER, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To repeal section 301.142, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to license plates and placards for persons with disabilities.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 301.142, RSMo, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 301.142, to read as follows:

301.142. 1. As used in sections 301.141 to 301.143, the following terms mean:

(1) "Department", the department of revenue;

(2) "Director", the director of the department of revenue;

(3) "Other authorized health care practitioner" includes advanced practice registered nurses licensed pursuant to chapter 335, physician assistants licensed pursuant to chapter 334, chiropractors licensed pursuant to chapter 331, podiatrists licensed pursuant to chapter 330, assistant physicians, physical therapists licensed pursuant to chapter 334, and optometrists licensed pursuant to chapter 336;

(4) "Physically disabled", a natural person who is blind, as defined in section 8.700, or a natural person with medical disabilities which prohibits, limits, or severely impairs one's ability to ambulate or walk, as determined by a licensed physician or other authorized health care practitioner as follows:

(a) The person cannot ambulate or walk fifty or less feet without stopping to rest due to a severe and disabling arthritic, neurological, orthopedic condition, or other severe and disabling condition; or

(b) The person cannot ambulate or walk without the use of, or assistance from, a brace, cane, crutch, another person, prosthetic device, wheelchair, or other assistive device; or

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

18 (c) Is restricted by a respiratory or other disease to such an extent that the person's
19 forced respiratory expiratory volume for one second, when measured by spirometry, is less
20 than one liter, or the arterial oxygen tension is less than sixty mm/hg on room air at rest; or

21 (d) Uses portable oxygen; or

22 (e) Has a cardiac condition to the extent that the person's functional limitations are
23 classified in severity as class III or class IV according to standards set by the American Heart
24 Association; or

25 (f) Except as otherwise provided in subdivision (3) of subsection 16 of this section, a
26 person's age, in and of itself, shall not be a factor in determining whether such person is
27 physically disabled or is otherwise entitled to disabled license plates and/or disabled
28 windshield hanging placards within the meaning of sections 301.141 to 301.143;

29 (5) "Physician", a person licensed to practice medicine pursuant to chapter 334;

30 (6) "Physician's statement", a statement personally signed by a duly authorized person
31 which certifies that a person is disabled as defined in this section;

32 (7) "Temporarily disabled person", a disabled person as defined in this section whose
33 disability or incapacity is expected to last no more than one hundred eighty days;

34 (8) "Temporary windshield placard", a placard to be issued to persons who are
35 temporarily disabled persons as defined in this section, certification of which shall be
36 indicated on the physician's statement;

37 (9) "Windshield placard", a placard to be issued to persons who are physically
38 disabled as defined in this section, certification of which shall be indicated on the physician's
39 statement.

40 2. Other authorized health care practitioners may furnish to a disabled or temporarily
41 disabled person a physician's statement for only those physical health care conditions for
42 which such health care practitioner is legally authorized to diagnose and treat.

43 3. A physician's statement shall:

44 (1) Be on a form prescribed by the director of revenue;

45 (2) Set forth the specific diagnosis and medical condition which renders the person
46 physically disabled or temporarily disabled as defined in this section;

47 (3) Include the physician's or other authorized health care practitioner's license
48 number; and

49 (4) Be personally signed by the issuing physician or other authorized health care
50 practitioner.

51 4. If it is the professional opinion of the physician or other authorized health care
52 practitioner issuing the statement that the physical disability of the applicant, user, or member
53 of the applicant's household is permanent, it shall be noted on the statement. Otherwise, the
54 physician or other authorized health care practitioner shall note on the statement the

55 anticipated length of the disability, which shall determine the expiration date for the
56 temporary windshield placard, and which period shall not exceed one hundred eighty days. If
57 the physician or health care practitioner fails to record an expiration date on the physician's
58 statement, the director shall issue a temporary windshield placard for a period of thirty days.

59 5. A physician or other authorized health care practitioner who issues or signs a
60 physician's statement so that disabled plates or a disabled windshield placard may be obtained
61 shall maintain in such disabled person's medical chart documentation that such a certificate
62 has been issued, the date the statement was signed, the diagnosis or condition which existed
63 that qualified the person as disabled pursuant to this section and shall contain sufficient
64 documentation so as to objectively confirm that such condition exists.

65 6. The medical or other records of the physician or other authorized health care
66 practitioner who issued a physician's statement shall be open to inspection and review by such
67 practitioner's licensing board, in order to verify compliance with this section. Information
68 contained within such records shall be confidential unless required for prosecution,
69 disciplinary purposes, or otherwise required to be disclosed by law.

70 7. Owners of motor vehicles who are residents of the state of Missouri, and who are
71 physically disabled, owners of motor vehicles operated at least fifty percent of the time by a
72 physically disabled person, or owners of motor vehicles used to primarily transport physically
73 disabled members of the owner's household may obtain disabled person license plates. Such
74 owners, upon application to the director accompanied by the documents and fees provided for
75 in this section, a current physician's statement which has been issued within ninety days
76 proceeding the date the application is made, and proof of compliance with the state motor
77 vehicle laws relating to registration and licensing of motor vehicles, shall be issued motor
78 vehicle license plates for vehicles, other than commercial vehicles with a gross weight in
79 excess of twenty-four thousand pounds, upon which shall be inscribed the international
80 wheelchair accessibility symbol and the word "DISABLED" in addition to a combination of
81 letters and numbers. Such license plates shall be made with fully reflective material with a
82 common color scheme and design, shall be clearly visible at night, and shall be aesthetically
83 attractive, as prescribed by section 301.130. If at any time an individual who obtained
84 disabled license plates issued under this subsection no longer occupies a residence with a
85 physically disabled person, or no longer owns a vehicle that is operated at least fifty percent
86 of the time by a physically disabled person, such individual shall surrender the disabled
87 license plates to the department within thirty days of becoming ineligible for their use.

88 8. The director shall further issue, upon request, to such applicant one, and for good
89 cause shown, as the director may define by rule and regulations, not more than two,
90 removable disabled windshield hanging placards for use when the disabled person is
91 occupying a vehicle or when a vehicle not bearing the permanent handicap plate is being used

92 to pick up, deliver, or collect the physically disabled person issued the disabled motor vehicle
93 license plate or disabled windshield hanging placard.

94 9. No additional fee shall be paid to the director for the issuance of the special license
95 plates provided in this section, except for special personalized license plates and other license
96 plates described in this subsection. Priority for any specific set of special license plates shall
97 be given to the applicant who received the number in the immediately preceding license
98 period subject to the applicant's compliance with the provisions of this section and any
99 applicable rules or regulations issued by the director. If determined feasible by the advisory
100 committee established in section 301.129, any special license plate issued pursuant to this
101 section may be adapted to also include the international wheelchair accessibility symbol and
102 the word "DISABLED" as prescribed in this section and such plate may be issued to any
103 applicant who meets the requirements of this section and the other appropriate provision of
104 this chapter, subject to the requirements and fees of the appropriate provision of this chapter.

105 10. Any physically disabled person, or the parent or guardian of any such person, or
106 any not-for-profit group, organization, or other entity which transports more than one
107 physically disabled person, may apply to the director of revenue for a removable windshield
108 placard. The placard may be used in motor vehicles which do not bear the permanent
109 handicap symbol on the license plate. Such placards must be hung from the front, middle
110 rearview mirror of a parked motor vehicle and may not be hung from the mirror during
111 operation. These placards may only be used during the period of time when the vehicle is
112 being used by a disabled person, or when the vehicle is being used to pick up, deliver, or
113 collect a disabled person, and shall be surrendered to the department, within thirty days, if a
114 group, organization, or entity that obtained the removable windshield placard due to the
115 transportation of more than one physically disabled person no longer transports more than one
116 disabled person. When there is no rearview mirror, the placard shall be displayed on the
117 dashboard on the driver's side.

118 11. The removable windshield placard shall conform to the specifications, in respect
119 to size, color, and content, as set forth in federal regulations published by the Department of
120 Transportation. The removable windshield placard shall be renewed every ~~four~~ **eight** years.
121 **The department shall have the authority to automatically renew current valid disabled**
122 **placards for a duration of eight years, or for the duration that correlates with the**
123 **disabled person's current physician's statement expiration date, until all permanent**
124 **disabled placards are on an eight-year renewal cycle.** The director may stagger the
125 expiration dates to equalize workload. Only one removable placard may be issued to an
126 applicant who has been issued disabled person license plates. Upon request, one additional
127 windshield placard may be issued to an applicant who has not been issued disabled person
128 license plates.

129 12. A temporary windshield placard shall be issued to any physically disabled person,
130 or the parent or guardian of any such person who otherwise qualifies except that the physical
131 disability, in the opinion of the physician, is not expected to exceed a period of one hundred
132 eighty days. The temporary windshield placard shall conform to the specifications, in respect
133 to size, color, and content, as set forth in federal regulations published by the Department of
134 Transportation. The fee for the temporary windshield placard shall be two dollars. Upon
135 request, and for good cause shown, one additional temporary windshield placard may be
136 issued to an applicant. Temporary windshield placards shall be issued upon presentation of
137 the physician's statement provided by this section and shall be displayed in the same manner
138 as removable windshield placards. A person or entity shall be qualified to possess and
139 display a temporary removable windshield placard for six months and the placard may be
140 renewed once for an additional six months if a physician's statement pursuant to this section is
141 supplied to the director of revenue at the time of renewal.

142 13. A windshield placard shall be renewable only by the person or entity to which the
143 placard was originally issued. Any placard issued pursuant to this section shall only be used
144 when the physically disabled occupant for whom the disabled plate or placard was issued is in
145 the motor vehicle at the time of parking or when a physically disabled person is being
146 delivered or collected. A disabled license plate and/or a removable windshield hanging
147 placard are not transferable and may not be used by any other person whether disabled or not.

148 14. At the time the disabled plates or windshield hanging placards are issued, the
149 director shall issue a registration certificate which shall include the applicant's name, address,
150 and other identifying information as prescribed by the director, or if issued to an agency, such
151 agency's name and address. This certificate shall further contain the disabled license plate
152 number or, for windshield hanging placards, the registration or identifying number stamped
153 on the placard. The validated registration receipt given to the applicant shall serve as the
154 registration certificate.

155 15. The director shall, upon issuing any disabled registration certificate for license
156 plates and/or windshield hanging placards, provide information which explains that such
157 plates or windshield hanging placards are nontransferable, and the restrictions explaining who
158 and when a person or vehicle which bears or has the disabled plates or windshield hanging
159 placards may be used or be parked in a disabled reserved parking space, and the penalties
160 prescribed for violations of the provisions of this act.

161 16. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, every applicant for issuance
162 of a disabled license plate or placard shall be required to present a new physician's statement
163 dated no more than ninety days prior to such application, and for renewal applications a
164 physician's statement dated no more than ninety days prior to such application shall be
165 required every eighth year.

166 (2) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, if the applicant has
167 presented proof of disability in the form of a statement from the United States Department of
168 Veterans Affairs verifying that the person is permanently disabled, the applicant shall not be
169 required to provide a physician's statement for the purpose of issuance or renewal of disabled
170 person license plates or windshield placards.

171 (3) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (f) of subdivision (4) of subsection 1
172 of this section, any person seventy-five years of age or older who provided a physician's
173 statement with the original application shall not be required to provide a physician's statement
174 for the purpose of renewal of disabled person license plates or windshield placards.

175 17. The director of revenue upon receiving a physician's statement pursuant to this
176 subsection shall check with the state board of registration for the healing arts created in
177 section 334.120, or the Missouri state board of nursing established in section 335.021, with
178 respect to physician's statements signed by advanced practice registered nurses, or the
179 Missouri state board of chiropractic examiners established in section 331.090, with respect to
180 physician's statements signed by licensed chiropractors, or with the board of optometry
181 established in section 336.130, with respect to physician's statements signed by licensed
182 optometrists, or the state board of podiatric medicine created in section 330.100, with respect
183 to physician's statements signed by physicians of the foot or podiatrists to determine whether
184 the physician is duly licensed and registered pursuant to law.

185 18. The boards shall cooperate with the director and shall supply information
186 requested pursuant to this subsection. The director shall, in cooperation with the boards
187 which shall assist the director, establish a list of all Missouri physicians and other authorized
188 health care practitioners and of any other information necessary to administer this section.

189 19. Where the owner's application is based on the fact that the vehicle is used at least
190 fifty percent of the time by a physically disabled person, the applicant shall submit a
191 statement stating this fact, in addition to the physician's statement. The statement shall be
192 signed by both the owner of the vehicle and the physically disabled person. The applicant
193 shall be required to submit this statement with each application for license plates. No person
194 shall willingly or knowingly submit a false statement and any such false statement shall be
195 considered perjury and may be punishable pursuant to section 301.420.

196 20. The director of revenue shall retain all physicians' statements and all other
197 documents received in connection with a person's application for disabled license plates and/
198 or disabled windshield placards.

199 21. The director of revenue shall enter into reciprocity agreements with other states or
200 the federal government for the purpose of recognizing disabled person license plates or
201 windshield placards issued to physically disabled persons.

202 22. When a person to whom disabled person license plates or a removable or
203 temporary windshield placard or both have been issued dies, the personal representative of the
204 decedent or such other person who may come into or otherwise take possession of the
205 disabled license plates or disabled windshield placard shall return the same to the director of
206 revenue under penalty of law. Failure to return such plates or placards shall constitute a class
207 B misdemeanor.

208 23. The director of revenue may order any person issued disabled person license
209 plates or windshield placards to submit to an examination by a chiropractor, osteopath, or
210 physician, or to such other investigation as will determine whether such person qualifies for
211 the special plates or placards.

212 24. If such person refuses to submit or is found to no longer qualify for special plates
213 or placards provided for in this section, the director of revenue shall collect the special plates
214 or placards, and shall furnish license plates to replace the ones collected as provided by this
215 chapter.

216 25. In the event a removable or temporary windshield placard is lost, stolen, or
217 mutilated, the lawful holder thereof shall, within five days, file with the director of revenue an
218 application and an affidavit stating such fact, in order to purchase a new placard. The fee for
219 the replacement windshield placard shall be four dollars.

220 26. Fraudulent application, renewal, issuance, procurement or use of disabled person
221 license plates or windshield placards shall be a class A misdemeanor. It is a class B
222 misdemeanor for a physician, chiropractor, podiatrist or optometrist to certify that an
223 individual or family member is qualified for a license plate or windshield placard based on a
224 disability, the diagnosis of which is outside their scope of practice or if there is no basis for
225 the diagnosis.

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