



609-292-6500 ext. 5069

## Public Agency's Guide to Abandoned & Unclaimed Vehicles

### General Information

Pursuant to N.J.S.A 39:10A-1 through 39:10A-7, a vehicle abandoned on public property must either be offered for sale at public auction or junked. A **junk** title will only be issued if the vehicle is inoperable or cannot be put in safe operational condition except at a cost in excess of the value of the vehicle.

The vehicle must have been abandoned and unclaimed for more than 20 business days, if requesting a standard title, or 15 business days if requesting a junk title. License plates must be removed before the auction and surrendered to the Motor vehicle Commission (MVC).

*In order to keep processing time to a minimum, it is highly recommended that you forward requests on a frequent basis rather than allowing requests to build up and mailing them all at once.*

### A. Junk Title Instructions

Report possession of an abandoned vehicle and request a Junk Title Certificate to be issued in the name of the Public Agency by completing the following steps:

1. Complete a check with the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) to determine whether the vehicle is stolen.
2. Complete Form OS/SS-87 – “Report of Possession of Abandoned Vehicle by Public Agency and Request for a Junk Title. This must also be signed by an authorized representative of the Public Agency.
  - a. Pursuant to N.J.S.A 39:10A-1, the Public Agency must perform an NCIC check, and, within three business days, notify the owner of record and lienholder (if applicable). The public agency shall also, within three business days, notify the person storing the abandoned vehicle. Upon receipt of the notice from the Public Agency, the person storing the abandoned motor vehicle shall notify the owner of record and any lienholder. If the OS/SS-87 form is not properly filled out reflecting this information, the request will be rejected.
  - b. If the vehicle has a digital odometer, and the key is not available to start the vehicle, please mark the word “DIGITAL” on the OS/SS-87 Form.
3. The Public Agency must also report possession of an abandoned vehicle to the National Insurance Crime Bureau. The Public Agency can prepare the OS/SS-87 Form in duplicate and stamp the duplicate copy “NICB”. The duplicate copy is to be filed with: NICB, 145 Pinelawn Rd, Suite 310 South, Melville, N.Y. 11747, ATTN: Michael Fella.
4. Mail required documents along with a \$2.00 check or money order (payable to NJMVC) to the MVC at the above listed address.

**Note:** The below listed documents are available from our website at [www.njmvc.gov/biz](http://www.njmvc.gov/biz).

- Form OS/SS-87 – “Report of Possession of Abandoned Vehicle & Request for Junk Title”
- Form OS/SS-89 – “Report of Possession of Abandoned Vehicle”
- Public Agency's Guide to Abandoned & Unclaimed Vehicles
- Checklist for acquiring title for abandoned vehicles
- Sample bill of sale.

***Any questions? Please call the Abandoned Unit.***

## B. Standard Title Instructions

1. Complete a check with the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) to determine that this is not a stolen vehicle.
2. Give notice of the sale at auction by certified mail, to the owner, if his name and address are known and to the lienholder of any security interest filed with the Chief Administrator.
3. Fully complete Form OS/SS-89 – “Report of Possession of Abandoned Vehicle by Public Agency”. This must also be signed by an authorized representative of the Public Agency. If the vehicle has a digital odometer, and the key is not available to start the vehicle, please mark the word “DIGITAL” on the OS/SS-89 Form.
  - a. Pursuant to N.J.S.A 39:10A-1, the Public Agency must perform an NCIC check, and, within three business days, notify the owner of record and lienholder (if applicable). The public agency shall also, within three business days, notify the person storing the abandoned vehicle. Upon receipt of the notice from the Public Agency, the person storing the abandoned motor vehicle shall notify the owner of record and any lienholder. If the OS/SS-87 form is not properly filled out reflecting this information, the request will be rejected.
4. Mail the original OS/SS-89 Form to the MVC to the address listed on Page 1.
5. The Public Agency must also report possession of an abandoned vehicle to the National Insurance Crime Bureau. The Public Agency can prepare the OS/SS-89 Form in duplicate and stamp the duplicate copy “NICB”. The duplicate copy is to be filed with: NICB, 145 Pinelawn Rd, Suite 310 South, Melville, N.Y. 11747, ATTN: Michael Fella.
6. Upon receipt and approval of documentation, the MVC will issue the “Application to Title Abandoned Vehicle by Public Agency and Sold at Public Sale” (Form OS/SS-88) and it will be mailed to the Public Agency. This form contains an assignment, which when executed, will result in issuance of a Certificate of Title to the purchaser.
7. Upon receipt of the OS/SS-88 Form, the Public Agency must publish a notice at least 5 days before the date of the auction in one or more newspapers published in this state and circulating in the municipality in which the motor vehicle is held.
8. Hold public auction. When, \*and if, the vehicle is sold, the Public Agency must supply the purchaser with the following items:
  - A fully completed and signed OS/SS-88 Form
  - A certified affidavit of newspaper publication
  - A bill of sale from the Public Agency. The bill of sale must contain the sale price, sale date, purchase name, address and signature, and the public agency name, address, authorized representative’s name and signature. A sample is available on-line at [www.njmvc.gov/biz](http://www.njmvc.gov/biz).
9. The purchaser must then mail the above documents with a \$3.00 check or money order made payable to NJMVC, 7% sales tax on the purchase price of the vehicle, and a photocopy of the purchaser’s driver’s license. Mail documents to the MVC at the address list on the reverse side.

**\*Special Note:** If the price bid for a motor vehicle is less than the minimum bid established by the public agency for the motor vehicle, or if no bid is made, then the public agency may withdraw the vehicle from auction and apply for title to the vehicle. The MVC will only honor requests for titles in the name of the public agency if the request is accompanied by a certification, on public agency letterhead, signed by the auctioneer and authorized agency representative. The certification must verify that the vehicle was indeed offered for sale a public auction and that either an unacceptable bid was offered or no bid was received. The certification also must include the following information:

- Year, make, model, and vehicle identification number (VIN) of the vehicle,
- Date of auction, Amount of bid,
- Printed names and signatures of auctioneer and agency representative including signatures and date.