

# STATE OF NEW YORK

4147

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

February 3, 2025

Introduced by Sen. COONEY -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Transportation

AN ACT to amend the vehicle and traffic law, the criminal procedure law and the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to improving enforcement of violations related to license plates

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "ghostbus-  
2 ter act".  
3 § 2. Subdivision 2 of section 238 of the vehicle and traffic law, as  
4 amended by chapter 224 of the laws of 1995, is amended to read as  
5 follows:  
6 2. A notice of violation shall be served personally upon the operator  
7 of a motor vehicle who is present at the time of service, and [~~his~~] such  
8 operator's name, together with the plate designation and the plate type  
9 as shown by the registration plates of said vehicle [~~and~~], the expira-  
10 tion date and the vehicle identification number; the make or model[~~, and~~  
11 ~~body-type~~] of said vehicle; a description of the charged violation,  
12 including but not limited to a reference to the applicable traffic rule  
13 or provision of this chapter; information as to the days and hours the  
14 applicable rule or provision of this chapter is in effect, unless always  
15 in effect pursuant to rule or this chapter and where appropriate the  
16 word ALL when the days and/or hours in effect are everyday and/or twen-  
17 ty-four hours a day; the meter number for a meter violation, where  
18 appropriate; and the date, time and particular place of occurrence of  
19 the charged violation, shall be inserted therein. A mere listing of a  
20 meter number in cases of charged meter violations shall not be deemed to  
21 constitute a sufficient description of a particular place of occurrence  
22 for purposes of this subdivision. The notice of violation shall be  
23 served upon the owner of the motor vehicle if the operator is not pres-  
24 ent, by affixing such notice to said vehicle in a conspicuous place.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [~~-~~] is old law to be omitted.

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1 Whenever such notice is so affixed, in lieu of inserting the name of the  
2 person charged with the violation in the space provided for the iden-  
3 tification of said person, the words "owner of the vehicle bearing  
4 license" may be inserted to be followed by the plate designation and  
5 plate type as shown by the registration plates of said vehicle together  
6 with the expiration date and the vehicle identification number; the make  
7 or model[~~, and body type~~] of said vehicle; a description of the charged  
8 violation, including but not limited to a reference to the applicable  
9 traffic rule or provision of this chapter; information as to the days  
10 and hours the applicable rule or provision of this chapter is in effect  
11 unless always in effect pursuant to rule or this chapter and where  
12 appropriate the word ALL when the days and/or hours in effect are every  
13 day and/or twenty-four hours a day; the meter number for a meter  
14 violation where appropriate; and the date, time and particular place of  
15 occurrence of the charged violation. Service of the notice of  
16 violation, or a duplicate thereof by affixation as herein provided shall  
17 have the same force and effect and shall be subject to the same penal-  
18 ties for disregard thereof as though the same was personally served with  
19 the name of the person charged with the violation inserted therein.

20 § 3. Paragraph (a) of subdivision 2-a of section 238 of the vehicle  
21 and traffic law, as added by chapter 224 of the laws of 1995, is amended  
22 to read as follows:

23 (a) Notwithstanding any inconsistent provision of subdivision two of  
24 this section, where the plate type or the expiration date are not shown  
25 on either the registration plates or sticker of a vehicle or where the  
26 registration sticker is covered, faded, defaced or mutilated so that it  
27 is unreadable, or where the vehicle identification number is destroyed,  
28 covered, defaced, altered or otherwise changed in violation of section  
29 170.65 of the penal law, or where the authenticity cannot be verified by  
30 a search of the license plate database, the plate type or the expiration  
31 date or vehicle identification number may be omitted from the notice of  
32 violation; provided, however, such condition must be so described and  
33 inserted on the notice of violation.

34 § 4. Subdivisions 3 and 4 of section 402 of the vehicle and traffic  
35 law are amended and a new subdivision 9 is added to read as follows:

36 3. No person shall operate [~~or~~], drive or park a motor vehicle drawing  
37 a trailer on the public highways of the state, unless such trailer shall  
38 have a distinctive number assigned to it by the commissioner and a  
39 number plate issued by such commissioner with a number corresponding to  
40 that of the certificate of registration displayed and fastened on the  
41 rear in the manner provided for number plates on the rear of a motor  
42 vehicle. The provisions of subdivision two of this section relating to  
43 number plates for motor vehicles shall apply to number plates for any  
44 such trailer. The provisions of this subdivision shall not apply when a  
45 newly constructed trailer is being drawn to or from a weighing station  
46 solely for the purpose of determining the weight thereof.

47 4. No person shall operate [~~or~~], drive or park a motor vehicle upon  
48 the public highways of this state having displayed thereon number plates  
49 not proper for such vehicle under the provisions of this chapter and,  
50 upon a conviction for this offense, the number plates shall be surren-  
51 dered to the court for delivery to the commissioner. The failure to  
52 produce the certificate of registration or registration renewal stub of  
53 a vehicle, or a vehicle bearing temporary registration or indicia of  
54 registration issued by a foreign country, state, territory or federal  
55 district, or an agent thereof, shall be presumptive evidence of display-  
56 ing number plates not proper for the vehicle. Every annual number plate

1 issued shall remain the property of the state until the correct regis-  
2 tration fee is paid. Every number plate of a permanent nature for use  
3 with a removable date tag which shall be issued shall remain the proper-  
4 ty of the state unless and until the commissioner finds that the state  
5 no longer has use for it. Number plates belonging to the state shall be  
6 under the control of the commissioner.

7 9. (a) In addition to the penalties set forth in subdivision eight of  
8 this section, whenever any police officer, or in a city having a popu-  
9 lation in excess of one million any person designated by the commission-  
10 er of traffic of such city, or on highways under the jurisdiction of the  
11 New York state thruway authority, the office of parks and recreation, a  
12 county park commission, a parkway authority, a bridge authority or a  
13 bridge and tunnel authority any person designated by such office,  
14 commission or authority, finds a vehicle which is in violation of the  
15 provisions of this section such officer is hereby authorized to provide  
16 for the removal of such vehicle, semitrailer or trailer to a garage,  
17 automobile pound or other place of safety, or to attach a mechanical  
18 device to the wheel or tire of such vehicle to prevent its usual manner  
19 of movement provided that such act is done by a person licensed to do so  
20 in accordance with any other applicable provision of law.

21 (b) The owner or other person lawfully entitled to the possession of  
22 such vehicle may be charged with any reasonable costs including removal  
23 and storage, payable before the vehicle is released.

24 § 5. The subdivision heading and paragraph (a) of subdivision 4-h of  
25 section 510 of the vehicle and traffic law, as added by section 5 of  
26 subpart A of part WW of chapter 56 of the laws of 2024, are amended to  
27 read as follows:

28 Suspension of registration for covering license plates with a license  
29 plate cover or material appearing to be a number plate [~~ex~~], obscuring  
30 license plates with any material or substance, displaying an improper  
31 plate or forgery of a vehicle identification number. (a) Upon receipt of  
32 a notification from a court or an administrative tribunal that an owner  
33 of a motor vehicle has been convicted three or more times within a peri-  
34 od of five years of a violation of paragraph (a) or subparagraph (ii),  
35 (ii-a) or (iii) of paragraph (b) of subdivision one of section four  
36 hundred two of this chapter or section 170.65 of the penal law, not  
37 arising out of the same incident, the commissioner or the commissioner's  
38 agent may suspend the registration of the motor vehicle involved in such  
39 violation for a period of ninety days. The commissioner may, in the  
40 commissioner's discretion, deny a registration or renewal application to  
41 any other person for the same vehicle and may deny a registration or  
42 renewal application for any other motor vehicle registered in the name  
43 of the applicant where the commissioner has determined that such regis-  
44 trant's intent has been to evade the purposes of this paragraph and  
45 where the commissioner has reasonable grounds to believe that such  
46 registration or renewal will have the effect of defeating the purposes  
47 of this paragraph. Such denial shall remain in effect only as long as  
48 the suspension entered pursuant to this paragraph remains in effect.

49 § 6. Section 402-b of the vehicle and traffic law, as added by section  
50 4 of subpart A of part WW of chapter 56 of the laws of 2024, is amended  
51 to read as follows:

52 § 402-b. Obscured and obstructed license plates or vehicle identifica-  
53 tion numbers. 1. If any vehicle is driven [~~ex~~], operated or parked on a  
54 public highway in violation of subparagraph (ii), (ii-a), or (iii) of  
55 paragraph (b) of subdivision one of section four hundred two of this  
56 article, or section 170.65 of the penal law, and is committed in their

1 presence, a police officer, as defined in section one hundred thirty-two  
2 of this chapter, shall be authorized to take such actions as may be  
3 required or permitted by the provisions of this section.

4 2. If the vehicle is being driven [~~or~~], operated or parked in  
5 violation of subparagraph (ii), (ii-a) or (iii) of paragraph (b) of  
6 subdivision one of section four hundred two of this article, or section  
7 170.65 of the penal law, such officer shall issue a summons[~~, provided,~~  
8 ~~however, that a summons shall not be issued if, in the discretion and at~~  
9 ~~the request of such officer, the defect is corrected in the presence of~~  
10 ~~such officer. The refusal of a police officer to permit the repair of~~  
11 ~~any defect in their presence shall not be reviewable, and shall not be a~~  
12 ~~defense to any violation charged in a summons issued pursuant to the~~  
13 ~~provisions of this section]~~ and confiscate any instrument used in  
14 connection with the violation. A vehicle bearing a temporary registra-  
15 tion or indicia of a registration issued by a foreign country, state,  
16 territory or federal district, or by an agent thereof, shall be presump-  
17 tive evidence of a violation. Such summons shall be issued irrespective  
18 of any correction of the defect in the presence of the officer.

19 3. Any complaint issued for any violation of subparagraph (ii), (ii-a)  
20 or (iii) of paragraph (b) of subdivision one of section four hundred two  
21 of this article may be dismissed by the court before which the summons  
22 is returnable if the violation as set forth in the summons is corrected  
23 not later than one-half hour after sunset on the first full business day  
24 after the issuance of the summons and proof of such correction is  
25 submitted to the court or administrative tribunal. For the purposes of  
26 this subdivision, "business day" shall mean any calendar day except  
27 Saturday and Sunday, or the following business holidays: New Year's Day,  
28 Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Colum-  
29 bus Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

30 § 7. Paragraph (b) of subdivision 1 of section 1.20 of the criminal  
31 procedure law, as added by chapter 450 of the laws of 2019, is amended  
32 to read as follows:

33 (b) an appearance ticket issued for a parking infraction when (i) such  
34 ticket is based on personal knowledge or information and belief of the  
35 police officer or other public servant who issues the ticket, (ii) the  
36 police officer or other public servant who issues such ticket verifies  
37 that false statements made therein are punishable as a class A misdemea-  
38 nor, (iii) the infraction or infractions contained therein are stated in  
39 detail and not in conclusory terms so as to provide the defendant with  
40 sufficient notice including, but not limited, to the applicable  
41 provision of law allegedly violated, and the date, time and particular  
42 place of the alleged infraction, and (iv) such ticket contains: (1) the  
43 license plate designation of the ticketed vehicle, (2) the license plate  
44 type of the ticketed vehicle, (3) the expiration of the ticketed vehi-  
45 cle's registration, (4) the make or model of the ticketed vehicle, and  
46 (5) the [~~body-type~~] vehicle identification number of the ticketed vehi-  
47 cle, provided, however, that where the plate type or the expiration date  
48 are not shown on either the registration plates or sticker of a vehicle  
49 or where the registration sticker or vehicle identification number is  
50 covered, faded, defaced or mutilated so that it is unreadable, the plate  
51 type [~~or~~], the expiration date or the vehicle identification number may  
52 be omitted, provided, further, however, that such condition must be so  
53 described and inserted on the instrument.

54 § 8. Section 422 of the vehicle and traffic law, as amended by chapter  
55 726 of the laws of 1983, is amended to read as follows:

1 § 422. Special vehicle identification numbers. The commissioner [~~may~~  
2 shall, by regulation, provide for the issuance of a special vehicle  
3 identification number. Such regulations shall be applicable whenever a  
4 special vehicle identification number is required by any provision of  
5 law. With respect to a vehicle part for which an inspection is required  
6 pursuant to subdivision two of section four hundred twenty-three-a of  
7 this chapter, a special identification number may consist of a distin-  
8 guishing mark. Such special vehicle identification number shall be  
9 [~~affixed~~] engraved only by or under the direction of a member of the  
10 department of motor vehicles who has the powers of a peace officer  
11 pursuant to section three hundred ninety-two-b of this chapter. A fee of  
12 twenty-five dollars shall be paid to the commissioner before such number  
13 shall be issued, except that no fee shall be required of a governmental  
14 agency.

15 § 9. Subdivision 1 of section 431 of the vehicle and traffic law, as  
16 amended by chapter 692 of the laws of 1979, is amended to read as  
17 follows:

18 1. Every manufacturer or assembler of a vehicle sold in this state  
19 shall [~~provide such vehicle with~~] engrave a vehicle identification  
20 number on each vehicle and, upon request of the commissioner, shall  
21 inform [~~him~~] such commissioner concerning the location or locations of  
22 every vehicle identification number and other identifying numbers on  
23 such vehicle. The commissioner may refuse to register or issue a certif-  
24 icate of title for a vehicle made by a manufacturer or assembler who  
25 fails to comply with this section.

26 § 10. Subdivision 2 of section 420-a of the vehicle and traffic law,  
27 as amended by section 1-b of part A of chapter 63 of the laws of 2005,  
28 is amended to read as follows:

29 2. A qualified dealer may obtain temporary registrations to be issued  
30 in accordance with the provisions of this section by applying to the  
31 commissioner and paying a fee of five dollars for each such temporary  
32 registration. The commissioner may limit the number of temporary regis-  
33 trations given to a dealer at any one time or the number of unissued  
34 temporary registrations in the possession of a dealer at one time. The  
35 commissioner shall issue a temporary registration to a dealer in another  
36 state in such manner as the commissioner shall prescribe.

37 § 11. Paragraph (a) of subdivision 1 of section 1224 of the vehicle  
38 and traffic law, as amended by chapter 795 of the laws of 1974, is  
39 amended to read as follows:

40 (a) with no number plates affixed thereto[~~, for more than six hours~~]  
41 on any highway or other public place;

42 § 12. The vehicle and traffic law is amended by adding a new section  
43 2130-a to read as follows:

44 § 2130-a. (a) No person, firm, partnership, association or corporation  
45 shall sell, offer for sale or process a transaction for any vehicle  
46 certificate of origin or any certificate of title, including via an  
47 online platform, in violation of this section.

48 (b) Whenever there shall be a violation of this section, application  
49 may be made by the attorney general in the name of the people of the  
50 state of New York to a court or justice having jurisdiction by a special  
51 proceeding to issue an injunction and upon notice to the defendant of  
52 not less than five days, to enjoin and restrain the continuance of such  
53 violation or to enforce the provisions of this section; and if it shall  
54 appear to the satisfaction of the court or justice that the defendant  
55 has, in fact, violated this section, an injunction may be issued by such  
56 court or justice, enjoining and restraining any further violation, with-

1 out requiring proof that any person has, in fact, been injured or  
2 damaged thereby. Whenever the court shall determine that a violation of  
3 this section has occurred the court may impose a civil penalty of not  
4 more than five hundred dollars for each violation. In connection with  
5 any such proposed application, the attorney general is authorized to  
6 take proof and make a determination of the relevant facts and issue  
7 subpoenas in accordance with the civil practice law and rules.

8 § 13. The vehicle and traffic law is amended by adding a new section  
9 402-c to read as follows:

10 § 402-c. Notice on sale of temporary license plates. Any person, firm,  
11 partnership, association or corporation which distributes or sells, or  
12 offers to distribute or sell, temporary license plates or tags of any  
13 other state, district or territory, or of any foreign country, or a  
14 reproduction thereof, to any resident of this state, including through  
15 an online platform, shall provide a written notice stating, "Not legal  
16 for use in the state of New York. A motor vehicle bearing this license  
17 plate or tag in New York state may be subject to booting or impounding  
18 at owner's expense."

19 § 14. Subdivision d of section 19-169.2 of the administrative code of  
20 the city of New York, as added by local law number 24 of the city of New  
21 York for the year 1995, is amended to read as follows:

22 d. In addition to the provisions of subdivision c of this section, no  
23 motor vehicle may be booted (1) unless such vehicle: (i) is unlawfully  
24 parked, (ii) has obscured or obstructed license plates or displays  
25 number plates not proper for such vehicle in violation of section 402 of  
26 the vehicle and traffic law, (iii) the vehicle identification number is  
27 destroyed, covered, defaced, altered or otherwise changed in violation  
28 of section 170.65 of the penal law, or (iv) is an abandoned vehicle as  
29 defined by section 1224 of the vehicle and traffic law; (2) where such  
30 vehicle is occupied by any person or live animal; (3) when such vehicle  
31 is parked on the roadway side of a vehicle stopped, standing or parked  
32 at the curb; (4) where such vehicle is parked in a fire lane, or in  
33 front of or immediately adjacent to a fire hydrant, fire connection or  
34 building emergency exit; (5) unless the express written authorization of  
35 the owner of a private driveway blocked by such vehicle has been  
36 obtained, which authorization includes the location, make, model, color  
37 and license plate number of such vehicle; (6) if such vehicle is an  
38 ambulance, correction vehicle, police vehicle, fire vehicle, civil  
39 defense emergency vehicle, emergency ambulance service vehicle, environ-  
40 mental emergency response vehicle, sanitation patrol vehicle, hazardous  
41 materials emergency vehicle, ordnance disposal vehicle of the armed  
42 forces of the United States; and (7) where such vehicle bears a special  
43 vehicle identification parking permit issued in accordance with the  
44 provisions of paragraph 15 of subdivision a of section 2903 of the New  
45 York city charter or issued in accordance with the provisions of section  
46 1203-a of the vehicle and traffic law, or "MD" New York registration  
47 plates.

48 § 15. Severability clause. If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdi-  
49 vision, section or part of this act shall be adjudged by a court of  
50 competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect,  
51 impair or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its  
52 operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or  
53 part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such  
54 judgment shall have been rendered. It is hereby declared to be the  
55 intent of the legislature that this act would have been enacted even  
56 if such invalid provisions had not been included herein.

1     § 16. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall  
2 have become a law; provided, however, that sections two and three shall  
3 take effect one year after they shall have become a law; and provided,  
4 further, that sections eight and nine of this act shall take effect  
5 three years after they shall have become a law.