§ 1204. Officers authorized to remove illegally stopped vehicles. (a) Whenever any police officer, or in a city having a population in excess of one million any person designated by the commissioner of traffic of such city or on highways under the jurisdiction of the New York state thruway authority, the office of parks and recreation, a county park commission, a parkway authority, a bridge authority or a bridge and tunnel authority any person designated by such office, commission or authority, finds a vehicle standing upon a highway in violation of any of the foregoing provisions of this article such officer is hereby authorized to move such vehicle, or require the driver or other person in charge of the vehicle to move the same to a position off the paved or main-traveled part of such highway.

(b) 1. Whenever any police officer, or in a city having a population in excess of one million any person designated by the commissioner of traffic of such city or on highways under the jurisdiction of the New York state thruway authority, the office of parks and recreation, a county park commission, a parkway authority, a bridge authority or a bridge and tunnel authority any person designated by such office, commission or authority finds a vehicle unattended where it constitutes an obstruction to traffic, or any place where stopping, standing or parking is prohibited, such officer is hereby authorized to provide for the removal of such vehicle, semitrailer or trailer to a garage, automobile pound or other place of safety.

2. In any city with a population of one million or more, whenever any police officer, or any person designated by the commissioner of traffic, finds a semitrailer or trailer without a tractor or towing vehicle attached, parked or unattended on any city street, such officer or person designated by the commissioner of traffic is hereby authorized to provide for the removal of such semitrailer or trailer to a garage, automobile pound or other place of safety.

(c) The owner or other person lawfully entitled to the possession of such vehicle may be charged with a reasonable cost for removal and storage, payable before the vehicle is released.

(d) No police officer or other public, state or municipal employee shall release a motor vehicle impounded because of any traffic or parking violation to any person who does not have a currently valid

driver's license and an insurance identification card or other acceptable evidence indicating current insurance coverage on such vehicle. The provisions of this subdivision with respect to insurance coverage shall not apply to a motor vehicle which will not be moved under its own power but will be transported by a tow truck or upon another vehicle, provided that the registration for such impounded vehicle has been surrendered to the commissioner and proof of such surrender is presented to the police officer or other public, state or municipal employee.