

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · FEDERAL WAY

# Federal Way Car Registration, Fees and Good To Go! Guide 2026

For people bringing a car from another state or from abroad, buying a car in Federal Way, or using the Tacoma Narrows bridge and SR 509.

## SHORT ANSWER

The order is: Washington license first, then registration within 30 days. Registration is not done at a DOL office but at a private subagent working for King County, **walk-in only**: Federal Way Licensing Services, 1320 S 324th St, Suite A2, 253-874-8375, weekdays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed Saturdays. The good news is that both offices sit on the same street, at numbers 1617 and 1320. Every car starts at a \$43.25 base fee. Federal Way charges no city transportation fee. Emissions testing ended January 1, 2020.

## Step by step

- 1 License first, then registration.** DOL wants a valid Washington license before it registers a vehicle. Licensing agencies take no appointments, so you queue; they do not handle driver licenses either. Two offices, two separate 30-day clocks.
- 2 If you bought the car,** transfer the title within 15 days. On day 16 a \$50 late fee starts, then \$2 a day up to \$125. From a dealer the paperwork is sent by the dealer and you simply show your unexpired Washington license.
- 3 Private sale.** You need the signed title, a Vehicle Title Application signed in front of the licensing agent, an odometer disclosure for model year 2011 and newer, and a bill of sale showing the price. The title arrives in 6 to 8 weeks; Quick Title (\$89.50 for a vehicle) speeds that up but cannot be used for an out-of-state vehicle.
- 4 VIN inspection.** Since July 1, 2001 out-of-state vehicles get no physical inspection; DOL runs an electronic stolen-vehicle screening. The State Patrol inspects only rebuilt, homemade, unnumbered or mismatched vehicles, for \$65 when required.

## Vehicle licensing offices in and around Federal Way

| OFFICE                         | ADDRESS                                            | PHONE AND HOURS                                               |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Federal Way Licensing Services | 1320 S 324th St, Suite A2,<br>Federal Way WA 98003 | 253-874-8375 · weekdays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.,<br>closed Saturdays |

| OFFICE                | ADDRESS                                      | PHONE AND HOURS                                                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Auburn License Agency | 124 Auburn Way N, Auburn WA 98002            | 253-833-9696 · weekdays 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.                             |
| Kent Licensing Agency | 22717 72nd Ave S, Suite B-108, Kent WA 98032 | 253-852-3110 · weekdays 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Saturdays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. |
| Burien License Agency | 630 SW 153rd St, Suite 105, Burien WA 98166  | 206-453-5384 · weekdays 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.                                |

The list comes from King County's [subagent page](#). Hours can change, so call before you go. **Kent is the only neighboring office open on Saturdays.**

## What does it cost?

| ITEM                                | AMOUNT                                                   |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Basic registration fee              | \$43.25                                                  |
| Annual tabs                         | \$30                                                     |
| Federal Way city transportation fee | None                                                     |
| Sound Transit RTA excise tax        | 1.1% of depreciated MSRP                                 |
| Filing and service fees             | \$6 + \$11 for registration, \$12.50 + \$29 with a title |
| New plates (each)                   | \$50                                                     |
| Title application                   | \$15                                                     |
| Out-of-state service fee            | \$50 (for the stolen-vehicle check)                      |
| Trip permit (3 days)                | \$36 (\$25 + \$11 service)                               |

- **Why Federal Way is cheaper:** Washington cities may add their own transportation benefit district fee to a tab renewal. Federal Way is not on DOL's [local fee list](#), while Des Moines and Burien charge \$40, Lake Forest Park and Seattle \$50, and Kirkland \$20. If the city adds such a fee later, the list is updated.
- **RTA tax:** if you live inside the Sound Transit district in King, Pierce or Snohomish county, you pay a 1.1% regional transit tax on the depreciated MSRP, at purchase and at every renewal. Federal Way is one of the Link station cities and sits inside the district; ask the agency whether every address falls inside the same boundary.
- **Use tax:** buy from a private party and you owe 0.3% motor vehicle use tax plus the sales tax rate at your address (10.40% in Federal Way), calculated on fair market value. If the market value is under \$7,500, or the price you paid is within 20% of market value, the invoice price can be accepted.
- **Tab renewal:** once a year, online, by mail or at the agency. You cannot renew with unpaid tickets or unpaid tolls.

## Is there an emissions test or safety inspection?

No. The state emission check program ended on **January 1, 2020**, no emissions test is required to renew registration, and there is no periodic safety inspection for private cars.

## How much insurance do you need?

| COVERAGE                             | WASHINGTON MINIMUM |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Bodily injury or death, per person   | \$25,000           |
| Bodily injury or death, per accident | \$50,000           |
| Property damage                      | \$10,000           |

Driving uninsured brings a fine of \$550 or more, and if you are at fault in a crash and do not pay the damage, your license can be suspended. Failing to show proof is a traffic violation; showing false proof is a crime. Carry your insurer's card with the company, policy number, start and end dates and the vehicle or driver.

## Which tolls do you meet once you leave Federal Way?

There is no toll road inside Federal Way and I-5 is free. But heading north toward the airport or south toward Tacoma you run into tolls. All of them are electronic: no booths and no cash, just a camera reading the plate.

| ROAD                                            | PASS RATE (2-AXLE)                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SR 509 Expressway (near Sea-Tac, northbound)    | Weekdays \$1.20 to \$2.40 by time and direction, weekends \$1.20                                                        |
| SR 167 express toll lanes (Renton to Sumner)    | Every day 5 a.m. to 8 p.m., \$1 to \$15 depending on traffic. Free with a Flex pass and two or more people              |
| Tacoma Narrows bridge (SR 16)                   | Tolled toward Tacoma only. \$4.50 with a pass, \$5.50 at the booth, \$6.50 by mail. The time of day makes no difference |
| SR 520 bridge (Seattle to Bellevue)             | Weekdays \$1.35 to \$4.90 by time of day, weekends and 6 holidays \$1.35 to \$2.95                                      |
| SR 99 tunnel (downtown Seattle)                 | Weekdays \$1.25 to \$2.80 by time of day, weekends \$1.25 all day                                                       |
| I-405 express toll lanes (Lynnwood to Bellevue) | Weekdays 5 a.m. to 8 p.m., \$1 to \$15 depending on traffic. Free at night, at weekends and on 6 holidays               |

## The Good To Go! account and passes

- **Opening an account:** [MyGoodToGo.com](https://MyGoodToGo.com) or 1-866-936-8246 (free phone interpreter). Two account types: Pre-Paid (a \$30 opening balance with automatic reload) and Pay As You Go (charged to your card twice a month). No monthly fee.
- **Passes:** sticker pass \$5, Flex \$15 (free carpool trips on I-405 and SR 167), motorcycle \$8, license-plate pass \$12 before tax. Adding your plate to an account without a pass costs 25 cents more per trip.

- **No account:** the camera photographs your plate, the bill goes to the address on your DOL record, and it costs \$2 more than the pass rate. There is a temporary visitor account for short stays that closes after 90 days.
- **If you do not pay:** a \$5 late fee after the due date; a \$40 civil penalty per toll if it is still unpaid 80 days after the trip; and if the penalty is unpaid for 20 days, DOL puts a hold on your registration and you cannot renew your tabs. A one-time penalty waiver is available if you call before paying, though the tolls themselves are still owed.
- **Low-income discount:** for households up to 200% of the federal poverty level, applications opened in the fall of 2026 and the discount starts in December 2026. It applies only on the SR 509 and SR 167 express routes, not on SR 520 or SR 99. The forms come in Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Russian, Somali, Spanish and Vietnamese; Turkish is not among them.

Going to the airport, Link is often both cheaper and faster than SR 509: about 17 minutes from Federal Way Downtown station for \$3.00. Heading toward Tacoma, you pay the Narrows bridge only when you cross to the peninsula, not on the way into downtown Tacoma.

#### NOTE FOR IMMIGRANTS

After you move, update the address on your vehicle record and your Good To Go! account right away. Otherwise toll bills go to the old address and can run all the way to a penalty and a registration hold. If you are subject to address reporting, report the same move to USCIS within 10 days (AR-11).



#### TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN FEDERAL WAY

#### Have a question about your immigration status?

Attorney Asim Clinch serves clients in Federal Way and the surrounding area, in Turkish and English.  
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