

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · NEW ORLEANS

Vehicle Registration, Insurance and Inspection in New Orleans 2026

Inspection is locally called a brake tag, and the city has paused the program since July 31, 2026. The insurance side runs against a Turkish habit: a driver who cannot show proof has the plate seized.

SHORT ANSWER

Three things at once, and all three run against a Turkish habit. First: **a passenger plate is issued for two years** and its cost depends on the value of the vehicle, with a minimum of **\$20.00**. Second: **if you are caught without insurance the plate is seized**; the state driver guide says the plate of a driver who cannot show proof will be taken, the vehicle may be impounded, and if proof is not delivered within **three business days** the **plate is destroyed**. Third: inspection is **in transition**. In New Orleans inspection is locally called a **brake tag**, but the city's own page says it has **paused all brake tag enforcement and issuance since July 31, 2026**; the statewide sticker is also being removed by a 2026 act. **This is the fastest-aging part of the guide**; we give you the door to ask at, not a figure.

Registration: where, and with what

The transaction can be done by mail or in person at the agency's headquarters, at an agency office, **or at an authorized tag agent**. For a new vehicle the agency asks for: the vehicle application form, the manufacturer's statement of origin, an **itemized invoice** from the dealer to the buyer, a signed odometer statement, a security agreement if a lien is to be recorded, and the fees. **If a plate is also requested**, a copy of each owner's valid photo identification and **proof of liability insurance** are added.

Immigration status is not separately asked at registration, and we write that carefully: the identification the registration page asks for is **a driver's license or identification card issued by this or another state**. So the status gate is not at registration, it is at [license or identification card issuance](#). No separate status requirement **could be found** on the page; we do not say none exists.

Fees, and where two official sources disagree

ITEM	AMOUNT
Title	\$68.50
Title correction	\$68.50
Lien recording	\$15.00 or \$10.00, depending on the filing
Handling fee	\$8.00

ITEM	AMOUNT
Local fee	Up to \$6.00
Passenger plate	Two years, minimum \$20.00

TWO SEPARATE CONTRADICTIONS: PLATE COST AND TAX RATE

- **Plate cost:** the agency's web page computes it as **one tenth of one percent of the vehicle's value per year** on a floor value of \$10,000, and says plates are sold in two-year blocks, so the minimum is **\$20.00**.
- The state driver guide describes the same item as **one percent of the first sale price**, then says **\$10.00 per year** for vehicles at or under \$10,000. The third sentence agrees with the web page, the second does not; **the guide is inconsistent with itself**.
- **We pick no side:** the safe conclusion for a reader is that **the minimum two-year plate cost is \$20.00**.
- **The second contradiction is in tax and matters more:** the same driver guide says the Louisiana state tax is **4 percent**. The state revenue department's own bulletin says the state sales tax rate has been **5 percent since January 1, 2025**.
- **We publish both and pick no side**, but **confirm at the counter** what you owe when you register. The tax is computed **by where the vehicle is domiciled**; in this city the combined rate is **10.00 percent**.

Within how many days? Three separate deadlines

- **A deadline for new residents to register a vehicle could not be found.** Thirty days is written for the license, but neither the agency's pages nor the state driver guide gives a day count for the vehicle. **We do not say none exists**; it was not found in either official source. **Do not wait, handle it in the first month**.
- **When you buy a vehicle: five days.** The guide asks that you apply for a title in your own name **within five days** of the date of sale.
- **When your address changes: 10 days.** The address on the registration must be corrected within **10 days** after a move; the corrected registration is issued **free**. The same 10 days applies to the license, and the agency asks that it be done **in person**.
- **And the most common mistake:** the guide warns that **changing the address on your license does not automatically change the registration address on any vehicles you own. Two separate transactions.** If the registration address is stale, the renewal notice does not reach you and you can be cited when stopped.

Insurance is a precondition of the plate

Proof of liability insurance is required with the plate application, so you cannot get a plate before the policy. And the proof **must be kept in the vehicle**. The guide's own sentences set the chain:

- **Every vehicle used on this state's highways must be insured**, and the plate application requires **proof of liability insurance** or an accepted substitute.
- **Proof of insurance must be kept in the vehicle while it is operable** and shown when a law enforcement officer asks. **Do not rely on a screenshot on your phone; keep the card in the car**.

- If you are stopped and cannot show proof, **the plate is seized and the vehicle may be impounded.**
- You have **three calendar days** to produce proof; **Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays do not count.** The office where you retrieve the plate is named on the **notice of violation** the officer hands you.
- If proof is not delivered within three days, **the plate is destroyed** and all fees are paid again when the vehicle is re-registered.
- If **false information** is given about coverage, the registration can be **suspended**; the court can also impose a fine and imprisonment is possible.
- The insurer must be **authorized to do business in Louisiana.**
- **A person whose license is suspended for refusing a chemical test** must file **high-risk insurance or post cash security** before getting the license back, and must maintain it for **three years from the date of conviction.**

THE RULE THAT SURPRISES MOST: PLATE FIRST, CANCELLATION SECOND

- The guide's own sentence: if you decide to stop using a vehicle on the highways, **you should remove the plate and surrender it to the motor vehicle agency before the insurance is canceled.**
- If the plate is not surrendered before cancellation, **penalties apply.**
- **The Turkish habit is the exact opposite:** there the policy is canceled when a vehicle is sold or parked, and the plate stays on the car.
- **Here the order reverses: surrender the plate first, then cancel the policy.** If you sold the car, do not leave this until after the sale.

Inspection: currently paused

The city's **Motor Vehicle Inspection Bureau** page says vehicles registered in Orleans Parish must pass a safety inspection and carry a valid city inspection sticker, and that **the local name for that sticker is a brake tag.** Inspection stations and inspectors are **private contractors**; the city licenses and oversees them. **But the notice at the top of the page changes the picture:** As of July 31, 2026, New Orleans has paused all brake tag enforcement and issuance for the remainder of 2026.

- The city's July 31, 2026 statement is clearer: law enforcement was **directed to stop citing** drivers who do not display an inspection sticker.
- The change **covers only brake tag enforcement** and does not affect other traffic rules or vehicle equipment requirements.
- The city has also stopped issuing new stickers and has written that it will **announce the new procedure for 2027 by year end.**
- **We publish the contradiction:** the city's older brake tag pages are still in search results and carry **an old fee schedule** and the sentence that the state change does not apply to New Orleans. **The living page says the program is paused.** We took **only the living page** into this document and **we do not publish the old fee schedule.**
- Ask the bureau about the current status: **(504) 658-7160**, braketag@nola.gov.

The state side: the sticker is going away

An act passed in the 2026 regular session changes the statewide inspection sticker regime and replaces it with an arrangement called the Louisiana Vehicle Identification Program. From the act's own text:

- Every motor vehicle registered in this state will carry the program's **sticker**.
- The sticker will **contain the vehicle identification number and be visible to law enforcement**.
- The fee **may not exceed six dollars per year** and may be collected **every two years**.
- The agency must issue implementing rules **by December 31, 2026**.
- **An interim provision: between June 30, 2026 and January 1, 2027** no officer will cite a vehicle for failing to display an inspection certificate.
- **The effective date splits in two.** In parishes subject to federal clean air legislation the act takes effect upon federal approval of a plan revision; **in every other parish it is January 1, 2027**. Orleans Parish is not inside the federal monitoring area; on the other hand the city's own statement refers to **separate inspection and emissions requirements**, so the city may have its own emissions rule. **We could not verify that.**
- **The procedure after January 1, 2027 is left unverified in this document:** the rules are not out yet. Call the city bureau at the start of the year.
- **A separate item:** the vehicle you bring to the road test must also be inspected. The agency's sentence for the motorcycle test is clear: the motorcycle must have a **valid plate, valid proof of insurance and a valid inspection sticker**. While the regime is in transition, **confirm by phone** before the test.

NUMBERS WE DO NOT PUBLISH

- **Minimum liability limits.** The statute carrying the amounts was reachable only through a compilation **stamped January 1, 2023**; the state legislative portal and the insurance department site did not open this round. **We do not say none exists and we do not give a figure**; ask your agent. What does not change is the mechanism: **a mandatory minimum exists**, no plate without a policy, and the proof travels in the car.
- **The old brake tag fee schedule and the inspection procedure after January 1, 2027.** The first comes from a dead page, the second has not been published.
- **Whether a clean claims history from Turkey affects your premium here:** no sentence from any institution **could be found**. Ask several insurers whether you can document a foreign driving history.

The bridge toll: we write where the toll is collected

The **Lake Pontchartrain Causeway**, which links the two shores of the lake, is tolled; the operator is the **Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission** and the bridge has its own police force. **The operator's own sentence says tolls are collected only on the north shore. That sentence says where the booth is**; which direction you pay in could not be derived from the operator's own text, and the two assessments available to us point in opposite directions. **We pick no side and make no statement about direction:** the only thing derivable from the operator's text is that **the toll is collected at a single point, at the north end of the lake**. Before you use the bridge, **confirm on the operator's own page** which crossing you pay on.

VEHICLE	WITH A TAG	CASH OR CARD
2 axles, under 7 feet, ordinary passenger car	\$3.40	\$6.00
3 axles, under 7 feet	\$7.75	\$8.00
4 axles, under 7 feet	\$10.25	\$11.00
2 axles, over 7 feet	\$10.25	\$11.00
3 axles, over 7 feet	\$15.25	\$16.00

- **A 3 percent fee applies to credit card fares;** that is the operator's own note. **Crossing without a tag costs nearly double.**
 - **Opening an account costs \$20.00** and that amount covers **one tag plus a \$20.00 prepaid toll balance.** Tag holders may use only the tag lanes.
 - **Sales offices on both shores:** at the north end, the **North Shore Toll Plaza Facility, Mandeville, LA 70448** (weekdays 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.), and on the south side **3939 N. Causeway Blvd., Suite 400, Metairie, LA 70002** (weekdays 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.).
 - **The state's own tag can be linked to this account, but not automatically:** the operator asks you to call, (985) 674-3641.
 - **A structural difference that matters:** there is **no license plate billing** on this bridge. You pay cash or card at the booth, so crossing without a tag does not mean pay later, it means **paying more right then. No separate page on disputing a toll could be found.**
 - **Fake toll messages are a real risk.** The state system's own customer notices include a **toll scam warning:** text messages claiming an unpaid toll arrive and push you to a link that asks for card details. **Never pay through a link in a message.**
 - **We do not write that the bridge inside the city is free.** The claim that the twin span crossing the Mississippi within the city currently charges nothing **could not be confirmed from the institution's own sentence.**
- 1 **Start the policy before the plate** and keep the proof in the vehicle.
 - 2 **Bring your state license or identification card to the counter;** that is the identification registration asks for.
 - 3 **If you buy a vehicle, put the five-day title deadline on the calendar.**
 - 4 **If you move, do two separate address transactions:** license and registration, both within 10 days.
 - 5 **For the brake tag, trust only the living page** and ask the city bureau about the 2027 procedure at the start of the year; the old fee tables online are not living information for this city.
 - 6 **If you stop using a vehicle, surrender the plate first, then cancel the policy.**
 - 7 **If you will cross the lake regularly, open a tag account;** crossing without a tag costs nearly double.
 - 8 **For statewide registration and insurance rules see** [our Louisiana guide](#).



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