

MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972

As Amended

SEC. 27-19-56. Special license tags or plates; disabled persons; decals and windshield placards; renewal; enforcement of parking restrictions.

(1) Upon application by any legal resident of the State of Mississippi with a disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk, the State Tax Commission shall prepare and issue through the county tax collectors a special license plate bearing the International Symbol of Access adopted by Rehabilitation International in 1969 at its Eleventh World Congress on Rehabilitation of the Disabled for not more than one (1) vehicle that is registered in the applicant's name. The initial application shall be accompanied by the certification of a licensed physician that (a) the applicant meets the definition of persons with disabilities which limit or impair the ability to walk; and (b) that the physician has determined that the applicant will have the disability for at least five (5) years. The State Tax Commission shall prepare and issue to the tax collectors of the various counties, decals for placement on the special license plates. The decals shall bear thereon the month in which the license plate was issued and the year in which the special license plate will expire. The special license plate issued under this section is valid for the period of time that the license tag attached upon a motor vehicle is issued pursuant to Section [27-19-31](#) (1). A person to whom the special license plate is issued may retain the special license plate and may renew it by submitting to the county tax collector, on or before its expiration, the certification of a licensed physician that the physician has determined (a) that the applicant meets the definition of a person with a disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk; and (b) that the applicant will have the disability for at least five (5) years. If an applicant fails to renew the special license plate before its date of expiration, then he shall surrender the special license plate to the county tax collector and the tax collector shall issue to such person a regular license plate to replace the special license plate.

The terms "vehicle" and "motor vehicle," as used in this section, includes motorcycles.

The term "persons with disabilities which limit or impair the ability to walk" when used in this section means those persons who, as determined by a licensed physician:

- (a) Cannot walk two hundred (200) feet without stopping to rest; or
- (b) Cannot walk without the use of, or assistance from, a brace, cane, crutch, another person, prosthetic device, wheelchair, or other assistive device; or
- (c) Are restricted by lung disease to such an extent that the person's forced (respiratory) expiratory volume for one (1) second, when measured by spirometry, is less than one (1) liter, or the arterial oxygen tension is less than sixty (60) mm/hg on room air at rest; or
- (d) Use portable oxygen; or
- (e) Have a cardiac condition to the extent that the person's functional limitations are classified in severity as Class III or Class IV according to standards set by the American Heart Association; or
- (f) Are severely limited in their ability to walk due to an arthritic, neurological or orthopedic condition.

An applicant for a special license plate bearing the International Symbol of Access shall not be required to pay any fee or charge for the issuance of such license plate separate from or in addition to the road

and bridge privilege taxes, ad valorem taxes and registration fees otherwise required by law to be paid for the issuance of a regular license plate for such vehicle.

(2) The State Tax Commission shall prepare removable windshield placards and such placards shall be issued and periodically renewed upon the applications of persons with disabilities which limit or impair the ability to walk. The placards shall be issued, free of charge, to applicants through the offices of the tax collectors of the counties. The initial application shall be accompanied by the certification of a licensed physician that the applicant meets the definition of persons with disabilities which limit or impair the ability to walk. These placards shall be valid for the period of time that the license tag attached upon a motor vehicle is issued pursuant to Section [27-19-31](#)(1) and may be renewed in the same manner as provided for the renewal of the special license plates under subsection (1) of this section. The removable windshield placard must be displayed on the left side of the vehicle dashboard or by hanging it on the rearview mirror of the vehicle. The State Tax Commission shall prescribe the placement for motorcycles.

(3) The State Tax Commission shall provide for the issuance of a temporary removable windshield placard, upon the application of a person with a disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk. Temporary removable windshield placards authorized by this subsection shall be prepared by the State Tax Commission and shall be issued, free of charge, to applicants through the offices of the tax collectors of the counties. Application for a temporary removable windshield placard must be accompanied by the certification of a licensed physician that the applicant meets the definition of persons with disabilities which limit or impair the ability to walk. The certification shall also include the period of time that the physician determines the applicant will have the disability, not to exceed six (6) months. The temporary removable windshield placard must be displayed on the left side of the vehicle dashboard or by hanging it on the rearview mirror of the vehicle. The temporary removable windshield placard shall be valid for a period of time for which the physician has determined that the applicant will have the disability, not to exceed six (6) months from the date of issuance. The State Tax Commission shall prescribe the placement for motorcycles.

(4) The removable windshield placard and the temporary removable windshield placard shall be two-sided and shall include:

(a) The International Symbol of Access, which is at least three (3) inches in height, centered on the placard (the color of the removable windshield placard shall be white on a blue shield; and the temporary removable windshield placard shall be white on a red shield);

(b) An identification number and, on the reverse side, the name of the individual to whom the placard is issued;

(c) A date of expiration; and

(d) The seal of the State of Mississippi.

(5) (a) It shall be unlawful to park a motor vehicle in an area set aside for persons who are disabled if the motor vehicle does not (i) have displayed the removable windshield placard authorized in this section with the date of expiration visible, (ii) have the special license plate issued under this section properly displayed upon the motor vehicle, or (iii) have the disabled American veteran tag or plate issued under Section [27-19-53](#) properly displayed upon the motor vehicle. Any person who unlawfully parks a motor vehicle in such areas, or who blocks such spaces or access thereto, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00) for each such violation. For the third and subsequent offenses under this section, the

offender's driver's license shall be suspended for ninety (90) days by the Commissioner of Public Safety in accordance with Section [63-1-53](#) in addition to any fine imposed. The court shall not suspend or reduce any fine required to be imposed under this subsection.

(b) A person who is charged with a violation of this section by parking a motor vehicle in an area set aside for persons who are disabled and failing properly to display (i) a removable windshield placard on the dash of the vehicle or by hanging it on the rearview mirror of the vehicle, (ii) a special license plate issued under this section upon the vehicle or (iii) a disabled American veteran tag or plate issued under Section [27-19-53](#) upon the vehicle shall not be convicted and shall have the charge dismissed upon presentation to the court of proof by means of sworn oral testimony or sworn affidavit that at the time of the charged violation he or a passenger in the vehicle possessed a valid removable windshield placard issued under this section.

(6) Any person who, for the purpose of obtaining a special license plate or windshield placard under this section, files with the county tax collector a physician's certification, knowing the certification to be false or to have been fraudulently obtained, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not more than Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00).

(7) All law enforcement officers are authorized to enforce this section on public and private property. Provision of spaces restricted to handicapped parking and proper marking of such spaces shall be considered as intent and permission to enforce such designated parking on private property. Any owner of private property may tow away a vehicle that is parked on the owner's private property in violation of the disabled parking restrictions set forth in this section at the vehicle owner's expense. In addition, the vehicle owner may be subject to any fines or other penalties provided in this section. Only areas marked in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines or equivalent standards shall be enforced. Spaces shall bear the International Symbol of Access.

(8) Motor vehicles displaying a special license plate, license plate decal, placard or parking certificate or permit bearing the International Symbol of Access issued to a person with a disability by any other state or district subject to the laws of the United States shall be allowed the special parking privileges under this section provided the license plate, decal, placard, permit or certificate bears the International Symbol of Access and is displayed in a prominent place on the vehicle.

(9) Parking in any area set aside for persons who are disabled is limited to vehicles which, immediately before or after the utilization of such an area, are used to transport a person with a disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk. The identification required to park in such an area, except as provided in subsection (8) of this section, is as follows:

(a) For a vehicle used to transport a person with a permanent disability, that person's permanent windshield placard must be displayed or the vehicle must have a special license tag issued under this section or Section [27-19-53](#) properly displayed.

(b) For a vehicle being used by a person who has a temporary disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk, or which is being used to transport such a person, a temporary windshield placard must be displayed.

Any person who parks in an area set aside for persons who are disabled in violation of this subsection shall be punished as provided for in subsection (5) of this section.

(10) Upon application by a nursing home, retirement home or other institution that transports disabled

persons, the State Tax Commission may issue the special license plate authorized pursuant to this section for not more than one (1) vehicle that is registered in the applicant's name that is used to transport disabled residents of the institution. Such institution shall comply with all other laws regarding the registration of such vehicle.

SOURCES: Laws, 1979, ch. 352; Laws, 1983, ch. 379; Laws, 1987, ch. 493; Laws, 1988, ch. 410; Laws, 1989, ch. 372, § 1; Laws, 1992, ch. 316, § 1; Laws, 1993, ch. 586, § 1; Laws, 1995, ch. 344, § 2; Laws, 1996, ch. 449, § 1; Laws, 1998, ch. 517, § 1; Laws, 2001, ch. 570, § 1; Laws, 2001, ch. 596, § 13, SB 2699; Laws, 2002, ch. 335, § 1, SB 2385; Laws, 2003, ch. 561, § 1, SB 2709; Laws, 2004, ch. 307, § 1, SB 2075, eff from and after passage (approved Apr. 12, 2004.).

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