

Subchapter B

OFFICIAL INSPECTION STATION REQUIREMENTS

175.21. Appointment

- (a) **Authority** - For the purpose of establishing a system of official inspection stations, the Bureau will issue certificate of appointment to a privately owned facility within this Commonwealth that complies with the requirements of the Vehicle Code and this title. An official inspection station is authorized to inspect vehicles and issue official certificates of inspection. See 75 Pa.C.S. §4721 (relating to appointment of official inspection stations).
- (b) **Certificate of Appointment** - The certificate of appointment will be issued only when the Bureau is satisfied that the station is properly equipped and has certified personnel to make inspections and adjustments. Only those stations fulfilling Department requirements and complying with this chapter will be issued a certificate of appointment. Prior involvement with a suspended inspection station may be sufficient cause to deny appointment. The certificate of appointment at all times shall be conspicuously displayed at the place for which it is issued. See 75 Pa.C.S. §4722 (relating to certificate of appointment).
- (c) **Certificate Not Assignable** - A certificate of appointment shall be valid only for the person in whose name it is issued and for transaction of business at the place designated therein. A certificate of appointment shall not be assignable to another person or location.
- (d) **Valid Certificate Required** - No person shall in any manner represent a place as an official inspection station unless the station is operating under a valid certificate of appointment issued by the Bureau.
- (e) **Inspection Stations with Common Access** - No certificate of appointment may be issued for operation by an official safety inspection station on the premises of another official safety inspection station which utilizes the same access. This prohibition does not apply if the inspection stations have separate internal accesses, though sharing common external access.
- (f) **Suspended Inspection Stations** - No certificate of appointment shall be issued for operation of an official safety inspection station on the premises of an official safety inspection station which has been suspended, if the owner of the suspended station continues to conduct any type of business which utilizes the same access. This prohibition shall not apply if the station and the other business each have a separate internal access, though sharing a common external access.
- (g) **Cancellation of Appointments** - A certificate of appointment previously issued for a station which does not comply with the restrictions contained in subsection (e) or (f) will be cancelled April 28, 1983.

175.22. Making Application

- (a) **Form** - The applicant shall file one copy of Form MV-427, Application for Designation as an Official Inspection Station, with the Bureau. A separate application shall be made for each place of business.
- (b) **Bond or Proof of Insurance** - Requirements shall be as follows:
 - (1) An applicant for a certificate of appointment shall furnish a bond on a form prescribed by the Department or proof of insurance as required by 75 Pa.C.S. §4722 (c) (relating to certificate of appointment).
 - (2) The bond or insurance shall be in the amount of \$10,000 for each place of business and shall provide compensation to a vehicle owner for damage their vehicle may sustain while it is in possession of the inspection station.
 - (3) The bond or proof of insurance shall be renewed each year.
 - (4) Cancellation of the bond or insurance shall automatically void the certificate of appointment. Inspections shall cease until the Bureau receives a new bond or proof of insurance.
- (c) **Specification of Type** - The application shall indicate the type of inspection station authorization applied for; that is, Commonwealth, general, fleet, recreational and utility trailer, or motorcycle.
- (d) **Applicant** - The applicant shall be the owner of the business or, in the case of a corporation, some other person specifically authorized to sign the application.
 - (1) If a natural person, the applicant shall be 18 years of age or older.

- (2) If the applicant is a corporation, partnership or association, the application shall be signed by an officer, partner, associate or another person specifically authorized to sign the application.
 - (i) The person who signs the application shall be 18 years of age or older.
 - (ii) Except in the case of an executive officer, partner or associate, written evidence of the authority of the person—for example, station manager—to sign the application shall be attached thereto and attested to by a partner or a corporation or association officer.

175.23. Approval

- (a) **Investigation** - An inspection station supervisor will conduct an investigation of each applicant to determine full compliance with the Vehicle Code and this chapter.
- (b) **English Comprehension** - The applicant and each inspection mechanic shall be sufficiently versed in the English language to read and understand this title.
- (c) **Issuance of Certificate** - Upon approval of the application by the Bureau, a certificate of appointment shall be issued to the applicant for the place of business located within this Commonwealth, as set forth in the application. No inspections shall be made unless a certificate of appointment has been issued to and is prominently displayed at the official inspection station.

175.24. Required Certificates and Station Signs

After appointment, the owner of each inspection station shall prominently display all signs required by the Bureau, including the following:

- (1) A certificate of appointment for each type of station approved for the location.
- (2) A sign clearly stating the fee for the certificate of inspection separate from the fee for inspection. The fee for inspection shall be the same whether the vehicle passes or fails. The fee for inspection shall include the cost of labor for the inspection, including pulling wheels, but it shall not include the cost of parts, repairs or adjustments. The sign shall clearly indicate the fee for different types of vehicles—for example, passenger cars, trucks, and trailers—to the extent that the fee varies among vehicles. Fleet and Commonwealth stations are exempt from this requirement.
- (3) A current list of certified inspection mechanics, Form TS-443.
- (4) An official inspection station sign outside the garage, clearly visible to the public. This sign shall have a keystone design which is 24 inches high and 21 inches wide. The station number plate shall be 2 3/4 inches high and 13 3/8 inches wide. The background shall be navy blue with gold lettering. If hung from a bracket, the sign shall be double faced. A previously issued sign will still be permitted. Fleet and Commonwealth stations are exempted from this requirement.

175.25. Inspection Area

- (a) **General** - The following requirements apply to inspection areas:
 - (1) Except as provided in subsection (b)(1)(iii) and (3), the inspection area shall be entirely within a sound, enclosed building, shall be in good repair; and shall be kept in good condition.
 - (2) Any anticipated alterations or change affecting the condition or size of the inspection area shall be reported to the inspection station supervisor at once.
 - (3) The floor shall be of a hard surface and in sound condition. Dirt floors will not be approved.
 - (4) The floor of the inspection area shall be level. No more than 1% slope from front to rear or side to side is acceptable.
 - (5) The inspection area shall be free from obstructions, including shelves, work benches, partitions, displays, machinery and stairways. If the inspection area or any part is located outside the building, the area shall also be kept clear of snow or other substances which would curtail or interfere with inspections.
 - (6) Hoists and lifts are permitted in the inspection area if a thorough and proper inspection can be performed.

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- (b) Minimum Requirements** - The following minimum dimensions apply to inspection areas:
- (1) Commonwealth, fleet, and general inspection stations:
 - (i) Twelve feet wide by 22 feet long, if the station uses an approved headlight aimer or tester.
 - (ii) Twelve feet wide by 43 feet long, if the station uses an approved headlight aiming screen.
 - (iii) A motor carrier vehicle may be inspected either as single unit or in combination if, in the case of a station meeting the requirements of subparagraph (i), the inspection area has an additional unobstructed length of 42 feet or, in the case of a station meeting the requirements of subparagraph (ii), an additional unobstructed length of 21 feet.
 - (2) Motorcycle inspection stations:
 - (i) Ten feet wide by 18 feet long, if the station uses an approved headlight tester.
 - (ii) Ten feet wide by 32 feet long, if the station uses an approved headlight aiming screen.
 - (3) Trailer inspection stations: 12 feet wide by 55 feet long.
- (c) Inspections Conducted in the Inspection Area** - An inspection shall be conducted entirely within the inspection area with the exception of the road test.

175.26. Tools and Equipment

- (a) General Requirements** - An inspection station shall have tools and equipment in good operating condition sufficient to inspect each type of vehicle to be inspected, including all of the following:
- (1) Hammers - a ball-peen hammer, one plastic or brass hammer and one rubber hammer.
 - (2) A workbench.
 - (3) A portable light.
 - (4) Socket sets.
 - (5) Assorted open end and box end wrenches.
 - (6) Torque wrenches-foot-pound and inch-pound.
 - (7) Screw drivers-assorted.
 - (8) Pliers-assorted.
 - (9) Test light-continuity tester.
 - (10) Floor stands: four
 - (11) Floor jack or hoist-wheels shall spin freely.
 - (12) Tire pressure gauge.
 - (13) Brake drum gauges.
 - (14) Micrometer gauges or thickness gauges, with measurements in 1/1000 inch, capable of measuring both the range of rotor thickness and the depth of the scores.
 - (15) A ball joint gauge - not required for recreational, utility and motorcycle stations.
 - (16) A tread depth gauge capable of indicating amount of usable tire tread in increments of 1/32 inch.
 - (17) A brake-lining gauge capable of indicating the amount of usable lining on both riveted and bonded lining in increments of 1/32 inch.
 - (18) An approved headlight testing device - SAE approved No. J600a for photo-electric type and J602c for mechanic aimers. Not required for recreational and utility trailer stations.
 - (19) A paper punch with a minimum diameter or width of 1/4 inch and a maximum diameter or width of 3/8 inch.
- (b) Discontinued testers** - An inspection station equipped with discontinued testers may continue to use them as long as they are in good working order and capable of testing all types of headlights.

175.27. Hours

- (a) An inspection station shall be open for business a minimum of 40 hours, Monday through Friday between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. This section may be waived by the Bureau upon written request of the inspection station owner and prior approval of the inspection station supervisor. To be considered for a waiver of this section, the inspection station shall be open for business at least 10 business hours between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. Monday through Friday. A request for a waiver of this section shall be submitted on a form provided by the Department. A waiver of this section may be denied or revoked for any of the following reasons:
- (1) A violation of this chapter was committed by the inspection station owner, manager, a certified inspection mechanic or other employee at the station within 3 years immediately preceding a request for a waiver.
 - (2) The station owner, manager, a certified inspection mechanic or other employee at an inspection station that has been granted a waiver of this section commits a violation of this chapter after the waiver has been granted.
 - (3) Station personnel currently employed or hired have been or are currently suspended for a violation of this chapter.
 - (4) The Department or a designee is unable, on 2 attempts on two different business days, to perform an official visit, including a periodic records audit, during the hours specified in the approved waiver.
 - (5) An inspection station fails to be in operation during the hours specified in the waiver.
 - (6) An inspection station fails to comply with this section.
- (b) This section does not apply to Commonwealth or fleet inspection stations.

175.28. Certified Inspection Mechanics

- (a) **General** - An official inspection station shall have at least one certified inspection mechanic. Every inspection shall be performed by a certified inspection mechanic. The mechanic shall only inspect the type of vehicle for which he is certified and for which he holds a valid driver's license, except as otherwise provided in 75 Pa.C.S. § 4726(a) (relating to certification of mechanics). The mechanic signing the inspection sticker shall conduct and be responsible for the entire inspection of the vehicle, including the road test, except that the Department may exempt a mechanic from the requirement to perform a road test because of a physical disability. See 75 Pa.C.S. § 4726.
- (b) **Multiple Stations** - A certified inspection mechanic may work part time at more than one official inspection station if the mechanic notifies the inspection station supervisor and the Vehicle Control Division of the names and station numbers of all current employers. Failure to do so may result in suspension of the mechanic's inspection privileges.
- (c) **Number of Inspections** - A certified mechanic may not inspect more than:
- (1) Two vehicles other than motorcycles per hour.
 - (2) Three motorcycles per hour.
- (d) **Certification Requirements** - A mechanic desiring to maintain certification or to become certified:
- (1) Shall be 18 years of age or older.
 - (2) Shall, as provided in subsection (a), have valid driver's license for each class of vehicle which the mechanic will inspect; except that a certified mechanic who inspects school buses is not required to hold a school bus driver endorsement. For the purposes of this chapter, a valid driver's license does not include a learner's permit, a probationary license held by a driver for less than 3 years, an occupational limited license or an interlock license. A mechanic exempted from the requirement to perform the road test shall also be exempt from the requirement of this paragraph.
 - (3) Shall have completed an approved certification course and successfully completed the required examination.
 - (4) Shall pass the required tactile test administered by a certified/qualified automotive instructor at an approved educational facility.

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- (e) **Recertification** - A mechanic shall be certified for no more than 5 years. Mechanics may renew their mechanic certification by passing the required examination within 180 days of receipt of notice from the Department that the mechanic card is due to expire.
- (f) **Prior Certification** - A mechanic card without an expiration date shall remain valid for 180 days after the date of notice to the mechanic to attend the certification course. Failure to complete the certification course and pass the required tests within 180 days will result in cancellation.
- (g) **Mechanic License Codes** - A mechanic will be issued codes from the following table for the types of vehicle inspections and equipment testing the mechanic is authorized to perform:

Code	Authorized Inspection or Testing
1	Inspection of passenger cars, trucks 17,000 pounds or less and trailers less than 10,000 pounds
2	Inspection of motorcycles
3	Inspection of trucks over 17,000 pounds, trailers over 10,000 pounds and buses
4	Inspection of all vehicles
5	Inspection under codes 1 and 2
6	Inspections under codes 2 and 3
7	Inspections under codes 1 and 3
9	Testing and calibration of electronic (nonradar) speed timing devices that measure elapsed time between two sensors
A	Testing and calibration of electronic (radar) speed timing devices
B	Testing and calibration of stopwatches
C	Testing and calibration of speedometers
D	Testing and calibration of electronic (nonradar) speed timing devices that calculate average speed between two points
J	Enhanced vehicle safety inspection in conjunction with inspection under existing mechanic license codes in this table for the purpose of authorizing the issuance of a branded Pennsylvania certificate of title

- (h) **Mechanic Card** - The valid mechanic card shall be carried by the mechanic when performing an inspection.
- (i) **Certified Document Reviewer** - The Department may certify nonmechanics to perform document review for the purpose of authorizing the issuance of a branded Pennsylvania certificate of title.

175.29. Obligations and Responsibilities of Stations

- (a) **Personal Liability** - It is the responsibility of the owner of an inspection station to do all of the following:
 - (1) To conduct the business of the official inspection station honestly and in the best interests of this Commonwealth, in accordance with the provisions of 75 Pa.C.S. (relating to Vehicle Code) and this chapter, and, except in the case of a fleet or Commonwealth inspection station, to make every reasonable effort to inspect all vehicles upon request.
 - (2) To make official inspection regulations and supplements available for the use of certified inspection mechanics and other employees involved in inspection.
 - (3) To notify the inspection station supervisor and the Vehicle Control Division when a certified mechanic is hired.
 - (4) To keep inspection records and required work orders available for examination and audit by the inspection station supervisor and other authorized persons.
 - (5) To keep certificate of inspection requisition forms for each inspection campaign.

- (6) To assume full responsibility, with or without actual knowledge, for:
 - (i) Every inspection conducted by an employe of the inspection station.
 - (ii) Every inspection conducted on the premises.
 - (iii) Every certificate of inspection issued to the inspection station.
 - (iv) Every certificate of inspection issued by the inspection station.
 - (v) A violation of the Vehicle Code or this chapter related to inspections committed by any employe of the inspection station.
- (7) To assure that each inspection is performed by an inspection mechanic certified to inspect that type of vehicle.
- (8) To have available, at all times, a current certificate of inspection for all types of vehicles inspected at that station.

(b) Change of Ownership - The following apply to change of ownership:

- (1) In the case of any change of ownership, the certificate of appointment, all unissued certificates of inspection, and all inspection material shall be surrendered immediately to the inspection station supervisor. The new owner shall submit a Form MV-427 application to the Bureau. An investigation of the premises will be conducted by the inspection station supervisor.
- (2) In the following circumstances, it shall not be necessary to surrender unissued certificates of inspection; however, no inspections shall be conducted until the new ownership has been approved and a new certificate of appointment issued:
 - (i) Creation, modification or termination of a partnership.
 - (ii) Incorporation of a business.
 - (iii) Transfer of the controlling interest in a corporation.
 - (iv) Transfer of ownership to a spouse, child or parent.

(c) Change of Location - In the case of a change of location of an inspection station, all of the following apply:

- (1) A Form MV-427 application shall be completed and submitted to the Bureau.
- (2) An investigation of the premises will be conducted by the inspection station supervisor.
- (3) Certificates of inspection will be audited by the inspection station supervisor and shall be retained by the station owner.
- (4) No inspections shall be made at the new location until it has been investigated and approved and a new certificate of appointment issued by the Bureau.
- (5) If the new location is not approved at the time of the investigation, the inspection station supervisor will pick up all current certificates of inspection and will retain them until the new location is approved.

(d) Discontinuance of Business - Inspections shall be discontinued in any of the following circumstances:

- (1) If the owner vacates, abandons or discontinues the inspection business. Immediate notice shall be provided to the Bureau and the inspection station supervisor. The inspection station supervisor will pick up the certificate of appointment and all certificates of inspection, records and other inspection materials and return them to the Bureau.
- (2) If the owner is deceased. If a member of the family or partner wishes to continue the business, a new application for appointment shall be submitted to the Bureau.
- (3) If the owner voluntarily discontinues the operation of an inspection station, the owner shall immediately notify the inspection station supervisor. Remaining inspection materials shall be returned to the inspection station supervisor.

(e) Notice Required - The following events shall be reported at once to the inspection station supervisor and the Bureau; however, it is not necessary to discontinue inspections:

- (1) Whenever certificates of inspection are damaged, lost or stolen.

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- (2) Whenever a certified mechanic or a person authorized to purchase certificates of inspection is dismissed or resigns.
 - (3) A change in the post office address of an inspection station, not location. The change shall be reported at once on Form MV-427.
 - (4) A change of the company name, not ownership. The change shall be reported at once on Form MV-427.
 - (5) When a person who signed the Form MV-427 application for a corporation is no longer in charge of the inspection station:
 - (i) A new Form MV-427 shall be submitted to the Bureau at once.
 - (ii) A new letter of authority is required for the person signing the Form MV-427.
 - (6) Whenever a person whose signature is on the signature card, Form MV-417, resigns or is relieved of inspection responsibilities, the owner shall request new signature cards from the Bureau at once. Upon receipt of new cards, the old cards shall be returned to the Bureau.
- (f) Customer Relations** - The garage owner shall consult the vehicle owner for permission to make repairs.
- (1) The permission may be established at the time the vehicle is brought to the station for inspection or after it is determined the repairs are needed.
 - (2) The vehicle owner shall be allowed to make his own repairs or to select anyone else he desires to do them for him.
 - (3) A part replaced as a result of inspection shall be retained until the vehicle is returned to the customer. The customer shall have the right to examine all replaced parts.
 - (4) The vehicle owner shall be informed in writing on the receipt or work order of any parts which, although in passing condition, the mechanic believes may become dangerous before the next inspection period. The brake and tire readings shall be indicated in writing on the receipt or work order. If a temporary inspection approval indicator is issued, the receipt or work order shall also contain the following information:
 - (i) A statement which specifies that failure to return the vehicle displaying a renewed emission certificate of inspection to the station prior to the expiration of the safety certificate of inspection shall void the temporary inspection approval indicator and necessitate a complete reinspection of the vehicle for which a fee may be charged.
 - (ii) A statement indicating that the fee for affixing a new certificate of inspection which shall be charged upon the return of the vehicle for the new certificate of inspection to be affixed. This fee shall be no greater than the posted fee for the certificate of inspection as required by Section 175.24(2) (relating to required certificates and station signs).

175.30. Commonwealth Inspection Stations

- (a) Eligibility** - This designation will be issued to stations owned and operated by:
- (1) The Federal Government.
 - (2) The Commonwealth.
 - (3) A political subdivision of the Commonwealth.
- (b) General Requirements** - An applicant for a Commonwealth inspection station shall meet the requirements of this chapter, unless specifically exempted, including the specific requirements for fleet stations.
- (c) Certified Inspection Mechanic** - Each official Commonwealth inspection station shall have at least one inspection mechanic certified to inspect each type of vehicle which will be inspected.
- (d) Method of Inspection** - A Commonwealth inspection station shall inspect and issue certificates of inspection only to vehicles registered in the name of the governmental body.
- (e) Certificates of Inspection** - No fee shall be charged for certificates of inspection requisitioned by Commonwealth inspection stations.

175.31. Fleet Inspection Stations

- (a) **Eligibility** - Eligibility requirements are as follows:
 - (1) A fleet inspection station owner shall own or lease at least 15 or more vehicles.
 - (2) The certificate of appointment shall authorize inspection of only those vehicles registered or leased by the fleet inspection station owner. Privately owned or registered vehicles of company officers and employees may not be inspected at a fleet inspection station even if they are used for business purposes.
 - (3) The inspection certificate shall be cancelled if the number of vehicles owned or leased falls below 15, except for a temporary delay in ordering or receiving additional vehicles to supplement the fleet.
- (b) **Certified Inspection Mechanic** - Each fleet inspection station shall have at least one inspection mechanic certified to inspect each type of vehicle which will be inspected.
- (c) **Requirements** - Requirements shall include the following:
 - (1) An applicant for a fleet inspection station shall meet the requirements of this chapter, unless specifically exempted.
 - (2) In addition to the minimum inspection area requirements of §175.25 (b)(1)(i) (relating to inspection area), the inspection area shall be large enough to accommodate the largest vehicle to be inspected at the fleet inspection station.

175.32. Recreational and Utility Trailer Inspection Stations

- (a) **Eligibility** - This designation will be issued to stations that inspect trailers.
- (b) **Requirements** - An applicant for a trailer station shall meet the requirements of this chapter, unless specifically exempted.
- (c) **Certified Inspection Mechanic** - Each trailer inspection station shall have a mechanic certified to inspect trailers present during normal business hours.
- (d) **Record Sheets** - Inspections of trailers shall be recorded on Form MV-480. Inspection of recreational trailers shall be recorded on separate Form MV-480 report sheets.
- (e) **Tools** - In addition to the tool requirements of §175.26 (relating to tools and equipment), trailer stations shall have an ammeter—low range type.

175.33. Motorcycle Inspection Stations

- (a) **Eligibility** - This designation shall be issued to stations that inspect only motorcycles.
- (b) **General Requirements** - A motorcycle inspection station shall meet all requirements of this chapter, unless specifically exempted.
- (c) **Certified Inspection Mechanic** - A motorcycle inspection station shall have a mechanic certified to inspect motorcycles present during normal business hours.
- (d) **Record Sheets** - A motorcycle inspection shall be recorded on Form MV-480.
- (e) **Tools** - In addition to the tool requirements of §175.26 (relating to tools and equipment), a motorcycle station shall have the following additional tools:
 - (1) A spoke wrench.
 - (2) A truing stand.
 - (3) A photo-electric type aimer or approved headlight aiming screen.
- (f) **Exemption** - A motorcycle station is not required to have floor jacks or a floor stand.

175.34. General Inspection Stations

- (a) **Eligibility** - This designation will be issued to stations that inspect all vehicles if the station is so equipped.

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- (b) **General Requirements** - An applicant for a general inspection station shall meet the requirements of this chapter, unless specifically exempted.
- (c) **Certified Inspection Mechanic** - A vehicle general inspection station shall have a certified mechanic present during normal business hours.
- (d) **Method of Inspection** - A vehicle shall be inspected according to this chapter by a mechanic certified to inspect the appropriate class of vehicle.

175.35. Enhanced Vehicle Safety Inspection Stations

- (a) **Eligibility** - The enhanced vehicle safety inspection designation will be issued to stations that perform enhanced vehicle safety inspections for the purpose of titling reconstructed, specially constructed, recovered theft, flood, collectible, modified vehicles, street rods and other vehicles requiring a branded certificate of title as prescribed by the Department.
- (b) **General requirements** - In addition to contractual requirements prescribed by the Department, an applicant for an enhanced vehicle safety inspection station shall meet the requirements of this chapter unless specifically exempted.
- (c) **Certified enhanced inspection mechanic** - Each enhanced vehicle safety inspection station shall have a certified enhanced inspection mechanic authorized by the Department employed and present during normal business hours.
- (d) **Certified document reviewer** - An enhanced vehicle safety inspection station shall have a certified document reviewer authorized by the Department employed and present during normal business hours. The certified enhanced inspection mechanic may act as the certified document reviewer.
- (e) **Method of inspection** - A subject vehicle shall undergo an enhanced vehicle safety inspection according to this chapter by a mechanic certified to perform enhanced inspections on the appropriate class of vehicle.
- (f) **Tools** - In addition to the tool requirements of § 175.26 (relating to tools and equipment), enhanced vehicle safety inspection stations shall have additional tools and equipment as contractually required by the Department.