

# FACT SHEET

## Bus, School Vehicle, Limousine, Taxi Registration

### PURPOSE

This fact sheet outlines the usage for the five different bus registration plates, the school vehicle registration plate, the limousine registration plate, and the taxi registration plate issued by PennDOT.

### REGISTRATION PLATE TYPES

#### Apportioned Bus



This registration plate is issued for buses that require Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration authority and travel on scheduled routes or charter services into or through other jurisdictions. Buses with this registration plate must also have an apportioned registration card. The apportioned bus registration plate is identified by the letters "BN" plus five digits and has the word "Apportioned" at the bottom.

#### Mass Transit



This registration plate is issued for buses (not school buses) that are owned or operated by a qualifying mass transportation system, regardless of the individual use of each bus. These tags are issued for municipal and authority buses as well as those owned by private companies. Private companies must hold a certificate with the Public Utility Commission or municipal, port or transportation authority. Registration plates issued to municipalities or other government agencies receive a permanent registration. Registration plates issued to private companies receive a registration which expires on May 31 of each year. The mass transit registration plate is identified by the letters "MT" plus five digits and has the words "Mass Transit" at the bottom. A vehicle carrying this registration plate may not be used outside of the commonwealth without an appropriate temporary permit of authorization.

#### Standard Bus



This registration plate is issued for buses or school buses which do not travel into or through other jurisdictions, but operate under the Public Utility Commission (PUC) Authority, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMSCA) Authority or under The Allegheny County Port Authority. Although its registrants operate under PUC Authority, they may, on occasion, be leased for operations which do not require PUC Authority. At those times, the authority numbers must be concealed on the side of the bus. Buses with these registration plates may also be used as school buses. This registration plate is identified by the letters "BA" plus five digits and has the word "Bus" at the bottom. This registration plate may not be used on 11-15 passenger vehicles used to transport school children unless the vehicle was titled and registered as a bus prior to March 1, 1993. Effective January 1, 2016, buses used to provide interstate charter activities must obtain a trip permit prior to entering another jurisdiction.

#### School Bus



This registration plate is issued only for school buses that are used exclusively for school activities. The registrant may not use the bus for general transportation activities that are not directly related to school functions, or as a for-hire bus. If the bus is owned by a school district, the registration is permanent. All others must be renewed prior to the expiration date assigned. The registration plate is identified by the letters "SC" plus five digits and the words "School Bus" at the bottom.

## School Vehicle



This registration plate is issued for vehicles designed to carry no more than ten passengers, including the driver, and used only for the transportation of school students while registered by or under contract with a school district, private or parochial school. This also includes vehicles having chartered, group and party rights under the PUC and used for the transportation of school children to or from public, private or parochial school activities. The registration for this vehicle must be renewed prior to the expiration date assigned. The standard school vehicle registration plate is identified by the letters "SV" plus five digits and the words "School Vehicle" at the bottom. This registration plate may not be used on 11-15 passenger vehicles used to transport school children, unless the vehicle was titled and registered as a bus prior to March 1, 1993.

**NOTE:** School vehicle registration plates may be personalized for an additional fee. To check personalized registration plate availability, visit PennDOT's Driver and Vehicle Services website, [www.dmv.pa.gov](http://www.dmv.pa.gov), and select the Plate Availability link from the list of services under the Online Services heading.

## Omnibus



This registration plate is issued for vehicles that do not have PUC Authority and, therefore, are generally not used as a for-hire bus. These vehicles are primarily owned by individuals, churches or other charitable organizations. If leased, these would not be long term leases, but rather trip leases. A copy of the trip lease should be carried in the vehicle. The standard omnibus registration plate is identified by the letters "OB" plus five digits and has the word "Omnibus" at the bottom. This registration plate may not be used on 11-15 passenger vehicles used to transport school children unless the vehicle was titled and registered as a bus prior to March 1, 1993.

**NOTE:** Omnibus registration plates may be personalized for an additional fee. To check personalized registration plate availability, visit PennDOT's Driver and Vehicle Services website, [www.dmv.pa.gov](http://www.dmv.pa.gov), and select the Plate Availability link from the list of services under the Online Services heading.

## Limousine



This registration plate is issued for vehicles designed for carrying no more than nine passengers, exclusive of the driver, and is used for the transportation of people for compensation. Limousine registration plates are used in "for hire" situations only where the services have been pre-arranged. In Pennsylvania, limousines are regulated by the Public Utility Commission (PUC), which ensures adequate insurance and vehicle safety regulations are being maintained. Limousine operations based in Philadelphia providing service between points within Philadelphia, and service from an airport, railroad station or hotel located in Philadelphia, are regulated by the Philadelphia Parking Authority (PPA) in a similar function as the PUC. Limousine carriers that hold operating authority from both the PUC and the PPA will be regulated by the PPA for transportation to and from Philadelphia. The PPA's scope of limousine service also includes carriers providing limousine service, airport transfer service and group and party service as defined by the PUC. This standard limousine registration plate is identified by the letters "LM" plus five digits and has the word "Limousine" at the bottom.

**NOTE:** Limousine registration plates may be personalized for an additional fee. To check personalized registration plate availability, visit PennDOT's Driver and Vehicle Services website, [www.dmv.pa.gov](http://www.dmv.pa.gov), and select the Plate Availability link from the list of services under the Online Services heading.

## Taxi



This registration plate is issued for motor vehicles designed for carrying no more than eight passengers, exclusive of the driver, on a call and demand service, and used for the transportation of persons for compensation. In Pennsylvania, taxis are regulated by the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) which ensures adequate insurance, charged rates and vehicle safety regulations are being maintained. Taxis operating within Philadelphia are regulated by the Philadelphia Parking Authority (PPA) in a similar function as the PUC. The standard taxi registration plate is identified by the letters "TX" plus five digits and the word "Taxi" at the bottom.

**NOTE:** Taxi registration plates may be personalized for an additional fee. To check personalized registration plate availability, visit PennDOT's Driver and Vehicle Services website, [www.dmv.pa.gov](http://www.dmv.pa.gov), and select the Plate Availability link from the list of services under the Online Services heading.

Registrations may be renewed for either a one-year or two-year registration period. Both registrations periods and the required fees are provided on the registration renewal form or [Form MV-70S, "Bureau of Motor Vehicles Schedule of Fees."](#) **NOTE:** If the fee listed on the "2-yr. fee" block on the registration renewal form is "N/A," the motor vehicle type is not eligible to renew for a two-year period. In addition, motor vehicles registered under the International Registration Plan and motor vehicles with a seasonal registration, are not eligible to renew for two-year period.

## School Buses - School Vehicles - Limousine

Vehicles as Designed by Manufacturer *1	What Temporary Registration Plate to be Issued	Registration Plate Type	Restricted Use	Compensation
<b>School Bus</b> 11-72 Passengers	School Bus (SC)	School Bus (SC) Bus (BA), (BN) Municipal (MG) Official Use - State (PA) Omnibus (OB)	Yes No Yes Yes No	Yes Yes N/A N/A Yes *2
<b>School Vehicle</b> Less than 10 Passengers	Omnibus (OB) Request for exchange must be made for School Vehicle (SV) or Municipal (MG) if owned by school district	Omnibus (OB) School Vehicle (SV) Municipal (MG)	No Yes *5 Yes – School districts only	Yes Yes No
<b>Bus</b> 16-72 Passengers	Bus (BA)	Bus (BA), (BN) Municipal (MG) Official Use – State (PA) Omnibus (OB)	No Yes Yes No	Yes N/A N/A Yes *2
<b>Bus/Passengers</b> 11-15 Passengers	Bus (BA)	Bus (BA), (BN) Municipal (MG) Official Use - State (PA) Omnibus (OB)	Bus - No *3 Passengers - No	Yes N/A N/A Yes *2
<b>Passenger</b> 1-10 Passengers *2	Passenger	Passenger School Vehicle (SV) Bus (BA), (BN) Municipal (MG) Official Use - State (PA) Omnibus (OB)	No Yes No Yes Yes No	No Yes Yes N/A N/A Yes *2
<b>Limousine Commercial</b>	Omnibus (OB) Bus (BA) Request for exchange must be made for Limousine (LM)	Omnibus (OB) BUS (BA)  Limousine (LM)	No No  No	Yes Yes  Yes
<b>Limousine Non-Commercial</b>	Omnibus (OB) Passenger	Omnibus (OB) Passenger	Private Use / Not for Hire	No No
<b>Taxi</b> 1-8 Passengers	Bus (BA) Omni-Bus (OB) <b>NOTE:</b> No temporary plates allowed in Philadelphia	Taxi (TX)	Yes	Yes

\*1 - Removal or blocking of seats does not reduce design capacity

\*2 - With lease or contract for compensation

\*3 - Only if registered as a bus prior to 3-1-93

\*4 - Cannot be used to transport school children

\*5 - Only used to transport school children