

DISABILITY PARKING



**Important Information on Using
Disability Parking Certificates and
Disability License Plates in Minnesota**



Minnesota State Council
on Disability

Your Policy, Training and Technical Resource



PARKING ACCESSIBILITY

A state-issued disability parking certificate or set of disability license plates provides an opportunity for a person with a mobility disability to park as close as possible to their destination.

Once issued a disability parking certificate or set of disability license plates you have both rights and responsibilities as specified in state statute.

YOUR RIGHTS

- With your valid disability parking certificate or disability license plates in clear view, you have the right to park in designated disability parking.
- With your valid disability parking certificate or plates in clear view, you have the right to park at parking meters in Minnesota without the obligation to pay. However there may be time limits during hours of enforcement, so be sure to pay attention to time limits when parking at a meter.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES ACCORDING TO STATE LAW:

- As the person with the disability, you must **not allow others**, such as family, friends, caregivers, volunteers or PCAs to use your disability parking certificate or plates for the purpose of exercising disability parking privileges unless you are in the vehicle and plan to exit upon reaching your destination.
- A parent of an eligible child with a disability cannot use disability parking if the child is not in the vehicle or does not exit the vehicle once the destination is reached.
- When using your disability parking certificate or disability license plates, you must exit the vehicle once you reach your destination.
- You should never drive your vehicle with the disability parking certificate hanging from the rear view mirror. State law considers it an obstruction to the driver's view when the vehicle is moving. You can be fined for this violation.



- When parking, never park in the access aisle, the striped space between two disability parking spaces. The access aisle is intended to provide extra space for people using wheelchairs, walkers and scooters to get in and out of their vehicle, especially if the vehicle is a side-loading vehicle with a ramp or lift. The access aisle should never be blocked by another vehicle and must be kept clear of obstructions. **You could be fined up to \$200 for parking in or obstructing an access aisle even if you have a disability parking certificate or license plates.**

(RESPONSIBILITIES continued on page 4)

(RESPONSIBILITIES continued from page 3)

- Safeguard your certificate. If you need more than three replacement certificates in a six-year period, the law requires that you obtain permission from the Minnesota State Council on Disability for a replacement certificate.
- Remember, others caught using your disability parking certificate or license plates in disability parking or at parking meters without paying could receive a fine of up to \$500.00 and could result in your disability parking privileges being revoked.
- Be sure to destroy an invalid certificate or return it to Driver and Vehicle Services, especially if the user has passed away. This will reduce the possibility that it is used by an unauthorized person.
- Whenever you're using a designated parking space, you must, according to federal law, hang your parking certificate from the rearview mirror. If your disability prevents you from reaching the rearview mirror, you may place it on the dashboard.



If you have a mobility disability and you are interested in obtaining a disability parking certificate or plates, you need to first find out if you are eligible.

SIMPLE STEPS FOR APPLYING

Disability parking certificate and license plate applications are available online at www.mndriveinfo.org

- Select 'forms' link
- Select 'motor vehicle' link

The disability parking certificate application form number is PS2005. The special plates form is PS2010.

You may also obtain the application form at any local motor vehicle office.

Application forms, as well as more information are also available from us, the Minnesota State Council on Disability (MSCOD).



Submit your completed application at any motor vehicle office or mail with payment, if applicable, to DVS at:

Driver & Vehicle Services

445 Minnesota Street
Suite 164
Saint Paul, MN 55101-5164
(651) 297-3377

You will need the signature of a physician, physician's assistant, nurse practitioner or chiropractor for a valid application. Allow several weeks for the application to be processed.

DISABILITY PARKING CERTIFICATES

A variety of disability parking certificates address a range of needs. Depending on the duration of your disability you may need a six month short-term disability parking certificate as you recover from an injury or surgery. You may need a certificate for a longer period of time as you undergo therapy or treatment. If you have a permanent disability, you may be interested in obtaining a certificate with a six-year duration.

Certificates are portable so that you may use them in any vehicle that is transporting you. There may be a small fee (currently \$5.00) depending on the type of certificate you receive.

Certificates are issued in the following categories:

30-day permits *

Issued immediately by a deputy registrar while you wait for a longer-term disability certificate.

Temporary certificates ** *(red and white)*

Issued for 1-6 months.

Short-term certificates ** *(blue and white)*

Appropriate for periods of 7-12 months.

Long-term certificates * *(blue and white)*

Remain in force for 13-71 months.

Six-year certificates * *(blue and white)*

Valid for 72 months.

Organization certificates ** *(green and white)*

Available to organizations that transport people with disabilities. These particular applications must include a plan that demonstrates accountability and prevents misuse.

* No fee

** \$5.00 fee



DISABILITY LICENSE PLATES

DVS issues disability license plates to individuals with a permanent disability or their custodial parents or guardians. Recipients must either own the vehicle or be a principle driver to receive one set of plates.

You may apply for the plates when you register the vehicle or when you renew your vehicle tabs.

Those eligible for disability license plates also may request an additional certificate. Or, instead of plates, you may choose a total of two certificates.

In addition, you may be eligible for more than one set of disability license plates. Motorcycle disability license plates can be obtained regardless of the number of other disability license plates you have issued to you.

**Be courteous.
Many people who
use disability parking
have no visible
disability.**



**They may have a
respiratory,
cardiac, chronic pain
or other nonvisible
condition that makes
them eligible for
disability parking.**

ELIGIBILITY CATEGORIES

Minnesota Statute 169.345 states that in order to be eligible for disability parking an individual must meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Has a cardiac condition to the extent that the applicant's functional limitations are classified in severity as Class III or Class IV according to the standards set by the American Heart Association.
2. Uses portable oxygen.
3. Has an arterial oxygen tension (PAO₂) of less than 60 mm/Hg on room air at rest.
4. Is restricted by a respiratory disease to such an extent that the applicant's forced (respiratory) expiratory volume for one second, when measured by spirometry, is less than one liter.
5. Has lost an arm or leg and does not have or cannot use an artificial limb.

Disability Definitions 6-9 below must state the specific diagnosis of the condition causing disability:

6. Due to disability, uses a wheelchair or cannot walk without the aid of: Another person; a walker; a cane; crutches; braces; a prosthetic device; or other assistive device.
7. Has a disability that would be aggravated by walking 200 feet under normal environmental conditions to an extent that would be life-threatening.
8. Due to disability cannot walk 200 feet without stopping to rest.
9. Cannot walk without a significant risk of falling.

PENALTIES FOR ABUSE BY HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

A health practitioner that fraudulently certifies a person for disability parking risks receiving a fine of up to \$500.00.

USING YOUR DISABILITY PARKING CERTIFICATE OR LICENSE PLATES



Once you receive your certificate or plates, there are a few things to keep in mind.

LOOK FOR THE SIGNS

Disability parking signs must be permanently posted and visible from within the parked vehicle. In addition, signs should:

- Use white lettering on a blue background and display the international symbol of accessibility (wheelchair emblem).
- Require vehicle identification.
- Indicate that violators are subject to a fine of up to \$200.00.

Even if you see a sign that does not conform to these standards — it might be brown instead of blue, for example — it is still valid as long as it clearly identifies the space as disability parking.

In parking lots constructed prior to July 2007 you will find disability parking spaces; some will have eight-foot access aisles and be signed as van accessible. Other disability parking spaces have a five-foot access aisle.

The wider access aisles are intended to accommodate vehicles with side equipped lifts or ramps.

If you don't need the wider stall in these parking lots and there are other disability parking spaces available, please be courteous and leave the wider space for someone who may need it. In newer lots, constructed or structurally renovated after July 2007 all of the disability parking spaces should have eight-foot access aisles.

In both cases, the access aisle is part of the disability parking space and you should never park in or obstruct it. You could get a ticket and be fined up to \$200, even if you have a valid disability parking certificate or plates!

ALLOWANCES FOR ON-STREET PARKING

Disability parking certificate or plates also improve access by making allowances for on-street parking.

USE (DON'T ABUSE) METERS

Your certificate or plates let you park at public parking meters without having to pay in Minnesota. Note that some municipalities may set time limits, so be on the alert for specific restrictions.

EXTENDING TIME LIMITS

Your certificate or plates also allow you to park in non-metered, time-limited, noncommercial parking spaces without worrying about time limits (unless otherwise posted).

LIMITS TO AUTHORIZATION

It is important to note that there are places your certificate or plates do not authorize you to park, such as:

- No-parking zones
- Commercial parking zones
- Fire lanes
- Rush-hour zones
- Fire hydrants
- Access aisles
- Yellow curbs



Keep in mind that the intent of these accommodations is to give you access. Please don't use street meters or time-limited street parking for regular day-long parking (while at work, for example).

RESIDENTIAL DISABILITY PARKING FRONT-OF-HOME SIGNS

Some cities make it possible to put disability parking signs in front of your home.

To request these signs in Minneapolis, contact:

Transportation & Special Projects
(612) 673-2700 or 311
www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us

In Saint Paul, contact:

Public Works Traffic Engineering
(651) 266-6200
www.ci.stpaul.mn.us

To learn about procedures in your town, or whether signs are available at all, contact your local city hall, public works, your city attorney or contact MSCOD if you are not able to find a resource in your town.

ENFORCEMENT

Disability parking laws are enforced, most often, by police and traffic control officers.

Some communities also may establish, by ordinance, a process for training citizen volunteers. These volunteers receive training (in accordance with Minnesota Statute, Chapter 169.346) in the regulations and methods for issuing citations.



**If you see someone
park in disability
parking without
a disability
certificate or plates,
contact your local
law enforcement.**

OUR MISSION

The Minnesota State Council on Disability (MSCOD) is a state agency providing leadership to empower and strengthen the rights of Minnesotans with disabilities. We collaborate with the public and private sectors as a policy, training and technical resource advisor.



Your Policy, Training and Technical Resource

Follow us on:



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