



# Tennessee Department of Revenue

## **Procedures for Handling Abandoned, Immobile or Unattended Vehicles:**

1. Within three business days\* of taking vehicle into custody, mail Request for Verification Ownership on Vehicles Found Abandoned/Immobile or Unattended form to:

Department of Revenue  
Vehicle Services Division  
44 Vantage Way, Suite 160  
Nashville, TN 37243

Form must include:

- \$1 fee.
- written authorization to tow vehicle from law enforcement, vehicle owner or private property's owner for the towing of vehicle.

2. Upon receiving owner/lienholder information from Department of Revenue, send notice within three business days\* to the vehicle's owner and any lienholders or other people claiming interest in the vehicle. Out-of-state inquiries must be made within 15 days of taking possession of the vehicle.

The notice must:

- be sent by registered mail, with return receipt requested. If it's delivered in person, it must involve a notarized affidavit naming the person who delivered the notice and specify the time, place and manner of giving notice; and
- include complete description of the vehicle, itemized statement of charges and a specified due date for payment not less than 10 days from the delivery of notice.

\* Garagekeepers/tow firms that fail to verify ownership within three business days after taking possession, or that fail to notify owner by mail within six days after taking possession, cannot collect more than six days of storage-related expenses.

3. Requester cannot charge in excess of 60 days for storage without owner/lienholder consent. Notice to charge for storage beyond 60 days must be sent by registered mail, with a return receipt requested.

4. After payment for towing and storage is presented, the vehicle must be released to owner, secured creditor, lessor or lienholder. Otherwise, the garagekeeper/tow firm may be subject to civil liability.

5. If there is no response to notices by registered mail or payment is not received by the deadline specified in the notice, the vehicle can be advertised for sale at auction no less than 15 days from the time of first publication. Advertisement must run once in a local newspaper in the area where the vehicle was abandoned, immobile or unattended. If area where the sale will be held does not have a newspaper, an ad must be posted at least 10 days before the sale in at least six conspicuous public places in the area where the vehicle will be sold.