



# HOUSE BILL 211: Various DMV Changes.

2019-2020 General Assembly

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<b>Committee:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	September 11, 2019
<b>Introduced by:</b>	Rep. Shepard	<b>Prepared by:</b>	Wendy Ray
<b>Analysis of:</b>	Conference Committee Substitute (H211-CCSSU-6)		Staff Attorney

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**OVERVIEW:** House Bill 211 would make the following changes to laws relating to motor vehicles:

- Amend the definitions of fuel cell and plug-in electric vehicles to clarify that they cannot have the ability to be propelled by a gasoline engine.
- Eliminate the requirement for a signature space on a registration card.
- Authorize remote conversion of a provisional license to a regular drivers license.
- Require the Division of Motor Vehicles to waive lapse in financial responsibility penalties under certain circumstances when a person has moved to another state.
- Provide for reflectivity standards for registration plates and require replacement of plates every seven years.
- Amend the helmet requirement exception for autocycles.
- Provide for a study of the feasibility of digital license plates.

**CURRENT LAW/BILL ANALYSIS:** House Bill 211 would make changes to motor vehicle-related laws as follows:

**Section 1** would amend current definitions within G.S. 20-4.01, applicable to fuel cell electric and plug-in electric vehicles, to clarify that those vehicles cannot have the ability to be propelled by a gasoline engine. Fuel cell electric vehicles and plug-in electric vehicles are not required to undergo emissions inspections pursuant to G.S. 20-183.2, nor are they subject to the HOV lane restrictions pursuant to G.S. 20-146.2, under certain circumstances.

**Section 2.** S.L. 2016-90, Section 12.(a), repealed the requirement for an owner to sign a motor vehicle registration card issued by the Division of Motor Vehicles. This section would make a technical correction to repeal the requirement that there be a space for the owner's signature on the registration card.

**Section 3** would authorize remote conversion of a full provisional license to a regular drivers license. It would also provide that a full provisional license expires 60 days after the holder's 21st birthday, rather than on the 21st birthday. It would also authorize a person remotely renewing or converting a license to update his or her address.

**Section 4.** Current law requires the owner of a motor vehicle that is registered or is required to be registered to have a motor vehicle liability policy. If the liability policy lapses during that motor vehicle's registration period, the Division is authorized to take action as outlined in G.S. 20-311. Under current law, if a vehicle owner cancels a North Carolina liability policy in the process of moving out-of-state and prior to registering that same vehicle out-of-state, the owner may be assessed a penalty.

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This section would require the Division to waive the monetary penalty and restoration fee for a lapse in liability insurance coverage if the owner of the vehicle meets all of the following requirements:

- The owner has become a resident of another state and has registered the owner's vehicle in that state within 30 days of the cancellation or expiration of the owner's North Carolina motor vehicle liability policy.
- The owner has submitted a copy of their current out of state registration card to the Division.
- The owner has returned the North Carolina registration plate or has submitted an affidavit indicating that the North Carolina registration plate has been lost, stolen, or destroyed.

**Section 5** would provide that the Division shall develop standards for reflectivity of registration plates that use the latest technology while maintaining a competitive bid process. It would also require the Division to replace registration plates every seven years (an existing plate would have to be replaced if, at the time of renewal, it is seven or more years old or will become that old during the registration period). The Division would be required to coordinate with the Department of Information Technology to implement a plate production platform that would integrate the registration system with on-demand plate production and provide for direct shipping of the plates. This section would be effective July 1, 2020, and would apply to plates issued on or after that date.

**Section 6** would amend the helmet requirement for operators and passengers on autocycles. Currently, autocycles fall within the definition of motorcycle for purposes of the helmet requirement, with the specific exception that helmets are not required on autocycles with completely enclosed seating. This section would add that helmets are also not required on autocycles equipped with a roll bar or roll cage. This section would become effective October 1, 2019.

**Section 7** would require the Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight Committee to study the feasibility of making digital license plates available as an alternative to traditional physical plates issued by the Division.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Except as otherwise provided, the act would be effective when it becomes law.

*Howard Marsilio, counsel to House Transportation, contributed to this summary.*