

# Section 3 – Diplomatic Motor Vehicle Program

## 3.1 Introduction and Definitions of Terms Frequently Used

Pursuant to international law, the domestic authority of the 1982 Foreign Missions Act (22 USC 4301 et. Seq.), as amended (collectively, the “**Act**”), and other applicable federal and state laws, the Office of Foreign Mission and its Regional Offices (collectively, “**OFM**”), are the sole providers in the United States of motor vehicle services to foreign missions, their members, and their members’ dependents, except for locally engaged staff, U.S. citizens, or legal permanent residents (hereinafter the “**Foreign Mission Community**”). Foreign missions include embassies, consulates, and certain international organizations (hereinafter “**Foreign Missions**”). Motor vehicles include automobiles, motorcycles, buses, trucks, and trailers that are imported, locally purchased, leased or transferred within the Foreign Mission Community (hereinafter “**Motor Vehicles**”).

Among the services provided by OFM are the registration and titling of Motor Vehicles and the issuance of driver licenses (hereinafter “**Motor Vehicle Services**”). OFM also monitors the liability insurance coverage of Motor Vehicles owned or leased by the Foreign Mission Community that are operated in any U.S. state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or in any territory of the United States (hereinafter “**U.S. Jurisdiction**”).

The Foreign Mission Community outside the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area must request Motor Vehicle Services at the appropriate Regional Office. The Foreign Mission Community assigned to the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area must obtain Motor Vehicles Services from the Diplomatic Motor Vehicles Unit at OFM. (See the Paragraph on **Regional Offices** in the **Introduction** to this publication.)

Prior to importing, purchasing, financing, leasing, or disposing of a Motor Vehicle, members of Foreign Missions should consult with OFM to determine if any restrictions and/or service fees apply. The Motor Vehicle reciprocity policy for a Foreign Mission in the United States reflects the treatment accorded to the U.S. mission, its members, and dependents, in that Foreign Mission’s country.

Motor Vehicles bearing official Department of State license

plates cannot be used for commercial endeavors except for the incidental permissible use for commercial activity as explained below.

### **3.2 Prohibition to Use Motor Vehicle for Commercial Endeavors**

Article 42 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations prohibits practice in the receiving State of "any professional or commercial activity" for personal profit. The same holds true for career consular officers pursuant to Article 57 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. In addition, commercial activity by a member of the Foreign Mission Community admitted to the United States as a principal alien on a diplomatic visa is in violation of the visa status of such individual and thus prohibited by the immigration laws of the United States. In the event this restriction is violated, such persons would not enjoy, in connection with civil actions related to the commercial activity or employment, any otherwise available immunity from the civil jurisdiction of the courts of the United States.

#### **Exception for Dependents from some Foreign Missions:**

A different situation exists with respect to the dependents of the classes of persons specified above. While as a general rule these dependents enjoy no right under international law to be commercially employed in the host State, and they too are in the first instance prohibited by U.S. immigration laws from such employment or commercial activity in the United States, U.S. law permits dependent employment (country-by-country) on the basis of reciprocity and in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security.

#### **Dependent Employment Program:**

Under the dependent employment program, the dependents of various States are permitted to engage in employment in the United States. All such employed dependents would, however, as a consequence of taking up such employment, lose their civil immunity in connection with such employment under international law (Articles 31(1)(C) and 34(D) of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and, in some cases, as a consequence of express provisions in bilateral agreements.

#### **Incidental Permissible Commercial Use of Motor Vehicles:**

The issue of the permissible commercial use of Motor Vehicles bearing Department of State license plates arises in connection with the relatively small class of dependents identified in the preceding paragraph. Chiefs of diplomatic or consular missions may themselves decline to permit the dependents of their personnel to use official-plated vehicles for a public and recognizable commercial purpose. From the Department's

point of view, use of a personal automobile bearing Department of State license plates *is permissible* if incidental to a dependent taking up employment under the reciprocity-based employment program. The drivers of such vehicles are susceptible to civil suit for damages that are found to be caused by acts related to the employment.

### 3.3 Registration of Vehicles

Motor Vehicles leased or owned by the Foreign Mission Community that will be operated in any U.S. Jurisdiction must be registered with OFM, and nowhere else.

**Warning:** Anyone in the Foreign Mission Community who, contrary to Department of State requirements, obtains a Motor Vehicle registration, decal, title, or a driver license from a U.S. Jurisdiction will be issued an OFM driver license, registration, title, or decal only upon the payment of a service fee of \$100 for each service requested. Foreign Missions are advised that, as OFM becomes aware of Motor Vehicle Services provided to members of the Foreign Mission Community by a local jurisdiction, it notifies the local jurisdiction of the person's diplomatic or consular status and obtains an administrative block of the person's record.

#### How to Register a Motor Vehicle

*\*interactive forms DS-100 and DS-101 in “.pdf” format can be accessed from the list at the end of this section, completed on-line, and printed out for submission to your servicing OFM office*

#### General Instructions

1. Submit Form DS-100 (Application for Registration Mission Vehicle)\* or Form DS-101 (Application for Registration Personal Vehicle)\*, as appropriate.
2. Submit proof of ownership of the Motor Vehicle. (See **Specific Instructions** below.)
3. Submit proof of liability insurance. (See **Liability Insurance for Motor Vehicles Prior to Registration** below.)

**Note:** If the Motor Vehicle is actually owned by a bona fide dependent, the name of his/her sponsor will be shown as the registered owner and the dependent's name will be shown as the “co-owner.” At the time of disposition (See **How to Obtain a Title** below), the actual owner's name will appear on the title.

**Warning:** Under U.S. law, Motor Vehicle registration and insurance cards must be carried in the Motor Vehicle when it is operated in any U.S. Jurisdiction. Motor Vehicle operators must be able to present proof of liability insurance and registration upon request.

**Note:** If a seller or a financial institution has any questions regarding the obligation to register the Motor Vehicle with OFM, or the non-issuance of an OFM title, please refer them to

this publication ([www.state.gov/OFM](http://www.state.gov/OFM)) or ask them to contact OFM.

### **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS (in addition to the items in General Instructions above)**

#### **Registering an imported Motor Vehicle:**

1. Submit the original certificate of origin (sometimes called the manufacturer's statement of origin), title, and any other foreign registration document;
2. Submit a copy of the DS-1504 (Request for Customs Clearance of Merchandise)\*;
3. Submit a copy of the bill of lading; and,
4. Submit Form DS-100 (Application for Registration Mission Vehicle)\* or Form DS-101 (Application for Registration Personal Vehicle)\*, as appropriate.

*\*interactive forms DS-100,DS-101 and DS-1504 in “.pdf” format can be accessed from the list at the end of this section, completed on-line, and printed out for submission to your servicing OFM office*

*\*links to “read only” forms HS-7 and EPA- 3520-1 in “.pdf” format are provided in the form list at the end of this section. Until further notice, applicants must submit the multi-copy forms available at port of entry or from NHTSA and EPA.*

**Note:** Registration applications for Motor Vehicles that do not meet the DOT and EPA safety and pollution standards must include DOT form HS-7\* and EPA for EPA-3520-1\*, which can be obtained at the Motor Vehicle’s U.S. port of entry.

#### **Registering a Motor Vehicle purchased from a dealership:**

1. If the Motor Vehicle is **new** submit the certificate of origin (sometimes called the manufacturer's statement of origin);
2. If the Motor Vehicle is **used**, attach the title, and any other documents such as title reassignment forms or power of attorney, which can be obtained from the dealership;
3. Submit Form DSP-100 (Application for Registration Mission Vehicle)\* or Form DSP-101 (Application for Registration Personal Vehicle)\*, as appropriate;
4. Submit a copy of the purchase agreement;
5. Submit Odometer statement.

*\*interactive forms DS-100 and DS-101 in “.pdf” format can be accessed from the list at the end of this section, completed on-line, and printed out for submission to your servicing OFM office*

**Note:** Always notify the dealership and the financial institution, if any, that the Motor Vehicle must be registered with the Department of State only. If the dealership or a financial institution sends these documents directly to OFM, submit a statement to that effect.

#### **Registering a used Motor Vehicle purchased from an individual outside the Foreign Mission Community:**

1. Submit the certificate of title endorsed by the previous owner to the new applicant; and,
2. Submit Form DSP-100 (Application for Registration Mission Vehicle)\* or Form DSP-101 (Application for Registration Personal Vehicle)\*, as appropriate.

*\*interactive forms DS-100 and DS-102 in “.pdf” format can be accessed from the list at the end of this section, completed on-line, and printed out for submission to your servicing OFM office*

### **Registering a used Motor Vehicle purchased from the Foreign Mission Community:**

1. Submit the seller’s DSP-102 (Application for Title)\*; and,
2. Submit Form DSP-100 (Application for Registration Mission Vehicle)\* or Form DSP-101 (Application for Registration Personal Vehicle)\*, as appropriate.

**Note:** If the seller has already submitted a DSP-102 through his/her Foreign Mission, submit a statement to that effect. (See *Transferring ownership to another mission or eligible mission member* below).

### **Registering a leased Motor Vehicle:**

1. Submit the certificate of origin (sometimes called the manufacturer's statement of origin);
2. Submit a copy of the lease agreement; and,
3. Submit Form DSP-100 (Application for Registration Mission Vehicle)\* or Form DSP-101 (Application for Registration Personal Vehicle)\*, as appropriate.

**Note:** Always notify the dealership that the Motor Vehicle must be registered with the Department of State only. If the dealership or financial institution, if any, send these documents separately to OFM, submit a statement to that effect.

### **Processing Initial Registration**

If the Application for Registration is complete and all necessary supporting documents have been submitted, the registration package will be ready within 2 to 3 working days in the Washington, DC metropolitan area and in the Regional Offices that offer full service. The Regional Offices that do not offer full service will require 6 to 11 working days to complete the process. The registration package will include the following:

1. Two distinctive license plates;
2. A validation decal showing the month and year of expiration; and
3. A registration card.

**Note:** Vehicle Registrations are valid for one year, expiring on the last calendar day of the month in which the Motor Vehicle was initially registered.

### **Annual Registration Renewal**

OFM will automatically issue a new registration card and a

## **Annual Registration Renewals**

new validation decal for each Motor Vehicle registration that will expire at the end of the month. If the new registration card and validation decal have not been received by the middle of the expiration month, please contact OFM.

## **Refusal to Renew a Registration**

### **Refusal of Registration Renewal**

Registrations will not be renewed if any Motor Vehicle owned by a member of the Foreign Mission Community of a particular Foreign Mission:

1. is not in full compliance with the liability insurance requirements contained herein; or
2. has any unpaid parking fines in Washington, D.C. or New York, N.Y.

**Note:** OFM will inform a Foreign Mission if conditions exist that will result in a refusal of registration renewals for a Foreign Mission or its members.

## **3.4 Payment of Reciprocal Fees or Surcharges, if any, at Registration and/or Disposition**

OFM will collect reciprocal registration fees and surcharges, as well as reciprocal disposition fees and surcharges, if any, from a member of the Foreign Mission Community at the time of registration of the Motor Vehicle. At the time of disposition, OFM will recalculate the fee or surcharge using the reciprocal formula and collect or refund the difference. The fees or surcharges will be imposed using the same criteria utilized by the sending state when imposing such fees on the U.S. mission or its members. Such fees and surcharges do not affect all Foreign Missions.

## **3.5 Liability Insurance for Motor Vehicles Prior to Registration**

The 1978 Diplomatic Relations Act and the Act require that all Motor Vehicles owned and operated in a U.S. Jurisdiction by a member of the Foreign Mission Community carry liability insurance coverage at all times. It is the responsibility of all Foreign Missions to provide OFM with written proof of continuous insurance coverage.

**Note:** The Secretary of State is authorized by the Act to impose a surcharge or fee on a Foreign Mission if an uninsured motorist of the Foreign Mission is at fault for personal injury, death, or property damage and has not satisfied a court-rendered judgment. The Secretary has delegated to OFM the authority to impose such surcharges or fees on the Foreign Mission employing the uninsured motorist.

## Proof of Insurance

Proof of insurance is required when applying to register a Motor Vehicle. Thereafter, proof of insurance is required on the semi-annual or annual renewal of the insurance policy.

Members of the Foreign Mission Community applying to register a Motor Vehicle must submit proof of liability insurance, in the amounts set forth below, in the following form:

1. A copy of an insurance company's binder valid for at least 30 days from the date of application; or
2. A certificate of insurance; or
3. The policy declaration page.

**Note:** There are no insurance requirements for trailers, which are covered by the insurance policy of the towing vehicle.

### **Required content:**

The proof of insurance submitted must include the following:

1. Description of the Motor Vehicle (including make, model, year, and vehicle identification number);
2. The effective dates of coverage;
3. Liability limits and levels of coverage;
4. The name, address, and telephone number of the broker or agent; and
5. An endorsement showing the Department of State, Diplomatic Motor Vehicle Office (OFM), as an "additional insured" or "Party of Interest."

**Note:** OFM must be notified by your insurer of any changes, updates, or cancellations to your insurance policy.

## Minimum Required Liability Coverage

**Required minimum limits of coverage:** The insurance agent/broker should be informed of the requirement to carry third-party liability automobile insurance coverage at or above the Department of State's mandatory minimum limits. Once registered, liability insurance must be maintained for the registered Motor Vehicle(s) at all times as set forth below. OFM must be notified every time there is a change, update, renewal, or cancellation to a liability insurance policy. OFM often conducts reviews to ensure compliance. The minimum acceptable limits to liability coverage are as follows:

1. \$300,000 combined single limit (CSL); or
2. Split limits of \$100,000 personal injury per person, \$300,000 personal injury per accident and \$100,000 property damage per accident. (Note: The required amount of property damage insurance if the Motor Vehicle is a motorcycle is \$50,000).

**Note:** An independent study has verified the adequacy of the required minimal coverage. Adequate insurance coverage was defined as insurance at a level that will cover 99% of third-party liability claims awarded.

### **Insurance Requirements for Rented Motor Vehicles by those with Liability Insurance Coverage**

**Members with Insurance Coverage:** Members of the Foreign Mission Community who have registered Motor Vehicle(s) with OFM may already possess liability insurance coverage that would cover rental Motor Vehicle(s) through their existing policies. Members of the Foreign Mission Community should confirm that their insurance policy covers rented Motor Vehicle(s).

### **Insurance Requirements for Rented Motor Vehicles by Member without Insurance Coverage**

**Members Without Insurance Coverage:** Members of the Foreign Mission Community who do not have Motor Vehicle(s) registered with OFM, and do not have the mandated minimum level of liability insurance coverage must obtain such minimum coverage prior to the operation of rental Motor Vehicle(s) in any U.S. Jurisdiction. This coverage may be obtained through the rental company.

**Warning:** Failure to comply with these requirements could lead the Department to take serious action against the privilege to operate Motor Vehicle(s) in the United States. Further, in any case involving an accident or injury, the Department of State intends to request an appropriate waiver of immunity if valid claims are not satisfied.

### **Request for a Motor Vehicle Record by Prospective Insurer**

**Requests for a Motor Vehicle Record (“MVR”):** The insurance agent or broker may ask for a copy of the driving record (also known as a Motor Vehicle Record or “MVR”) of each person who will operate the Motor Vehicle. An MVR contains the following information:

1. The individual’s name;
2. License number, and date issued;
3. Class of license and restrictions, if any;
4. Class(es) of Motor Vehicles authorized;
5. Status of the license;
6. Previous U.S. license(s), if any;
7. A list of moving violations, if any, to include violation recorded against a previous license issued by any U.S. Jurisdiction; and,
8. Any suspension or withdrawal of the driving privilege.

The insurance carrier or agent may obtain a copy of an individual’s Department of State MVR from OFM. An MVR request should be faxed to (202) 895-3646 and include the following information:

1. Name;
2. DOB (Date of Birth);
3. DOS (Department of State) Driver License Number;
4. A contact telephone number; and
5. A return fax number.

### 3.6 City or County Parking Stickers

**County or City Parking Stickers:** Some county and city jurisdictions require Motor Vehicles to display stickers confirming that local taxes have been paid or that parking in a residential area is authorized. Members of the Foreign Mission Community should determine if such stickers are required and, if so, acquire them. Problems in this area should be reported to OFM so that assistance can be provided.

**Residents of Virginia:** Mission personnel residing in Virginia must display county/city stickers on the windshield of their Motor Vehicles. Police officers may ticket Motor Vehicles that do not display current stickers. Stickers can be obtained without charge by presenting a copy of the Motor Vehicle's registration card and Department-issued identification to the proper city/county Office of Assessments in Virginia. There may be residential parking sticker requirements in some cities in northern Virginia. Those in Arlington County should present these documents in person at the Arlington County Office of the Commissioner of Revenue.

**Residents of the District of Columbia:** Mission personnel residing in some areas of the District of Columbia must display a Residential Parking Permit (RPP) to park their vehicle without restriction. In order to be eligible for an RPP, the street must be zoned for RPP as indicated by a two-hour residential restriction sign on your block. Police officers may ticket Motor Vehicles that do not display current stickers. RPP's can be obtained at the Division of Motor Vehicles, 301 C Street, N.W., Room 1157, Washington, D.C. by presenting a copy of the Department's vehicle registration card, a \$15 fee, and proof of residency as set forth in <http://dmv.washingtondc.gov/info/proofofresidency.shtm>.

### 3.7 Vehicle Inspections

**Vehicle Inspections:** OFM does not require Motor Vehicle inspections for purposes of registration or sale. If a member of the Foreign Mission Community receives a citation from a police officer for failure to display a valid inspection sticker, the Foreign Mission may forward the citation to OFM and request the issuance of a letter confirming that inspection stickers are not required on OFM-registered Motor Vehicles.

Members of the Foreign Missions Community are reminded that it is the owner's responsibility to maintain their Motor Vehicles in safe operating condition and that citations can and will be issued for failure to do so. The most common violations in this area are because of worn tires or defective lights.

### 3.8 How to Report a Change of Address

*\*interactive form DS-2006 in “.pdf” format can be accessed from the list at the end of this section, completed on-line, and printed out for submission to your servicing OFM office*

Any change in the address of a member of the Foreign Mission Community must be reported promptly to OFM using Form DS-2006 (Notification of Change Identification Card Request).\*

Approximately one week after reporting a change of address, please request the following:

1. A replacement registration card showing the new address; and,
2. A replacement driver license for each driver in the household showing the new address. See ***Change of Residence Address*** below.

### 3.9 Lost or Stolen License Plate(s) and/or Registration Decal

#### **If license plate(s), registration, or decal is/are lost or stolen:**

1. Immediately report the loss/theft to the police;
2. Obtain a police report number; and,
3. Contact OFM by telephone immediately. If the theft or loss occurs during non-business hours, call (202) 647-7277 to file a report with the OFM duty officer.

**Note:** Any member of the Foreign Mission Community who reports lost/stolen decals and/or plates to OFM without a police report number will be required to pay an administrative replacement fee of \$35 by money order payable to OFM. If an individual accidentally attaches a decal to the wrong license plate, the torn decal must be returned to avoid payment of the replacement fee.

#### **Both Plates Lost/Stolen**

*\*interactive form DS-104 in “.pdf” format can be accessed from the list at the end of this section, completed on-line, and printed out for submission to your servicing OFM office*

#### **One Plate Lost/Stolen**

#### **Both license plates and the registration decal are lost/stolen:**

1. Submit Form DS-104 (Application for Replacement Plates)\*.

#### **Only one license plate is lost/stolen:**

1. Immediately apply for replacement of both license plates and a registration decal using Form DS-104 (Application for Replacement Plates)\*; and
2. Return the license plate that was not lost/stolen.

## Decal is Lost/Stolen

### **Only the decal is lost/stolen but not the plate itself:**

1. Submit to OFM an explanation on mission letterhead that includes the OFM Lost/Stolen Report number and the Foreign Mission seal.

**WARNING:** Do not operate the Motor Vehicle until replacement license plates and a registration decal have been issued and affixed to the Motor Vehicle. Motor Vehicles without license plates or with expired decals are subject to being stopped by police. Local authorities are not obligated to permit such Motor Vehicles to operate on local streets. In these cases, the driver may be required either to park the Motor Vehicle nearby, if legally permissible, or to arrange at the driver's expense for the Motor Vehicle to be towed to the Foreign Mission or to another place of safekeeping. Insurers also often contest coverage when the Motor Vehicle has not been re-registered.

## Plates and Decals Property of U.S. Government

**NOTE:** License plates and registration decals issued through OFM are U.S. Government property, must not be removed from the United States, and must be returned to OFM when the purpose for which they were issued is no longer valid. Department license plates reported by OFM to law enforcement community as stolen, and plates failing to display the required registration decal, may be confiscated.

## 3.10 How to Request Handicap License Plates

**Handicap License Plates:** OFM issues handicap license plates to qualified member of the Foreign Mission Community. To obtain these plates, submit a signed statement from a physician certifying that handicap plates are warranted and indicating whether the medical condition is permanent or temporary.

**Note:** A medical statement may be submitted either with the original **application for registration** or at a later time with an application for replacement plates.

## 3.11 If a Motor Vehicle is Stolen

If a Motor Vehicle is stolen, immediately report the theft of a Motor Vehicle to the police and then to OFM, providing the police report number and the police jurisdiction where the report was filed. If the theft occurs during non-business hours, call (202) 647-7277 immediately, to file a report with the OFM duty officer. If the Motor Vehicle is recovered, notify OFM immediately.

**Note:** In some cases, the Motor Vehicle may have been towed

if it was parked illegally on private property or may have been moved to another location if it was impeding traffic.

### 3.12 Issuance of Motor Vehicle Titles

OFM maintains an electronic title for each Motor Vehicle registered under the diplomatic registration program. A paper title is issued **only** when a Motor Vehicle is being removed from the program. However, the owner of a Motor Vehicle **must** request a title if:

1. The owner intends to sell, junk, salvage, or export official and personal Motor Vehicles; or
2. The owner of the Motor Vehicle has ended his employment with the Foreign Mission; or
3. The owner has become a legal permanent resident or a U.S. citizen.

### Application for Title

*\*interactive form DS-102 in “.pdf” format can be accessed from the list at the end of this section, completed on-line, and printed out for submission to your servicing OFM office*

### General Instructions

1. Submit Form DS-102 (Application for Title)\*; and,
2. In the field entitled “**TITLE TO:**” indicate the type of title being requested. (See *Specific Instructions* below for explanation of the various types.)

**NOTE:** If the Motor Vehicle has a lien recorded against it, OFM will require a copy of the Release of Lien or the original record of legal ownership before a title is issued (unless the buyer is an automobile dealership).

In most cases a title showing the name of the buyer is issued. The title will be released in exchange for the license plates issued by OFM. Failure to return the license plates after a Motor Vehicle is removed from the diplomatic registration program is a violation of Department of State regulations and may result in administrative sanctions being imposed against the violator or the violator’s Foreign Mission.

### Specific Instructions

#### Transferring ownership within the Foreign Mission Community:

- Under “**TITLE TO:**”, select “**TRANSFER TO ANOTHER DIPLOMAT/EMPLOYEE**”. Provide the name and mailing address of the buyer in the field “**BUYER NAME**”. Lastly, indicate that the buyer “**IS A FOREIGN NATIONAL ACTING AS AN OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF...**”,

**Note:** The seller's "Application for Title" (Form DS102) and the buyer's "Application for Registration" (Form DS100 or

### Transfer within the Foreign Mission Community

DS101) must be submitted simultaneously. The buyer has the responsibility to ensure that all application forms and the seller's license plates are submitted to OFM. The buyer's new license plates, registration decal, and new registration card will be released only after OFM receives the seller's license plates.

**Owner has been posted to another duty station within the U.S.**

A mission member who has been posted to another duty station within the same Foreign Mission should retain his\her Department of State license plates until receiving notice of recognition in the new position. At that time, the mission member should submit a Request for Replacement License Plates (DSP 104), and proof of insurance at the new location, to receive new license plates. The old license plates will be exchanged for the new license plates and registration decal.

**Transfer to other than a Member of the Foreign Mission Community**

**Transferring ownership outside the Foreign Mission Community (including, but not limited to, a sale to an ineligible individual, a donation to a charity, a gift to an ineligible family member, or a trade-in to a dealership):** In the field **“TITLE TO:”** select **“SELL.”** Provide the name and mailing address of the buyer in the field **“BUYER NAME.”** Lastly, indicate that the buyer **“IS NOT A FOREIGN NATIONAL ACTING AS AN OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE.”**

**Self Terminating Title**

A **“Self Terminating”** title is issued to enable a member of the Foreign Mission Community, other than a Foreign Mission, to register a Motor Vehicle with a local jurisdiction if the following conditions are met:

1. **The member of the Foreign Mission Community is terminating employment at the Foreign Mission and remaining in the United States:** Under **“TITLE TO:”**, select **“SELF TERMINATING.”** Leave the field **“BUYER NAME”** blank. Submit DS-2008 (Notice of Termination of Diplomatic, Consular, or Foreign Government Employment)\* and a copy of the Certification of Naturalization, Alien Registration Receipt Card or “green card,” or other proof of legal presence in the United States (e.g., if remaining in the U.S. as a non-immigrant). If temporary license plates are being requested prior to registering the Motor Vehicle in a local jurisdiction, submit proof of insurance.
2. **A member of the Foreign Mission Community who has become a U.S. citizen or a legal permanent resident, and will remain employed at the Foreign Mission:** Under **“TITLE TO:”**, select **“SELF**

*\*interactive form DS-2008 in “.pdf” format can be accessed from the list at the end of this section, completed on-line, and printed out for submission to your servicing OFM office*

*\*interactive form DS-2006 in “.pdf” format can be accessed from the list at the end of this section, completed on-line, and printed out for submission to your servicing OFM office*

**TERMINATING.”** Leave the field **“BUYER NAME”** blank. Submit DS-2006 (Notification of Change Identification Card Request)\*, and a copy of the Certification of Naturalization or the Alien Registration Receipt Card, or “green card.” If temporary license plates are being requested prior to registering the Motor Vehicle in a local jurisdiction, submit proof of insurance.

## Salvage

**An insurance company has declared a Motor Vehicle “totaled” or “too expensive to repair:”** A "salvage" title should be requested. Print the word **“SALVAGE”** on the top and bottom of the application. Under **“TITLE TO:”**, select **“SELL.”** Provide the name and mailing address of the insurance company or its designated agent in the field **“BUYER NAME”**. Indicate that the buyer **“IS NOT A FOREIGN NATIONAL ACTING AS AN OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE.”** Lastly, submit a brief explanation of what happened to the Motor Vehicle.

## Junk

**The owner has decided to sell a Motor Vehicle for use as parts or scrap:** A "junk" title should be requested. Print the word **“JUNK”** on the top and bottom of the application. Under **“TITLE TO:”**, select **“SELL.”** Provide the name and mailing address of the junkyard or scrap facility in the field **“BUYER NAME”**. Indicate that the buyer **“IS NOT A FOREIGN NATIONAL ACTING AS AN OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE.”** Lastly, submit a brief explanation of what happened to the Motor Vehicle.

## Lease

**Returning a Motor Vehicle to a leasing company:** Under **“TITLE TO:”**, select **“SELL.”** Provide the name and mailing address of the leasing company or its designated representative in the field **“BUYER NAME”**. Lastly, indicate that the buyer **“IS NOT A FOREIGN NATIONAL ACTING AS AN OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE.”**

## Exporting the Motor Vehicle

**A member of the Foreign Mission Community wanting to export a Motor Vehicle:** Under **“TITLE TO:”**, select **“EXPORT.”** Leave the field **“BUYER NAME”** blank. If temporary license plates, valid for 30 days, are being requested prior to exporting the Motor Vehicle, submit proof of insurance.

## Late Application for Title

Owners of Motor Vehicles will be allowed a 30-day grace period after termination of duties to complete the application for title process. OFM will charge a \$35 service fee for

processing applications for title received after the 30-day grace period.

## Reissuing a Title

OFM will also charge a service fee in the amount of \$35 for reissuing a Department of State title for a Motor Vehicle, as is the case, for example, where a duplicate title is required due to misplacement or damage of the initial title.

### 3.13 Converting a Non-conforming Motor Vehicle

Imported Motor Vehicles that do not conform to U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) safety and emissions standards may not be sold in the United States unless they are brought into compliance. If such Motor Vehicles are not brought into compliance, they must be exported once the Motor Vehicle is removed from the diplomatic registration program.

To bring into compliance, or “convert” a non-conforming Motor Vehicle to U.S. safety and emissions standards:

1. The Foreign Mission must advise OFM by diplomatic note of its intention to convert the Motor Vehicle to meet DOT and EPA standards and give the reason for doing so.
2. The diplomatic note must indicate the owner’s name; the Motor Vehicle’s identification number, year, make, model, and license plate assigned; and the Motor Vehicle’s date of duty-free entry into the United States.
3. If all criteria are met, OFM will respond in writing to authorize the conversion.
4. The owner must then go to any Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (“BCBP”) port of entry to complete the necessary customs forms regarding the Motor Vehicle and provide BCBP with a copy of OFM’s authorization for the conversion and documentation that establishes the Motor Vehicle’s arrival date and its dollar value at the time of duty free entry. In addition, the posting of a customs bond for three (3) times the value of the car is required to ensure the vehicle will be converted to meet DOT and EPA standards within the prescribed time limit.
5. The owner must convert the Motor Vehicle to meet the DOT and EPA standards within the time limit set and submit the necessary verification papers to both agencies (EPA allows 90 days for conversion; DOT allows 120 days). When both agencies have approved the Motor

Vehicle's conversion, the customs bond can be released to the Motor Vehicle owner.

6. Once DOT and EPA have approved the conversions, OFM will issue a title to allow the owner to sell the Motor Vehicle or to register it locally.

### 3.14 Driver Licenses

All members of the Foreign Mission Community are required to obtain a driver license from OFM. Applicants must prove their ability to operate a Motor Vehicle by submitting a copy of their current driver license and/or a certification that they have met all the driving requirements and passed all the necessary tests of the state in which they reside in the United States.

Applicants with a valid U.S. driver license are required to take a vision test.

Applicants with a valid foreign license are required to take at least a vision test to obtain a Department of State driver license. In addition, some applicants may also be required to pass a written test.

#### **International Driver Permit:**

- International driving permits do not qualify as an acceptable driver license for members of the Foreign Mission Community. Applicants who possess only an international driving permit must take and pass all tests required to obtain a driver license in the U.S. state where the applicant resides.

**Note:** OFM in Washington D.C. and in New York administers vision tests.

**Warning:** Under U.S. law, anyone operating a Motor Vehicle in any U.S. Jurisdiction must carry a valid driver license.

### 3.15 How to Obtain a Driver License or a Non-driver Identification Card

*\*link to "read only" form DS-1972 in ".pdf" format is provided in the form list at the end of this section. Until further notice, applicants must use the hard-copy form available from your servicing OFM office.*

#### **To Obtain a Driver License:**

1. Submit Form DS-1972 (United States Department of State Driver License Application)\*;
2. Affix one color photograph of the applicant to Block A of the DS-1972; and,
3. Submit proof of the applicant's qualification to operate a Motor Vehicle as set forth below in ***Specific Instructions.***

#### **Specific instructions:**

## Those with a U.S. Driver License

### **Applicants with a valid license from another U.S. jurisdiction:**

1. Submit a copy of the applicant's U.S. driver license;
2. Submit the results of a recent (not more than six months old) vision test. *Prescriptions are not acceptable.*

**Note:** If a vision test is the only requirement for licensing, the applicant may want to obtain certification from a recognized vision testing facility not associated with a local DMV, since some motor vehicle offices provide this service only in conjunction with other testing.

**Note:** The applicant's U.S. driver license must be surrendered to OFM in exchange for the Department of State driver license.

## Those with a Foreign Driver License

### **Applicants with a valid foreign driver license:**

Submit a copy of the applicant's valid foreign driver license; further instructions will be issued after the application has been reviewed by OFM.

## Those without any Driver License

### **Applicants without any driver license:**

- Submit certification of the applicant's successful completion of all required tests (including driver education, if applicable) of the jurisdiction where s/he resides. Please consult the state's DMV website for specific requirements.

## Those who do not Qualify for a Department Driver License

If the applicant is not eligible for a Department of State driver license, e.g., an employee whose status is "miscellaneous" or a dependent whose age precludes eligibility in accordance with guidelines established by the Department, OFM will return the application with a certification addressed to the appropriate licensing authority that the individual should be licensed by that local jurisdiction.

## Locations for Testing

Several states have indicated that they wish to designate certain offices to provide service to members of the Foreign Mission Community. Many of these states have not yet provided the names and locations of these offices to OFM. As soon as this information becomes available, OFM will communicate it to the Foreign Missions via letter to the administrative officer. In the Washington, DC metropolitan area mission members may obtain service from the following offices:

Maryland - Gaithersburg, Glen Burnie and Largo;  
District of Columbia - Bureau of Motor Vehicle Services;  
Virginia - All northern Virginia offices;  
New York – Herald Square, New York City;

## Non-Driver I.D.

### **Non-driver Identification Card:**

These cards can be issued to members of the Foreign Mission Community of licensing age who do not drive. The Non-Driver ID cards bear the photograph and signature of the applicant, unlike the tax exemption card that bears only the applicant's photograph. To obtain a non-driver ID:

1. Submit Form DS-1972; and
2. Attach one (1) recent color photographs to Block A. Photographs should be facial view, 1 ½" x 1 ½".

## Loss/Theft of a Driver License

Report the loss or theft of the Department of State driver license to OFM by letter or diplomatic note. OFM strongly recommends that this loss also be reported to local law enforcement authorities.

## 3.16 Replacing a Lost or Stolen Driver License

To request a duplicate driver license:

1. Submit Form DS-1972 (United States Department of State Driver License Application) to the letter or diplomatic note and indicate that it is an application for a duplicate license; and,
2. Attach one (1) recent color passport photograph not more than six months old.

## 3.17 Change of Residence Address

To report a change of residence address:

1. Submit Form DS-1972 (United States Department of State Driver License Application) and write "CHANGE OF ADDRESS" across the top of the application;
2. Submit a copy of the current U.S. Department of State driver license;
3. Submit one (1) color passport photograph not more than six months old; and,
4. Submit Form DS-2006 showing the new address, if it has not been submitted already.

**Note: Do not** surrender the current license until the replacement driver license (with the new address) has been issued.

## 3.18 Moving Violation, Driving Records, and the Point System

Foreign Missions are reminded that persons enjoying diplomatic or consular privileges and immunities have a duty under international law to respect the laws and regulations of the receiving state. Foreign Missions are also reminded that the Department of State takes the position that any fines incurred through the violation of local traffic ordinances should be paid. Failure to do so may result in the suspension of driving

privileges.

OFM maintains driving records on members of the Foreign Mission Community with a Department of State driver license. OFM also has a point system to record moving traffic violations. Everyone receiving a traffic ticket that carries a fine is expected to either pay the fine or contest the ticket in the appropriate court. If the ticket is contested, a court appearance is required. If appropriate, the Department of State will request that applicable immunities be waived by the sending government so that the member of the Foreign Mission Community may appear in court to contest the ticket. An express waiver of immunity must be granted before this can happen.

**Point System:** An accumulation of eight points on a driving record in a two-year period will cause a review and possible administrative action. A twelve-point accumulation within a two-year period will cause all license and driving privileges to be suspended. Habitual violation of traffic laws will result in the suspension or revocation of driving privileges. The Department will request the recall of any person who demonstrates a serious disregard for U.S. law or public safety.

### **Return of Driver License/ Non-driver ID Cards**

**Note:** Department of State driver licenses and non-driver identification cards are the property of the U.S. Government and must be returned to the Office of Foreign Missions upon request or within 30 days following the termination of eligible mission members from their diplomatic assignments in the United States.

Failure to return these items is considered a violation of Department regulations and may result in the imposition of administrative action.

If, after termination, a mission member needs proof of driving privileges, please contact OFM.

### **3.19 Commercial Driver Licenses**

The Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986 (Title XII, Public Law 95-570) requires that all operators of commercial class Motor Vehicles, e.g. those with a capacity of 16 occupants or more (“Commercial Motor Vehicle(s)” or “CMV”), be licensed in accordance with federal guidelines.

**Note:** At present, OFM does not issue commercial driver licenses (“CDL”). Foreign Missions buying CMV’s are encouraged to hire local drivers who already possess a CDL of

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the appropriate class to operate the CMV.

To obtain a CDL, an individual must take and pass all tests required in the U.S. state where the applicant resides. OFM will assist Foreign Missions by providing information on training and testing.

**Note:** No registration will be issued to a Foreign Mission for a CMV without proof that the operator possesses the appropriate CDL for that CMV.

## Forms Applicable to this Section

### ***OFM/DMV Forms:***

DS-100 **Application for Registration (Mission Vehicle)**

*interactive form in “.pdf” format can be accessed [here](#), completed on-line, and printed out for submission to the your servicing OFM office*

DS-101 **Application for Registration (Personal Vehicle)**

*interactive form in “.pdf” format can be accessed [here](#), completed on-line, and printed out for submission to the your servicing OFM office*

DS-102 **Application for Title**

*interactive form in “.pdf” format can be accessed [here](#), completed on-line, and printed out for submission to the your servicing OFM office*

DS-104 **Application for Replacement Plates**

*interactive form in “.pdf” format can be accessed [here](#), completed on-line, and printed out for submission to the your servicing OFM office*

DS-1972 **Driver’s License and Tax Exemption Card Application**

*“read only” form in “.pdf” format. It is provided for purposes of illustration only. Until further notice, applicants must use the hard-copy form available from their servicing OFM office.*

### ***Customs Forms:***

DS-1504 **Request for Customs Clearance of Merchandise**

*interactive form in “.pdf” format can be accessed [here](#), completed on-line, and printed out for submission to the your servicing OFM office*

## ***Protocol Forms:***

DS-2006 **Notification of Change/Identification Card Request**

*interactive form in “.pdf” format can be accessed here, completed on-line, and printed out for submission to the your servicing OFM office*

DS-2008 **Notice of Termination of Diplomatic, Consular and Foreign Government Employment**

*interactive form in “.pdf” format can be accessed here, completed on-line, and printed out for submission to the your servicing OFM office*

## ***Other Agency Forms:***

EPA 3520-1 **Declaration Form – Importation of Motor Vehicles and Motor Vehicle Engines Subject to Federal Air Pollution Regulations**

*“read only” form in “.pdf” format. It is provided for purposes of illustration only. Until further notice, applicants must submit the multi-copy form available at port of entry or from the Environmental Protection Agency.*

HS-7 **Declaration – Importation of Motor Vehicles and Motor Vehicle Equipment Subject to Federal Motor Vehicle Safety, Bumper and Theft Prevention Standards**

*“read only” form in “.pdf” format. It is provided for purposes of illustration only. Until further notice, applicants must submit the multi-copy form available at port of entry or from the National Highway Transportation Safety Agency.*