

810-5-1-.212 Undercover License Plates.

(1) License plate issuing officials may issue undercover license plates to law enforcement agencies in order to carry out investigations and surveillances (Attorney General Opinion 86-00271). Prior to the issuance of an undercover license plate, the license plate issuing official must ensure that the requesting law enforcement agency has obtained the appropriate state, county or municipal license plate from the Department of Revenue as provided under Section 40-12-250, Code of Alabama, 1975. The Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) is responsible for issuing state license plates to vehicles owned and operated by the ALEA.

(2) The following information must be provided on the Department of Revenue Application for Undercover License Plates, form MV UC:

- (a) Name of person applying for the undercover license plate,
- (b) Position of person applying for the undercover license plate,
- (c) Law Enforcement department or agency requesting the undercover license plate,
- (d) County in which the vehicle is based,
- (e) Vehicle Identification Number (VIN),
- (f) Vehicle year,
- (g) Vehicle make,
- (h) Vehicle model,
- (i) Vehicle color,
- (j) State, County, or Municipal License plate number assigned to vehicle,
- (k) If registration should appear in the state registration database,
- (l) Name and address as it should appear in the state registration database,
- (m) Signature of department head authorizing the issuance of the undercover license plate, and
- (n) Telephone number of person authorizing the issuance of the undercover license plate.

(3) If the undercover license plate record is to be reflected on the state registration database, the applicant should provide the name and address as it is to appear in the database (this may be a fictitious name and address). If the undercover license plate record is not to be reflected in the state registration database, the county license plate issuing officials should not upload the undercover license plate information to the database so that anyone performing a license plate query would receive a “no record” response.

(4) Pre-numbered standard license plates shall be issued free of charge for use on undercover motor vehicles, including automobiles, trucks, truck-tractors, trailers and recreational vehicles and are not subject to the payment of license taxes levied on motor vehicles.

(5) Law enforcement agencies often desire distinctive license plates for use on undercover vehicles as these plates do not reflect a county indicator. The Helping Schools and God Bless America pre-numbered license plates may be obtained for undercover vehicles without payment of any additional fee. For any other distinctive or collegiate license plate, additional fees must be collected.

(6) Undercover license plates may not be issued to vehicles owned/used by non-law enforcement agencies, even though law enforcement officials may work part-time security for these non-law enforcement agencies.

(7) The United States General Services Administration (GSA) requires that federal law enforcement agencies provide a copy of the Manufacturer’s Statement of Origin (MSO) with the Application for Undercover License Plates (form MV UC).

(8) The ALEA requires that employees of the ALEA return a copy of the completed Application for Undercover License Plates (form MV UC) to the secretary of the ALEA.

(9) It is critical that information involving undercover vehicles be kept confidential. Accordingly, license plate issuing officials should retain any documentation involved with the issuance of undercover license plates in a locked secure location, and access to this information must be strictly limited.

Author: Sherry Helms.

Authority: Section 40-2A-7(a)(5), Code of Alabama 1975

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