

Alabama Department of Public Safety
Alabama Department of Revenue
For Immediate Release

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Reminder: Mandatory Liability Insurance Required June 1

Montgomery, May 30, 2000—The Alabama Department of Public Safety joins the Alabama Department of Revenue in reminding motorists that beginning June 1, 2000, they will be required to carry proof of their current vehicle liability insurance in their motor vehicles.

The proof of insurance requirement is part of the recently-enacted mandatory automobile liability insurance law, passed during the 2000 Regular Session.

Drivers who are stopped by law enforcement for driving violations or equipment checks and cannot provide the requested proof of vehicle liability insurance can be fined up to \$500 for the first offense, if convicted. If convicted a second time, vehicle owners can face a fine up to \$1,000, or a six-month driver's license suspension, or face both fine and license suspension.

"The insurance card issued to the vehicle owner by his or her insurance company is the best proof of liability insurance," advised Col. James Alexander, Alabama Public Safety director.

"The insurance card contains the vehicle year model, vehicle make, vehicle identification number, name of the insured, name of the insurance company, policy number, and the effective and expiration dates of the policy. As policies expire and are renewed during the year, motorists are also reminded to replace their expired cards with new cards, showing current proof of insurance," added Alexander.

Other acceptable proof of insurance documents include:

- ▶ A temporary insurance card issued by the insurance company.
- ▶ A premium receipt or insurance binder issued by the owner's insurance agent.
- ▶ The current declaration page of a liability insurance policy.
- ▶ The actual liability insurance policy issued for the vehicle.
- ▶ A certificate of liability insurance issued by either the insurance company or its authorized agent.

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In the case of recently-purchased new or used vehicles and rental vehicles, liability insurance proof documents can also include the following:

- ▶ Pre-1975 year model used vehicles—a bill of sale (within the last 60 days) and a valid insurance card issued for the vehicle that was replaced by the recently-purchased vehicle.

- ▶ 1975 or later model new or used vehicles—the owner’s permit (yellow) copy of the title application and a valid insurance card for the vehicle that was replaced by the recently-purchased vehicle.

- ▶ Rental vehicles—a copy of the rental agreement specifying insurance coverage is sufficient.

Another important provision of the 2000 mandatory liability insurance law involves the repeal of the proof-of-insurance requirement at the time of vehicle registration, set by the 1999 law.

“Vehicle owners will not be required to show proof of insurance at the time they register their vehicles. The insurance proof requirement at the time of registration was repealed by the 2000 law and replaced with an insurance certification requirement, beginning Jan. 1, 2001,” explained State Revenue Commissioner Michael Patterson.

“The insurance certification requirement will be incorporated into the motor vehicle registration form. Currently, when registering a vehicle for the first time or renewing a vehicle’s registration, vehicle owners are required to sign the registration form, certifying the accuracy of the ownership and registration information shown on the form. Beginning Jan. 1, 2001, this certification will also include the insurance certification requirement. By signing the registration form, vehicle owners will indicate that the registration and ownership information shown on the form is correct and that the vehicle is currently insured. **No proof of insurance will be required at the time of registration, only a signature by the vehicle owner or the owner’s designated representative, indicating that the vehicle is insured.** A similar certification process will be used to accommodate mail-in and online motor vehicle registrations,” added Patterson.

Beginning January 2001, the Alabama Department of Revenue will begin randomly surveying vehicle owners to determine if owners are maintaining liability insurance as required under Act 2000-554. If an owner is found not to have insurance, the owner’s vehicle

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tag registration will be suspended. The owner must provide proof of insurance to the Revenue Department at the time of reinstatement and pay a \$100 registration reinstatement fee.

Subsequent offenses carry a four-month tag suspension, a \$200 reinstatement fee, proof of insurance at the time of reinstatement, and coverage of liability insurance for three years.

For more information concerning Alabama's mandatory liability insurance law, contact the Alabama Department of Public Safety at (334) 242-4445 or the Alabama Department of Revenue at (334) 353-2000.