

WAC 308-96A-560 Special license plates—Criteria for creation or continued issuance. (1) **What is a special license plate series?** For the purpose of this rule a special license plate series is one license plate design with a range of numbers and letter combinations to be determined by the department.

(2) **What is required for an organization to apply to create a new plate through the department?** The organization must submit a completed application packet, signature sheet and supporting documentation as required by law. Signature sheets must reflect that they are collected within three years of submission.

(3) **What are the design criteria for a special license plate series?**

(a) The jurisdiction must be located at the top of the license plate;

(b) The plate dimensions, bolt hole placement, and other features must comply with the *Department's Specialty Plate Design Guide*;

(c) Plate color usage must be readable by state tolling facilities or law enforcement plate readers, consistent with the department's published guidance; and

(d) Other criteria as established by the department.

(4) **What criteria are used to discontinue issuing special license plates?** A special license plate series may be canceled if:

(a) The department determines that fewer than 500 special license plates are purchased annually and fewer than 1,500 special license plates are purchased in any continuous three-year period. (Except those license plates issued under RCW 46.16.301, 46.16.305, and 46.16.324); or

(b) If the sponsoring organization does not submit an annual financial statement required by RCW 46.16.765 and certified by an accountant; or

(c) The legislature concurs with a recommendation from the department to discontinue a plate series created after January 1, 2003; or

(d) The state legislature changes the law allowing that plate series.

(5) **What information must be contained in the annual financial report?** The annual financial report must include all expenditures related to programs, fund-raising, marketing, and administrative expenses related to their special license plate(s). The report must include:

(a) The stated purpose of the organization receiving the special plate revenue;

(b) A message from the chair or director of the organization;

(c) Program highlights with a detailed list of how the funds were expended for those programs;

(d) List of special events the organization held to market their special plate for the current reporting year;

(e) A summary of financial information:

(i) Previous revenue received during current reporting year;

(ii) Total revenue received during current reporting year;

(iii) Summary of administrative expenses.

If an organization is disbursing funds through a grant program or to another nonprofit organization supporting Washington citizens, a list including the program and the organizations must be submitted which includes their name and amount received.

(6) **What steps are taken by the department if the annual financial report is not submitted as required or the special plate revenue is expended for purposes other than allowed by law?** The department will follow the guidelines as established in the organization's contractual agreement with the department:

- (a) Send a written notice of the violations to the organization;
- (b) The organization is given 30 days to correct the violation;
- (c) If the violation is not corrected, the department may immediately terminate the contract.

(7) **Can an organization have more than one special plate series?** No. Organizations cannot have more than one special license plate series except those issued before January 1, 2006. Those organizations that already have multiple special plate series may not have more.

An updated design of the current special license plates does not constitute more than one special plate series. The newest design supersedes the prior design. The assigned number and letter combination cannot be changed when a new plate design is created.

(8) **Are tribal license plates established pursuant to RCW 46.16A.230 subject to the requirements of this section?** No. Tribal license plates enacted through the compacting process described in RCW 46.16A.230 are exempt from the special license plate requirements established in this section.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 46.01.110 and 46.18.200. WSR 23-22-022, § 308-96A-560, filed 10/20/23, effective 11/20/23. Statutory Authority: RCW 46.01.110. WSR 11-01-118, § 308-96A-560, filed 12/20/10, effective 1/20/11; WSR 08-22-067, § 308-96A-560, filed 11/4/08, effective 12/5/08; WSR 07-20-110, § 308-96A-560, filed 10/3/07, effective 11/3/07. Statutory Authority: RCW 46.01.110, 46.16.135, 46.16.225, 46.16.490, 46.16.276. WSR 04-08-079, § 308-96A-560, filed 4/6/04, effective 5/7/04. Statutory Authority: RCW 46.01.110, 46.16.335, 46.16.276. WSR 01-10-069, § 308-96A-560, filed 4/30/01, effective 5/31/01. Statutory Authority: RCW 46.01.110 and 1997 c 291. WSR 98-01-151, § 308-96A-560, filed 12/22/97, effective 1/22/98. Statutory Authority: RCW 46.16.301, 46.16.324 and 46.01.110. WSR 95-11-043, § 308-96A-560, filed 5/10/95, effective 6/10/95. Statutory Authority: RCW 46.01.110. WSR 93-14-083, § 308-96A-560, filed 6/30/93, effective 7/31/93; WSR 91-03-091, § 308-96A-560, filed 1/18/91, effective 2/18/91.]