



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **DMV Reminds Motorists of New 2017 Laws**

**Sacramento** - With the New Year just around the corner, the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) wants to inform the public of several new laws or changes to existing law that, unless otherwise noted, take effect on January 1, 2017. The following are summaries of some transportation-related laws taking effect.

**Use of Electronic Wireless Devices (AB 1785, Quirk):** Driving a motor vehicle while holding and operating a handheld wireless telephone or a wireless electronic communications device will be prohibited, unless the device is mounted on a vehicle's windshield or is mounted/affixed to a vehicle's dashboard or center console in a manner that does not hinder the driver's view of the road. The driver's hand may only be used to activate or deactivate a feature or function on the device with the motion of a single swipe or tap of the driver's finger, but not while holding it. The law does not apply to manufacturer-installed systems that are embedded in a vehicle.

**Child Safety Seats (AB 53, Garcia):** This law requires a parent, legal guardian, or the driver of a motor vehicle to properly secure a child who is younger than 2 years of age in an appropriate rear-facing child passenger restraint system, unless the child weighs 40 or more pounds or is 40 or more inches in height (3 feet, 3 inches).

**Motorcycle Lane Splitting (AB 51, Quirk):** This law defines "lane splitting" as driving a two-wheeled motorcycle between rows of stopped or moving vehicles in the same lane. The law authorizes the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to develop educational guidelines relating to lane splitting in a manner that would ensure the safety of motorcyclists, drivers, and passengers. In developing these guidelines, the law requires the CHP to consult with specified agencies and organizations that have an interest in road safety and motorcyclist behavior.

**Vehicle Registration Fee (SB 838, Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review):** This law increases the vehicle registration fee on every vehicle or trailer coach from \$43 to \$53 beginning April 1, 2017.

**Environmental License Plate (SB 839, Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review):** This law increases the fee for the issuance of Environmental License Plates from \$43 to \$53, starting July 1, 2017. This law also increases the fee for the renewal, retention, transfer, or duplication of Environmental License Plates (personalized) from \$38 to \$43, starting January 1, 2017.

**Accident Reporting (SB 491, Committee on Transportation and Housing):** This law increases the minimum financial threshold for property damage that is required to be reported to the DMV from \$750 to \$1,000 when a driver is involved in a motor vehicle collision.

**Vehicle Safety Recalls (AB 287, Gordon):** This law enacts the Consumer Automotive Recall Safety (CARS) Act, and requires the DMV to include a general advisory regarding vehicle recalls and needed repairs on each vehicle registration renewal notice. This law prohibits a dealer or a rental car company from renting or loaning a vehicle with a manufacturer's recall no later than 48 hours after receiving the notice—until the vehicle has been repaired. This law gives a limited exception for a licensed dealer or a rental car company with a fleet of 34 or fewer loaner or rental vehicles. The law authorizes the DMV to suspend or revoke a vehicle dealer's license if they violate the CARS Act.

**Year of Manufacture License Plates (SB 1429, Nielsen):** This law expands the Year of Manufacture (YOM) license plate program to include vehicles and license plates manufactured through 1980. This law benefits owners of vintage motor vehicles who obtain license plates from the year corresponding to the vehicle's model-year, and wish to use those vintage plates in lieu of regular license plates. Such plates are commonly found from different sources, including relatives, garage sales, estate sales, etc. The program will include the blue and yellow license plates issued for use on California motor vehicles from 1970 until 1980.

**Background Checks of Drivers of Transportation Network Companies (AB 1289, Cooper):** A transportation network company (TNC) will be required to perform a comprehensive background check of all their drivers. This law also specifies penalties for a TNC that violates or fails to comply with this requirement. A TNC will be prohibited from contracting with, employing, or retaining a driver if they are registered on the U.S. Department of Justice National Sex Offender public website, has been convicted of specified felonies, or within the previous seven years, has been convicted of a misdemeanor assault or battery, domestic violence, or driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Any TNC in violation of the specified requirements is subject to a penalty of not less than \$1,000 or more than \$5,000 for each offense.

**Installing Counterfeit or Nonfunctional Air Bags (AB 2387, Mullin):** This law prohibits knowingly and intentionally manufacturing, importing, installing, reinstalling, distributing, or selling any device intended to replace an air bag system in any motor vehicle if the device is a counterfeit or nonfunctional air bag system, or does not meet federal safety requirements. The law also prohibits selling, installing, or reinstalling any device that would cause a vehicle's diagnostic system to fail to warn when the vehicle is equipped with a counterfeit, nonfunctional, or a case in which no air bag was installed. This violation is a misdemeanor punishable by a \$5,000 fine and/or up to a one year in county jail.

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