



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2007 Wisconsin Act 194
[2007 Senate Bill 20]

**Special Registration Plates for Fire
Fighters and Military Groups**

Under current law, the Department of Transportation (DOT) issues special distinguishing vehicle registration plates to members of certain authorized special groups, including fire fighters. Prior to 2007 Wisconsin Act 194, special fire fighter plates that had been issued to a person who ceased being a fire fighter were required to be disposed. Act 194 allows the surviving spouse of a fire fighter that has fire fighter plates and that dies in the line of duty to retain the special plates or to have the plates reissued within two years of disposal of the plates. DOT must also allow the surviving spouse to change from personalized plates to standard plates or from standard plates to personalized plates. Act 194 also allows a surviving spouse of a fire fighter who dies in the line of duty to receive fire fighter plates even if the decedent did not have fire fighter plates at the time of his or her death.

Also under current law, a number of groups who are military in nature also have special distinguishing registration plates. Prior to Act 194, DOT could allow surviving spouses of people who had been issued special military plates to keep the special military plates or have them reissued, and could allow such plates to be changed from personalized plates to standard plates or from standard plates to personalized plates. Act 194 directs DOT to allow the surviving spouse to keep the special military plates if requested, and also directs DOT to allow the surviving spouse to change the plates from personalized plates to standard plates or from standard plates to personalized plates upon request. An application to have military plates reissued to a surviving spouse must be submitted within two years of disposal of the plates.

Act 194 also allows a fire fighter, rescue squad member, or emergency medical technician who has special group plates in one of these three categories, and who suffers an injury in the course of his or her job duties that prevents him or her from subsequently performing these job duties, to retain the special plates. If such a person was required to surrender his or her special plates between September 1, 2007 and April 11, 2008, or had his or her plates expire during that time period, the Act requires the DOT to reissue the plate at no additional fee upon application by that person.

Effective Date: April 11, 2008.

Initial Applicability: This Act first applies to applications to retain special plates received by the DOT on April 11, 2008.

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This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>.