
Wisconsin Legislative Council

ACT MEMO



Prepared by: David Moore, Principal Attorney

December 19, 2025

2025 Wisconsin Act 50 [2025 Senate Bill 38]

Personalized Registration Plates for Gold Star Families

2025 Wisconsin Act 50 allows an individual who qualifies for Gold Star registration plates to personalize those plates without being subject to the personalization fee that applies to most registration plates.

BACKGROUND

Wisconsin law allows a person who has had an immediate family member die while serving in the U.S. armed forces and who meets the criteria under federal law for a Gold Star Lapel Button to apply for and receive “Gold Star” registration plates for his or her vehicle. Greatly simplified, the U.S. Department of Defense provides the Gold Star Lapel Button to the next of kin of members of the armed forces who have lost their lives during certain periods of hostilities or while engaged in certain types of military conflicts or actions.

Wisconsin law also permits a person to apply for a personalized a registration plate with a registration number composed of letters or numbers, or both, requested by the applicant. The Department of Transportation charges a \$15 annual fee, in addition to the regular registration fee, for the issuance, maintenance, or reissuance of most personalized plates.

2025 WISCONSIN ACT 50

The act provides that a personalization fee may not be charged for the personalization of Gold Star registration plates.

Effective date: December 11, 2025

For a full history of the bill, visit the Legislature’s [bill history page](#).

DM:jm