



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
DRIVER AND MOTOR VEHICLE SERVICES  
1905 LANA AVE NE, SALEM OREGON 97314

# Dispute of Ownership and Stolen Vehicle Information Sheet

DMV is an administrative agency and as such, **cannot assist you** in retrieving your vehicle or title, or provide you with any legal advice. This includes advising you on whether you need to seek legal assistance; how to file a court case; or how to obtain a restraining order to withhold issuance of a title.

## Administrative Notations on DMV Vehicle Records

Administrative notations can be added to temporarily stop a title from being transferred when:

- **Your title has been stolen and you believe your signature will be forged to release your interest in the vehicle.**

DMV must receive a police report or letter on official law enforcement letterhead showing that law enforcement is doing an investigation. It must include a statement that the title was reported stolen and the owner believes their signature will be forged to release their interest in the vehicle. Law enforcement may not take a police report if they consider the issue civil. If law enforcement considers the issue civil, you may want to:

- Resolve the dispute on your own.
- Resolve the dispute through a court of law.
- Obtain a court order, specifically restraining DMV from transferring title.

You should contact law enforcement if you are unsure whether your dispute is civil or criminal.

Send the police report or letter to us with a letter of explanation that has your name, address, and the vehicle information to: DMV Vehicle Programs, 1905 Lana Ave. NE, Salem OR 97314.

- **Your signature was forged to release your interest in a vehicle and the title has been transferred to another party.**

DMV will place an administrative notation on the vehicle record **only** when provided with a police report that indicates law enforcement is conducting an investigation concerning forgery. To retitle the vehicle in your name, along with other title requirements, DMV would need either:

- A court order that convicts the party on the title of forging your release of interest or falsely obtaining title; or
- A court order that extinguishes the interest of all owners shown on the title and awards the vehicle to you.

- **DMV receives a court order restraining us from transferring title.**

DMV will place an administrative notation on the vehicle record when we are specifically restrained by a court of law from transferring title. DMV remains bound by the restraining order until provided with a court order awarding ownership of the vehicle or evidence that the restraining order is no longer valid or has been lifted.

DMV cannot advise you on how to obtain a restraining order. You may wish to seek legal assistance for advice on whether a restraining order is necessary, or if other legal options are available to you.

**DMV will not place an administrative notation on a vehicle record for reasons other than what is described on page 1.** We will not place a notation for any of the following:

- Bankruptcy (even when papers indicate no transfers allowed)
- Divorce or domestic separation
- Estate distribution
- Friend or relative borrowed vehicle and never returned vehicle to owner
- Pending court litigation
- Possessory lien
- Registered owner not making payments to security interest holder
- Restraining order against other person
- Sold - insufficient bank funds
- Sold - seller never perfected security interest by transferring title to reflect their lien
- Stolen vehicle or stolen title and police won't take a police report because they consider the dispute civil rather than criminal

## **Stolen Vehicle**

Notify your local law enforcement agency and your insurance company if your vehicle has been stolen.

Before a title is issued, DMV checks NCIC (National Crime Information Center) to verify whether the vehicle has been listed as stolen. DMV contacts law enforcement and completes additional research to determine whether or not a title can be issued.

## **Stolen Title**

A replacement title can only be issued if the title is lost, destroyed, or mutilated **AND** someone is available to attest to the disposition of the title. **Stolen titles are only considered lost if an unknown party with no possible ownership interest stole the title. You cannot apply for a replacement title when you know, or believe you know, who stole the title.**