

CHAPTER 2019-66

Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 87

An act relating to registration and titling of vehicles and vessels; amending s. 320.055, F.S.; revising registration periods for certain vehicles; requiring the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to prorate registration renewals for customers in order to implement changes made by the act; amending s. 320.0609, F.S.; authorizing the department or its agent to verify necessary information through the electronic file of death records maintained by the Department of Health for a surviving spouse of a motor vehicle owner when requesting a registration certificate and license plate transfer; amending ss. 320.07 and 320.0705, F.S.; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; amending s. 328.01, F.S.; authorizing the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles or its agent to verify necessary information through the electronic file of death records maintained by the Department of Health for a new owner or surviving coowner of a vessel when applying for transfer of title; providing effective dates.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Effective September 1, 2020, paragraph (a) of subsection (1) and subsection (5) of section 320.055, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

320.055 Registration periods; renewal periods.—The following registration periods and renewal periods are established:

(1)(a) For a motor vehicle subject to registration under s. 320.08(1), (2), (3), ~~(4)(a) or (b)~~, (5)(b), (c), (d), or (f), (6)(a), (7), (8), (9), or (10) and owned by a natural person, the registration period begins the first day of the birth month of the owner and ends the last day of the month immediately preceding the owner's birth month in the succeeding year. If such vehicle is registered in the name of more than one person, the birth month of the person whose name first appears on the registration shall be used to determine the registration period. For a vehicle subject to this registration period, the renewal period is the 30-day period ending at midnight on the vehicle owner's date of birth.

(5) For a vehicle subject to apportioned registration under s. 320.08(4)(c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i), (j), (k), (l), (m), or (n) ~~s. 320.08(4)~~, (5)(a)1. ~~or~~; (e), (6)(b), or (14), the registration period shall be a period of 12 months beginning in a month designated by the department and ending on the last day of the 12th month. For a vehicle subject to this registration period, the renewal period is the last month of the registration period. The registration period may be shortened or extended at the discretion of the department, on receipt of the appropriate prorated fees, in order to evenly distribute such registrations on a monthly basis. For a vehicle subject to nonapportioned registration under

s. 320.08(4)(c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i), (j), (k), (l), (m), or (n) ~~s. 320.08(4), (5)(a) 1., (6)(b), or (14)~~, the registration period begins December 1 and ends November 30. The renewal period is the 31-day period beginning December 1.

Section 2. Beginning September 1, 2020, in order to implement the changes made by this act to s. 320.055, Florida Statutes, the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles shall give customers the option to renew their registrations on their dates of birth in 2021 or 2022. Customers whose dates of birth occur in the months of January through June may choose to renew for 1 to 18 months. Customers whose dates of birth occur in the months of July through December may choose to renew for 7 to 24 months.

Section 3. Subsection (7) of section 320.0609, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

320.0609 Transfer and exchange of registration license plates; transfer fee.—

(7) A surviving spouse of a registered owner of any motor vehicle may, upon presenting the death certificate, request a registration certificate and transfer of the registration license plate. If the surviving spouse does not present the death certificate, the department or its agent may verify the necessary information through the electronic file of death records maintained by the Department of Health.

Section 4. Effective September 1, 2020, paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section 320.07, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

320.07 Expiration of registration; renewal required; penalties.—

(2) Registration shall be renewed semiannually, annually, or biennially, as provided in this subsection, during the applicable renewal period, upon payment of the applicable license tax amounts required by s. 320.08, service charges required by s. 320.04, and any additional fees required by law.

(a) Any person who owns a motor vehicle registered under s. 320.08(4)(c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i), (j), (k), (l), (m), or (n) ~~s. 320.08(4), (6)(b), or (13)~~ may register semiannually as provided in s. 320.0705.

Section 5. Effective September 1, 2020, subsection (1) of section 320.0705, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

320.0705 Semiannual registration or renewal for certain vehicles.—

(1) The owner of a motor vehicle taxed under s. 320.08(4)(c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i), (j), (k), (l), (m), or (n) ~~s. 320.08(4)~~ or (6)(b) may register his or her vehicle semiannually, if the amount of license tax due annually is more than \$100 and the vehicle registration fee is not required to be apportioned, upon payment of a fee of \$2.50 for each semiannual registration.

Section 6. Paragraph (c) of subsection (3) of section 328.01, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

328.01 Application for certificate of title.—

(3)

(c) In making application for transfer of title from a deceased titled owner, the new owner or surviving coowner shall establish proof of ownership by submitting with the application the original certificate of title and the decedent’s probated last will and testament or letters of administration appointing the personal representative of the decedent. In lieu of a probated last will and testament or letters of administration, a copy of the decedent’s death certificate, a copy of the decedent’s last will and testament, and an affidavit by the decedent’s surviving spouse or heirs affirming rights of ownership may be accepted by the department. If the decedent died intestate, a court order awarding the ownership of the vessel or an affidavit by the decedent’s surviving spouse or heirs establishing or releasing all rights of ownership and a copy of the decedent’s death certificate shall be submitted to the department. If the new owner or surviving coowner does not present a copy of the death certificate, the department or its agent may verify the necessary information through the electronic file of death records maintained by the Department of Health.

Section 7. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this act, this act shall take effect July 1, 2019.

Approved by the Governor June 7, 2019.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 7, 2019.