

§ 20-183.4C. When a vehicle must be inspected; 10-day temporary license plate.

(a) Inspection. – A vehicle that is subject to a safety inspection, an emissions inspection, or both must be inspected as follows:

- (1) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision, a new vehicle must be inspected before it is delivered to a purchaser at retail in this State. Upon purchase, a receipt approved by the Division must be provided to the new owner certifying compliance. An inspection is not required if the vehicle was previously inspected by an affiliated dealership, or between dealerships having common or interrelated ownership, and the inspection occurred either within 180 days from the date of sale or within 300 miles from the mileage recorded at the date of sale.
- (1a) A new motor vehicle dealer who is also licensed pursuant to this Article may, notwithstanding subdivision (1) of this section, examine the safety and emissions control devices on a new motor vehicle and perform such services necessary to ensure the motor vehicle conforms to the required specifications established by the manufacturer and contained in its predelivery check list. The completion of the predelivery inspection procedure required or recommended by the manufacturer on a new motor vehicle shall constitute the inspection required by subdivision (1) of this section. For the purposes of this subdivision, the date of inspection shall be deemed to be the date of the sale of the motor vehicle to a purchaser.
- (2) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision, a used vehicle must be inspected before it is offered for sale at retail in this State by a dealer. Upon purchase, a receipt approved by the Division must be provided to the new owner certifying compliance. An inspection is not required if the vehicle was previously inspected by an affiliated dealership, or between dealerships having common or interrelated ownership, and the inspection occurred either within 180 days from the date of sale or within 300 miles from the mileage recorded at the date of sale. This subdivision does not apply to a used vehicle offered for sale in this State by an auctioneer pursuant to the judgment or order of any court, on behalf of receivers, trustees, administrators, executors, guardians, governmental entities, or other persons, appointed by or acting under a judgment or order of any court.
- (3) Repealed by Session Law 2007-503, s. 5, effective October 1, 2008.
- (4) Except as authorized by the Commissioner for a single period of time not to exceed 12 months from the initial date of registration, a new or used vehicle acquired by a resident of this State from outside the State must be inspected before the vehicle is registered with the Division.
- (5) Except as authorized by the Commissioner for a single period of time not to exceed 12 months from the initial date of registration, a vehicle owned by a new resident of this State who transfers the registration of the vehicle from the resident's former home state to this State must be inspected before the vehicle is registered with the Division.
- (5a) Repealed by Session Law 2007-503, s. 5, effective October 1, 2008.
- (6) A vehicle that has been inspected in accordance with this Part must be inspected by the last day of the month in which the registration on the vehicle expires.
- (7) A vehicle that is required to be inspected in accordance with this Part may be inspected 90 days prior to midnight of the last day of the month as designated by the vehicle registration sticker.

- (8) A new or used vehicle acquired from a retailer or a private sale in this State and registered with the Division with a new registration or a transferred registration must be inspected in accordance with this Part when the current registration expires unless it has received a passing inspection within the previous 12 months.
- (9) Repealed by Session Laws 2010-97, s. 3, effective July 20, 2010.
- (10) An unregistered vehicle may be registered with the Division in accordance with G.S. 20-50(b) for a period not to exceed 10 days prior to the vehicle receiving a passing inspection in accordance with this Part.
- (11) A person who owns a vehicle located outside of this State when its emissions inspection becomes due may obtain an emissions inspection in the jurisdiction where the vehicle is located, in lieu of a North Carolina emissions inspection, as long as the inspection meets the requirements of 40 C.F.R. § 51.

(b) Temporary License Plate. – The Division may issue a temporary license plate under and in accordance with G.S. 20-50(b) that is valid for 10 days to a person that authorizes the person to drive a vehicle whose inspection authorization or registration has expired.

(c) Exemption. – The Division may issue a temporary exemption from the inspection requirements of this Article for any vehicle that has been determined by the Division to be principally garaged, as defined under G.S. 58-37-1(11), in this State and is primarily operated outside a county subject to emissions inspection requirements or outside of this State. (1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 754, s. 1; 1997-29, s. 2; 2001-504, s. 11; 2007-481, s. 2; 2007-503, s. 5; 2008-190, s. 3; 2009-319, s. 2; 2010-97, s. 3; 2015-241, s. 29.35(a); 2018-42, s. 5; 2021-134, s. 10; 2021-147, s. 14.)