

Ownership in Doubt

Bonded Title or Three-Year Registration Only Without Title

Ownership in doubt is a process that allows a previous owner to contest a transfer for up to three years when appropriate ownership documents or release of interest is not available. If a claim is filed during the three years, ownership becomes a civil issue.

Steps to Apply for Ownership in Doubt

1. Verify if you need a Washington State Patrol (WSP) inspection.
 - Some items are exempt from WSP inspection. See reverse for details.
 - If your vehicle requires an inspection, go to a licensing office to complete a *Washington State Patrol Inspection Request* to take to your inspection.
2. Get a Washington State Patrol (WSP) inspection
 - Make an appointment online at <http://www.wsp.wa.gov/driver/schedule-a-vin/> or by phone at 360-654-1134. Appointments are added to the schedule 5 weeks out, 1 week at a time, on Tuesdays.
 - Return to a licensing office to get a transit permit for the date of your appointment, if needed.
3. After your inspection, bring all of these documents into a licensing office:
 - WSP Inspection report
 - All documents showing how you obtained ownership of the vehicle/vessel such as a bill of sale
 - If the vehicle was last titled or registered in another country, you will need to clear US Customs before bringing your paperwork into a licensing office
4. If you have all of the required documents, you will be able to register the vehicle in your name for three years but will not receive a title (Certificate of Ownership)
 - The previous owner has the opportunity to contest ownership and make a claim within the three-year period. This becomes a civil issue.
 - The vehicle can be sold within the three-year ownership in doubt period. The buyer completes the remainder of the three-year period. The seller must provide either a notarized bill of sale or a notarized release of interest and bill of sale.
 - At the end of the three-year ownership in doubt period the owner will need to apply for a title. A title will not automatically be issued.

Vehicles Exempt from WSP Inspections

These vehicles are exempt from WSP Inspections if they meet the conditions below:

- Mopeds
- Trailers with a scale weight less than 2,000 pounds
- Vehicles that are Not Eligible for Road Use, such as ORVs and ATVs, if the model year is 10 years old or older
- Travel trailers and park model trailers, if the model year is 10 years old or older
- Campers that are 10 years old or older
- Manufactured or mobile homes, regardless of the model year

Conditions for WSP Inspection Exemption

The vehicles on the above list are only exempt from a WSP Inspection if there is either:

- A Washington record or
- You have a valid ownership document issued by Washington or another jurisdiction AND there is NO release of interest

In place of a WSP Inspection, owners must provide:

- A notarized or certified *Vehicle Exempt from WSP Inspection for Bonded Title or Three-Year Registration Without Title Affidavit*. Only one owner needs to complete the form
- Legible etching or photograph of the VIN

Different Types of Ownership in Doubt: Registration Only vs Bonded Title

Registration Only allows people to register vehicles or vessels in their name for three years when they are unable to provide satisfactory evidence of ownership or releases of interest. The vehicle or vessel must have been acquired by purchase, exchange, gift, lease, or inheritance from the owner on record or an interim buyer.

Bonded Titles allow people to title a vehicle or vessel in their name with a bond when they are unable to provide satisfactory evidence of ownership or releases of interest. DOL will issue a restricted Certificate of Title that indicates "Bonded" in the Comments section.