186.170 Retention of receipt -- Display of registration plates -- Registration years.

(1) (a) Except as provided in this subsection and KRS 186A.127 and 186.045, the owner shall have the receipt issued by the cabinet through the county clerk constantly in his possession, and shall display the registration plate conspicuously upon the rear of the motor vehicle, except that the registration plate upon a semitrailer-tractor shall be displayed upon the front of the tractor.

(b) The owner's copy, or a reproduced copy thereof, of the registration receipt of every motor vehicle, except motorcycles, licensed under KRS 186.050 shall be kept in the vehicle at all times and shall be available for inspection.

(c) Plates shall be kept legible at all times and the rear plate shall be illuminated when being operated during the hours designated in KRS 189.030. No rim, frame, or other covering around the plate shall in any way obscure or cover any lettering or decal on the plate.

(d) If the cabinet has prescribed that plates shall continue in use, it shall each year, in addition to the registration receipt, select and give to the owner as further evidence of registration some insignia which may conveniently be attached permanently and conspicuously to the motor vehicle during each registration year. It shall be the duty of the owner to attach the insignia in the prescribed manner and no person may operate a motor vehicle unless the insignia is affixed upon it. The cabinet shall have placed on the insignia either figures, letters, writing, marks, or a combination thereof, which indicate that the motor vehicle has been registered and which in conjunction with the records of the cabinet make identity of the registrant readily ascertainable.

(2) The registration year for commercial vehicles, trailers, semitrailers, mobile homes, and recreational vehicles shall be from April 1 to March 31.

(3) At the discretion of the vehicle owner, the title to a motor vehicle may be held in the system and subsequently printed and mailed to the owner at the owner's request.

Effective: July 15, 2026

History: Amended 2026 Ky. Acts ch. 135, sec. 17, effective July 15, 2026. -- Amended 2022 Ky. Acts ch. 18, sec. 14, effective January 1, 2024. -- Amended 1998 Ky. Acts ch. 128, sec. 10, effective July 15, 1998. -- Amended 1996 Ky. Acts ch. 97, sec. 4, effective July 15, 1996. -- Amended 1994 Ky. Acts ch. 428, sec. 12, effective July 15, 1994. -- Amended 1988 Ky. Acts ch. 287, sec. 3, effective July 15, 1988. -- Amended 1986 Ky. Acts ch. 86, sec. 2, effective July 15, 1986; and ch. 431, sec. 12, effective July 15, 1986. -- Amended 1982 Ky. Acts ch. 395, sec. 9, effective July 15, 1982. -- Amended 1978 Ky. Acts ch. 239, sec. 7, effective June 17, 1978. -- Amended 1976 Ky. Acts ch. 133, sec. 9, effective June 19, 1976. -- Amended 1966 Ky. Acts ch. 139, sec. 11, effective January 1, 1967. -- Amended 1962 Ky. Acts ch. 62, sec. 9, effective June 1, 1963. -- Amended 1958 Ky. Acts ch. 82, sec. 5, effective January 1, 1960. -- Amended 1954 Ky. Acts ch. 153, sec. 5. -- Amended 1942 Ky. Acts ch. 78, secs. 5 and 10. -- Recodified 1942 Ky. Acts ch. 208, sec. 1, effective October 1, 1942, from Ky. Stat. sec. 2739g-11.