

Expedited Bill No. 14-26  
Concerning: Motor Vehicle Towing –  
Redemption of Vehicle - Proof of  
Ownership or Control (The Vehicle  
Recovery Act)  
Date: 4/28/2026 Draft No. 5  
Introduced: March 3, 2026  
Enacted: April 28, 2026  
Executive: \_\_\_\_\_  
Effective: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sunset Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ch. \_\_\_\_\_, Laws of Mont. Co. \_\_\_\_\_

## COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

---

Lead Sponsor: Councilmember Stewart  
Co-Sponsors: Council President Fani-González, Councilmembers Friedson, Evans, Glass, Council  
Vice President Balcombe, and Councilmembers Mink, Jawando, Katz, Luedtke, and Sayles

---

**AN EXPEDITED ACT to:**

- (1) specify procedures governing vehicle redemption;
- (2) require towing companies to accept alternative documentation that establishes ownership or lawful possession;
- (3) establish indemnification requirements associated with vehicle release;
- (4) provide enforcement mechanisms for misconduct related to the release of impounded vehicles; and
- (5) generally amend the law governing motor vehicle towing **[[and immobilization on private property]]**.

**[[By amending**

Montgomery County Code  
Chapter 30C, Motor Vehicle Towing and Immobilization on Private Property  
Section 30C-2]]

By adding

Montgomery County Code  
**[[Chapter 30C, Motor Vehicle Towing and Immobilization on Private Property  
Section 30C-8A]]**

Chapter 30D, Motor Vehicle Towing – Procedures for Police Tow  
Sections 30D-1, 30D-2, and 30D-3

<b>Boldface</b>	<i>Heading or defined term.</i>
<u>Underlining</u>	<i>Added to existing law by original bill.</i>
[Single boldface brackets]	<i>Deleted from existing law by original bill.</i>
<u>Double underlining</u>	<i>Added by amendment.</i>
[[Double boldface brackets]]	<i>Deleted from existing law or the bill by amendment.</i>
* * *	<i>Existing law unaffected by bill.</i>

*The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following Act:*



28           **(b)**    Scope. This Chapter applies to any tow companies responding to a police  
 29                    tow request for any participating police department, police employee, or  
 30                    authorized agency in Montgomery County when the officer or employee  
 31                    is acting within an official capacity.

32    **30D-2. Definitions.**

33            In this Chapter:

34                    Chief means the Chief of Police or a designee.

35                    Department means the Montgomery County Police Department.

36                    Impounded vehicle means a vehicle towed and stored at the direction of  
 37                    a Montgomery County police officer, police employee, or code  
 38                    enforcement specialist from the County's Abandoned Vehicle Section.

39                    Participating Agency means a county, federal, state, or city agency or  
 40                    municipality in Montgomery County that has entered into a  
 41                    Memorandum of Understanding with the Montgomery County Police  
 42                    Department, agreeing to abide by the Executive Towing Rules and  
 43                    Regulations.

44                    Police tow means a non-consensual tow. This is a tow constituted when  
 45                    a Montgomery County police officer or employee, or a police officer or  
 46                    employee from a participating agency, requests a tow truck and directs  
 47                    the tow.

48                    Redemption area means an area or building where a vehicle owner may  
 49                    pay any charges necessary to redeem a vehicle.

50                    Storage site means any land or building used by a towing service to store  
 51                    towed vehicles.

52                    Towing company means any individual, partnership, corporation,  
 53                    association, or other entity authorized by the Chief of Police to tow and  
 54                    store vehicles at the direction of a police officer or police employee.

Vehicle means a device that is able to transport persons or property on a public highway and is required to be registered pursuant to Title 13 of the Transportation Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, as amended.

Vehicle Owner means the person or persons in whose name the title to a vehicle is registered.

**[[30C-8A.]] 30D-3. Redemption of vehicle – proof of ownership or control.**

(a) [[Short title. This Section is known as “The Vehicle Recovery Act.”

(b)]] Redemption of impounded vehicle.

(1) Redemption by owner. To redeem an impounded vehicle, the vehicle owner must present the following to a towing company:

(A) either:

(i) a U.S. or state government-issued photo identification; or

(ii) a consular registration card from any country approved pursuant to Section 2-5 of the County Code; and

(B) proof of current vehicle registration [[issued by the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration, including]] or current temporary registration card issued to a permanent or metal registration plate[[documentation where applicable]].

(2) Redemption by authorized agent.

(A) If the vehicle owner is not present, [[a]] an impounded vehicle may be released to an [[authorized agent]] individual who is not the owner, but who demonstrates that they are authorized by the owner based upon presentation of:

- 81                   (i)    a notarized letter signed by the owner authorizing  
82                               release and custody of the impounded vehicle to the  
83                               named individual; or
- 84                   (ii)   a letter from an insurance company, lienholder, or  
85                               rental car company that indicates the [[agent]] named  
86                               individual is entitled to custody of the impounded  
87                               vehicle.
- 88                   (B)   In lieu of a letter under paragraph (2)(A), [[a]] an  
89                               impounded vehicle may be released to a family member or  
90                               household member of the owner upon presentation of:
- 91                   (i)    a photo identification issued by:
- 92                               (a)   the U.S. or state government;
- 93                               (b)   a foreign government; or
- 94                               (c)   a valid nonprofit organization registered in the  
95                                       state of Maryland; and
- 96                   (ii)   at least one form of documentation reasonably  
97                               establishing shared residence or familial relationship,  
98                               which may include:
- 99                               (a)   a utility or service bill, deed, mortgage  
100                                       statement, or current lease agreement that has  
101                                       the same residential address as shown for the  
102                                       registered vehicle;
- 103                               (b)   a birth certificate establishing a parent-child  
104                                       relationship;
- 105                               (c)   a marriage certificate; or

106 (d) other documentation deemed sufficient by the  
 107 towing company, consistent with County  
 108 regulations.

109 (C) *Indemnification.* A towing company must require, as a  
 110 condition of release to a person who is not the vehicle owner  
 111 or secured party, execution of an indemnification and hold  
 112 harmless agreement. The agreement must offer indemnity  
 113 by an individual who is not the vehicle owner or a secured  
 114 party for the benefit of the towing company on a form  
 115 prescribed by the [[Office]] Department, and the agreement  
 116 must include indemnification for any claims brought against  
 117 the towing company by the vehicle owner or the secured  
 118 party in connection with the release of the impounded  
 119 vehicle. Such indemnification must not extend to claims  
 120 arising from gross negligence or willful misconduct of the  
 121 County or towing company.

122 (D) *Prohibited conduct.* An authorized agent of a vehicle owner  
 123 or secured party must not:

124 [[(A)] (i) falsely state that the owner authorized the  
 125 release of a particular vehicle; or

126 [[(B)] (ii) provide any false or fraudulent information in  
 127 connection with redemption.

128 [[(c)] (b) *Enforcement.* A violation of this [[Section]] Chapter must  
 129 constitute a violation subject to enforcement under Section 30C-12.

130 [[(d)] (c) *Regulations.* The rules and procedures of this Chapter related to  
 131 police towing are set forth in COMCOR 30C.00.02 {Executive Towing  
 132 Rules and Regulations}.

133           **Sec 2. Expedited Effective Date.** The Council declares that this legislation is  
134 necessary for the immediate protection of the public interest. This Act takes effect on  
135 the date on which it becomes law.

136           **Sec 3. Sunset.** [[Section 30C-8A]] Chapter 30D must expire 4 years after its  
137 effective date, with no further force or effect of law.

*Approved:*



---

Natali Fani-González, President, County Council

April 28, 2026

Date

*Approved:*

---

Marc Elrich, County Executive

Date

*This is a correct copy of Council action.*

---

Sara R. Tenenbaum, Clerk of the Council

Date