

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: May 7, 2026
Effective: May 7, 2026
Sunset Date: _____
Ch. 15, Laws of Mont. Co. 2026

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

Boldface	<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:

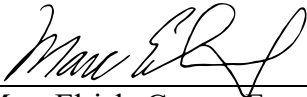


Natali Fani-González, President, County Council

April 28, 2026

Date

Approved:



Marc Elrich, County Executive

May 7, 2026

Date

This is a correct copy of Council action.



Sara R. Tenenbaum, Clerk of the Council

May 7, 2026

Date