

FAQs Persons with Disabilities

How do I obtain a disability parking placard or disability license plates?

An applicant must complete a Persons with Disabilities Certification for Parking Placard/License Plates form (VSD 62) certifying the disability by a licensed physician. If the applicant has a permanent disability, the form must be mailed to the Secretary of State's office (by either the physician or the applicant). Based on the information on the certification form, a disability parking placard and/or disability license plates will be issued.

If the applicant has a temporary disability, he/she may take the form to a Secretary of State facility and receive a temporary disability parking placard, which is good for up to six months, depending on the disability.

What recent changes were made to the Persons with Disabilities Parking Program?

New legislation establishes more stringent criteria for a person to park for free at parking meters in order to reduce fraud. The new two-tier system removes the ability for all persons with disability license plates and/or placards to park for free at metered spaces.

What are the new criteria a person must meet to qualify for free metered parking?

To be eligible for free metered parking, a person with a disability must hold a valid Illinois driver's license and be unable to do at least one of the following:

manage, manipulate or insert coins, or obtain tickets or tokens in parking meters or ticket machines in parking lots or parking structures, due to the lack of fine motor control of BOTH hands;

reach above his/her head to a height of 42 inches from the ground, due to a lack of finger, hand or upper-extremity strength or mobility;

approach a parking meter due to a wheelchair or other device for mobility; or

walk more than 20 feet due to an orthopedic, neurological, cardiovascular or lung condition in which the degree of debilitation is so severe that it almost completely impedes the ability to walk.

How were the new criteria for disabilities determined for meter-exempt parking privileges?

Criteria for meter-exempt parking was not established by the Secretary of State's office but rather set forth in legislation passed by the Illinois General Assembly.

What will the new placard look like?

The new meter-exempt disability parking placard will be yellow and gray striped.

When do the changes take effect?

Recertification of all existing disability placard and license plate holders will begin in April 2013. Current disability placard or license plate holders will receive a letter and certification renewal form in the mail from the Secretary of State, to be completed by the applicant and his/her certifying physician. Enforcement of the new parking program will take effect January 1, 2014.

Will individuals who do not meet the new criteria still be eligible for disability plates or parking placard?

Yes. All individuals who meet the existing disability criteria will still qualify for disability plates or a placard, which entitle them to park in accessible parking spaces. However, only those individuals who meet the new disability criteria will receive a new meter-exempt placard.

When will I get my new parking placard?

For permanent disability parking placards (blue or yellow/gray), you or your physician must mail the new Persons with Disabilities Certification for Parking Placard/License Plates form (VSD 62) to the Secretary of State's office at the address on the form. Please allow 45-60 days to process your application/certification form.

If you are applying for a temporary disability parking placard (good for up to six months depending on your diagnosis), you may visit a Secretary of State facility and be issued a red, temporary disability parking placard.

Once I get my new parking placard, can I still continue to use my old one?

No. Once you receive your new placard, you should destroy your old one.

I was previously issued a blue parking placard, but the Secretary of State has now issued me a yellow and gray placard. What is the difference?

If you received a yellow and gray placard, your disability meets the criteria allowing you to park for free at metered parking spaces.

Does the new yellow and gray disability parking placard still entitle me to park at designated disabled parking locations at malls, grocery and retail stores?

Yes. Both types of disability parking placards allow you to park at any designated disability parking space, with the exception of metered spaces, at which only holders of the new yellow and gray placards may park for free.

I used to be able to park at parking meters for free with my disability placard; can I continue this practice with my new placard?

You may only park for free at metered spaces if you have the new yellow and gray parking placard. If you have a blue or red placard, you must pay parking metered fees.

How will I know if a person is eligible to park for free at a metered parking space?

In addition to issuing the permanent (blue) and temporary (red) parking placards, the Secretary of State's office will issue a new placard that entitles eligible holders to park for free at meters. If a person has disability parking license plates, he/she also must display the new yellow and gray placard while parked at a meter. Disability license plates by themselves do not allow for parking at metered spaces.

What if I have a blue or red parking placard and I don't pay for metered parking?

You may be issued a ticket by local law enforcement for failure to pay meter fees. Citations vary by location.

I am the primary caretaker for an adult and/or child with disabilities. May I park in designated disability parking spaces or at metered spaces when I am transporting my client/child?

If you are the caretaker for an adult or child with disabilities, you must complete Part 2 of the Persons with Disabilities Certification for Parking Placard form VSD 62. This entitles you to utilize the handicap placard that is issued to the person with disability, allowing you to park in a designated parking spaces at malls, retail, and grocery stores when transporting the client/child. If the person with disability is issued a meter exempt placard, this entitles you to utilize the handicap placard at metered spaces to park for free when transporting the client/child. The person with disability must exit and enter the vehicle when parked in a handicap space or metered space.

I do not have an Illinois driver's license, but I have a disability that qualifies me for meter-exempt parking. What type of disabled parking privileges can I receive?

Only persons with an Illinois driver's license AND one of the qualifying disabilities are eligible for a meter-exempt disability parking placard. If you do not have the ability to drive, you do not meet the new criteria for a meter-exempt parking placard and will be issued a blue, non meter-exempt parking placard.

What if I feel that I qualify for meter-exempt parking but was issued a blue (non-exempt) placard?

You should discuss this with your family physician. Once the Secretary of State receives the certification form with the physician's diagnosis, the office will issue the appropriate disability parking placard. The Secretary of State's office is not authorized to supersede the diagnosis of a physician and issue a different type of parking placard.

I currently have disability license plates. Will I qualify for meter-exempt parking under the new program?

Anyone with Illinois Persons with Disabilities license plates or Disabled Veteran license plates must complete the Persons with Disabilities Certification for Parking Placard VSD 62 and obtain a valid parking placard to utilize the plates. The Secretary of State's office will issue a parking placard based on the information provided by the physician on the certification form. Your physician will determine if you meet the qualifications for a meter-exempt parking placard.

What happens if my placard is lost or stolen?

If your placard is lost or stolen, you must submit an Application for Replacement Disability Parking Placard (VSD 415). The cost for a replacement placard is \$10.

I own more than one car; can I get a parking placard for each vehicle?

No. Only one disability parking placard will be issued to an applicant. A parking placard issued by the Secretary of State's office may be used in any vehicle, provided the placard holder is either a driver or passenger and will be entering or exiting the vehicle while it is parked in the designated disability parking space.

Is there a fee for a parking placard or disability plates from the Secretary of State's office?

Disability parking placards are free to eligible Illinois residents. Disability license plates cost \$29 for a transfer fee in addition to the annual registration renewal fee (\$151).

Is my disability parking placard or license plate recognized in other states and foreign countries?

Most states and some foreign countries honor Illinois' disability license plates and placards. However, like Illinois, some jurisdictions may not allow free parking, even with an Illinois meter-exempt parking placard. You should contact the law enforcement agency of the community you will be visiting to find out if there are any special disability parking ordinances.

I have an out-of-state disability parking placard/license plates, but I visit Illinois frequently. Can I continue to use my disability parking placard/license plate for parking in Illinois after the changes in the law?

Your out-of-state disability parking placard/license plates will be recognized by Illinois. However, it will not be recognized and does not qualify the holder for meter-exempt parking. If you park your vehicle in a space containing a parking meter, you are required to pay any fees associated with using the parking space.