Abandoned Vehicle FAQ:

What has changed with the abandoned vehicle process?

Senate Bill 2848 was passed this year and implemented new changes to the abandoned vehicle process including requiring the use of a third-party vendors for sending certified mail notices, shortening the time in which a notice must be sent, adding online posts for towing notifications, and implementing a simplified process for scrap/salvage vehicles. This law went into effect on July 1, 2026.

Who are the approved third-party vendors?

As of July 15, 2026, Auto Data Direct is the only approved third-party vendor.

What are the new rules for letters?

For vehicles which are not total loss/ scrap vehicles, two letters must be sent to owners and lienholders to notify them of the tow.

First Letter: Must be sent by certified mail using a third-party vendor with postmark 7 days after the initial tow. It will include the towing and storage charges due and inform the owner and lienholder that they have 30 days from the initial tow to reclaim their vehicle.

Second Letter: Must be sent 30 days after the initial tow via certified mail using a third-party vendor. It will inform the owners and lienholders of the storage and towing costs and include the time, date, and location of a public sale. It will also inform the recipient that they have 10 days from the date of the letter to reclaim the vehicle, or it will be sold by auction.

How will the online notifications be done?

Approved Vendor -Auto Data Direct notifications - When the first letter is sent, key information will be added to CarLocate.com to allow owners and lienholders to search by VIN or tag to locate their vehicle. When the second letter is sent, the post on CarLocate.com will be updated to reflect the auction information.

Note: This information will be updated to reflect the websites for each approved third-party vendors.

What if the vehicle is considered scrap/salvage/total loss?

If the vehicle has no value and is going to be sold to a scrap metal processor, used auto parts dealer, or otherwise be destroyed or dismantled, the tower must send the first letter as outlined above.

If the vehicle is not reclaimed within 30 days of the letter, the tower must notify the DOR that they intend to sell the vehicle and provide evidence that they have complied with the notification requirements.

If the DOR receives sufficient evidence, they will remove the lien and notify the tower that they may commence with the sale or destruction of the vehicle.

How do I notify the DOR that I intend to sell a salvage vehicle?

Towers may notify the DOR of their intention to sell the vehicle either directly or via a third party.

The DOR is working on a method to allow the third-party vendor to notify them of the vehicles and send documentation, but it is not available at this time. Once the DOR can receive information from the third-party vendor, a method will be implemented in order to directly send these request to the DOR for review. As updates are known on the DOR timeline, they will be provided.

In the meantime, towers may notify the DOR directly by sending proof of compliance with notification to abandonments@dor.ms.gov. The DOR will then work directly with the tower to notify them of other documentation needed or approval for sale.

Towers may export their completed packet from the third-party vendor to assist in providing proof of compliance to the DOR.

Are newspaper notifications still required?

Yes, if the vehicle is not a salvage vehicle. The law change added online notifications to allow owners and lienholders to locate vehicles more easily, but it still requires newspaper notices for abandoned vehicle.

For normal abandoned vehicles, the towing company shall publish for two (2) consecutive weeks a notice of sale in the newspaper having circulation in the county where the vehicle was initially towed.

If the identity of the last registered owner cannot be determined, or if the registration contains no address for the owner, or if it is impossible to determine with reasonable certainty the identity and addresses of all lienholders, notice by three publications once each week for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the county where the motor vehicle was abandoned shall be sufficient to meet all requirements of notice.

Does the third-party vendor assist with newspaper notices?

The current approved vendor, Auto Data Direct is unable to assist with sending newspaper notices.

Note: This information will be updated to reflect the newspaper notices for each approved third-party vendors.

Where can I read the final language of Senate Bill 2848?

The final bill language can be found below:

https://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2026/pdf/SB/2800-2899/SB2848SG.pdf

Where can I get the latest information from the DOR about this process?

Any updates or clarifications on this process will be posted by the DOR at the following web address:

https://www.dor.ms.gov/motor-vehicle/motor-vehicle-titles/abandoned-vehicles

When will the new process be required?

For those vehicles that were towed on or after July 1, 2026.