

Pennsylvania Clean Vehicles (PCV) Program

Cars and trucks are a significant source of smog-forming pollutants, such as volatile organic compounds (VOC) and oxides of nitrogen (NOx), and also contribute to other air toxics, such as benzene. The federal Clean Air Act allows states to either adopt the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) vehicle emission standards, also referred to as federal standards, or adopt California's vehicle emission standards. Historically, California's emission standards have been more stringent than federal standards and result in increased emission reductions from light-duty vehicles.

To achieve higher emission reductions, Pennsylvania has adopted the California vehicle emission standards. The PCV Program requires that new passenger cars and light-duty trucks, model year 2008 or newer, with fewer than 7,500 miles on the odometer, that are sold, leased, purchased, titled, or registered in Pennsylvania, be certified to emissions standards set by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). The PCV Program also requires manufacturers to meet fleet average emission standards for certain pollutants. Additionally, Pennsylvania has adopted California's greenhouse gas (GHG) provisions, although Pennsylvania does not require automakers to comply with a Pennsylvania-specific fleet-wide GHG average.

Information on this program can be found at both Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection ([DEP](#)) and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation ([PennDOT](#)) websites.

Q. Who is subject to the requirements of the PCV Program?

- A. Pennsylvania residents who are purchasing a new passenger car or light-duty truck (8,500 pounds gross vehicle weight or less) that is model year 2008 or newer, with fewer than 7,500 miles on the odometer, must ensure the vehicle meets the requirements of the PCV Program prior to purchasing, leasing, titling, or registering the vehicle.

Q. Are there exemptions from the requirements of the PCV Program?

- A. There are several exemptions for this program including, but not limited to: emergency vehicles; vehicles transferred exclusively for off-road use; vehicles granted a national security or testing exemption; vehicles transferred by inheritance or court decree; a vehicle titled and registered while the owner was a resident of another state and the owner is moving to Pennsylvania; and replacement of a vehicle that is damaged, became inoperative, is beyond reasonable repair, or was stolen while the resident is out of state. The exemptions are listed on the PennDOT Form MV-9 and in the PCV regulation. Form MV-9 can be found at PennDOT's Pennsylvania Clean Vehicles Program website.

Q. How to tell if the vehicle is CARB-certified?

- A. If the vehicle is purchased in Pennsylvania, the dealer should be selling compliant vehicles. Titling agents in Pennsylvania should also be verifying the emissions certification before submitting the titling paperwork to PennDOT. There are two sources for titling agents or consumers to check to verify the vehicle emission certification:
 - A document that the manufacturer provides the dealer (MSO, a Manufacturer's Statement of Origin, or MCO, a Manufacturer's Certificate of Origin) will usually state the emission certification of the vehicle. This document must accompany the title application for a new vehicle and is the document that a titling agent will most likely review for the vehicle's CARB certification. If the vehicle is CARB-certified, the MSO or MCO will usually contain language clearly stating that the vehicle is approved or certified for use or sale in California or in "all 50 states." If this language is not present on the MSO or MCO, the titling agent or the consumer should refer to the next bullet.
 - Every vehicle is required to have a Vehicle Emission Control Information (VECI) label placed in an accessible spot in the engine compartment or on the underside of the hood of the vehicle. This label will list, at minimum, the federal emission certification level. The VECI label will also list the California emission certification level if the vehicle is CARB-certified. If the label lists "N/A" or "not for sale in California" under the California section, the vehicle is not CARB-certified and cannot be titled in Pennsylvania unless it meets one of the exemptions in the PCV Program. If the label lists "LEV," "ULEV," "SULEV," "PZEV," or "ZEV," the vehicle is CARB-certified and can be titled in Pennsylvania. Different language may appear under the California section. Please contact the DEP if you need confirmation on whether or not the language on the VECI label indicates CARB certification.

If a vehicle does not have an MSO or MCO, the purchaser will need to fill out an additional self-certification form (PennDOT Form MV-9) as part of the title paperwork, verifying that the vehicle is CARB-certified (via checking the VECI label) or that it meets an exemption.

Q. Can a vehicle be purchased from another state?

- A. Yes, as long as the vehicle is CARB-certified. A vehicle that is not CARB-certified and does not meet any of the exemptions will be denied a Pennsylvania title. If the MSO or MCO is not available for the vehicle, submit PennDOT Form MV-9 with the titling paperwork, verifying the emissions certification. Form MV-9 can be found at PennDOT's PCV Program [website](#).

Q. Does this program affect used cars?

- A. Generally, no. If, however, the used vehicle is model year 2008 or newer, and has fewer than 7,500 miles on the odometer, the vehicle is still considered new under the program and is required to be CARB-certified to obtain a Pennsylvania title.

Q. Do the PCV Program requirements apply to diesel, hybrid electric, electric, or other alternative fuel vehicles?

- A. Yes, the requirements apply if the vehicle meets the other applicability standards (namely model year, weight, and mileage). There are CARB-certified versions available for many, but not all, of these types of vehicles. Executive orders identifying the CARB-certified vehicles can be found on CARB's website at www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/onroad/cert/cert.php. Follow the instructions on the website for identifying certified non-gasoline vehicles. Additionally, the MSO, MCO, or VECI label will list the vehicle's emission certification.

Q. What to do if the title application is rejected by PennDOT because the vehicle is not CARB-certified?

- A. Contact DEP, Bureau of Air Quality, at 717-787-9495 or by email at RA-epcleanvehicles@pa.gov. Contacting DEP does not guarantee that the vehicle will receive a Pennsylvania title. DEP will work with the owner to determine if the vehicle meets one of the program's exemptions. DEP will also explain to the vehicle owner the potential options available to remedy the situation.

Q. If a vehicle purchased for use in Pennsylvania is not CARB-certified, are there any types of mechanical or technological repairs or products that can be installed to make the vehicle CARB-certified?

- A. There are no repairs or aftermarket fixes that can make a vehicle CARB-certified if it was not CARB-certified at manufacture. A summary of the certification process for new light-duty vehicles can be found at www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/onroad/cert/cert.php.

Q. An owner wants to convert their vehicle to operate on an alternative fuel. Does the conversion system need to be CARB-certified?

- A. DEP allows both EPA- and CARB-certified aftermarket alternative fuel conversion kits to be used on vehicles that are still subject to the PCV Program requirements. DEP published a [guidance document](#) titled "Policy on Clean Alternative Fuel Conversion Systems" explaining DEP's position on alternative fuel conversion systems. This document can also be found on DEP's Pennsylvania Clean Vehicles [website](#) under Program Guidance at www.dep.pa.gov. The guidance applies only to conversion systems and does not address new vehicles as built by the manufacturer, referred to as "Original Equipment Manufacturer" (OEM) vehicles. OEM non-gasoline or bi-fuel vehicles are still required to be CARB-certified to be titled in Pennsylvania.

Q. Who to contact with questions or concerns?

- A. The regulation establishing the PCV Program is codified at 25 Pa. Code §§ 126.401 - 126.451, which can be found at www.pacode.com. For questions about the PCV Program, visit DEP's website at www.dep.pa.gov, enter search term "Clean Vehicles" or contact DEP, Bureau of Air Quality, by telephone at 717-787-9495 or by email at RA-epcleanvehicles@pa.gov.

For more information, visit www.dep.pa.gov.