



General Assembly

**Substitute Bill No. 279**

February Session, 2024



**AN ACT CONCERNING CERTIFICATION FOR REMOVABLE WINDSHIELD PLACARDS FOR PERSONS WHO ARE BLIND AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE ACCESSIBLE PARKING ADVISORY COUNCIL.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (b) of section 14-253a of the 2024 supplement to  
2 the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
3 thereof (*Effective October 1, 2024*):

4 (b) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall accept applications  
5 and renewal applications for removable windshield placards from (1)  
6 any person who is blind, as defined in section 1-1f; (2) any person with  
7 disabilities; (3) any parent or guardian of any person who is blind or any  
8 person with disabilities, if such person is under eighteen years of age at  
9 the time of application; (4) any parent or guardian of any person who is  
10 blind or any person with disabilities, if such person is unable to request  
11 or complete an application; and (5) any organization which meets  
12 criteria established by the commissioner and which certifies to the  
13 commissioner's satisfaction that the vehicle for which a placard is  
14 requested is primarily used to transport persons who are blind or  
15 persons with disabilities. Except as provided in subsection (c) of this  
16 section, on and after October 1, 2011, the commissioner shall not accept  
17 applications for special license plates, but shall accept renewal  
18 applications for such plates that were issued prior to October 1, 2011.

19 No person shall be issued a placard in accordance with this section  
20 unless such person is the holder of a valid motor vehicle operator's  
21 license, or identification card issued in accordance with the provisions  
22 of section 1-1h. The commissioner [is authorized to] may adopt  
23 regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, for the  
24 issuance of placards to persons who, by reason of hardship, do not hold  
25 or cannot obtain an operator's license or identification card. The  
26 commissioner shall maintain a record of each placard issued to any such  
27 person. Such applications and renewal applications shall be on a form  
28 prescribed by the commissioner. The application and renewal  
29 application shall include: (A) Certification by a licensed physician, a  
30 physician assistant, an advanced practice registered nurse, licensed in  
31 accordance with the provisions of chapter 378, or a member of the driver  
32 training unit for persons with disabilities established pursuant to  
33 section 14-11b, that the applicant meets the definition of a person with a  
34 disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk, as defined in 23  
35 CFR [Section] 1235.2, as amended from time to time; or (B) certification  
36 by a psychiatrist who is employed by, or under contract with, the United  
37 States Department of Veterans Affairs that the applicant (i) is a veteran,  
38 as defined in subsection (a) of section 27-103, who has post-traumatic  
39 stress disorder certified as service-connected by the United States  
40 Department of Veterans Affairs, and (ii) meets the definition of a person  
41 with a disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk, as defined  
42 in 23 CFR [Section] 1235.2, as amended from time to time. In the case of  
43 persons who are blind, the application or renewal application shall  
44 include certification of legal blindness made by the Department of  
45 Aging and Disability Services, an ophthalmologist or an optometrist.  
46 Any certification issued by a health care professional, as defined in  
47 section 2 of this act, pursuant to this section shall be based upon such  
48 person's professional opinion after having completed a medically  
49 reasonable assessment of the applicant's medical history and current  
50 medical condition made in the course of a bona fide health care  
51 professional-patient relationship. Any person who makes a certification  
52 required by this subsection shall sign the application or renewal  
53 application under penalty of false statement pursuant to section 53a-

54 157b. The commissioner, in said commissioner's discretion, may accept  
55 the discharge papers of a disabled veteran, as defined in section 14-254,  
56 in lieu of such certification. The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles may  
57 require additional certification at the time of the original application or  
58 at any time thereafter. If a person who has been requested to submit  
59 additional certification fails to do so within thirty days of the request, or  
60 if such additional certification is deemed by the Commissioner of Motor  
61 Vehicles to be unfavorable to the applicant, the commissioner may  
62 refuse to issue or, if already issued, suspend or revoke such special  
63 license plate or placard. The commissioner shall not issue more than one  
64 placard per applicant, except the commissioner shall issue one placard  
65 to each applicant who is a parent or guardian of any person who is blind  
66 or any person with disabilities, provided no more than two such  
67 placards shall be issued on behalf of such person. The fee for the  
68 issuance of a temporary removable windshield placard shall be five  
69 dollars. Any person whose application has been denied or whose special  
70 license plate or placard has been suspended or revoked shall be afforded  
71 an opportunity for a hearing in accordance with the provisions of  
72 chapter 54.

73 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2024*) (a) As used in this section, (1)  
74 "health care professional" means a licensed physician, physician  
75 assistant, advanced practice registered nurse licensed in accordance  
76 with the provisions of chapter 378 of the general statutes, psychiatrist  
77 who is employed by, or under contract with, the United States  
78 Department of Veterans Affairs, ophthalmologist or optometrist, (2)  
79 "person" has the same meaning as provided in section 14-1 of the general  
80 statutes, and (3) "removable windshield placard" has the same meaning  
81 as provided in section 14-253a of the general statutes, as amended by  
82 this act.

83 (b) No health care professional shall charge a fee for the provision of  
84 services to an applicant for a removable windshield placard that is  
85 contingent on such health care professional certifying that such  
86 applicant meets the definition of a person with a disability which limits  
87 or impairs the ability to walk, as defined in 23 CFR 1235.2, as amended

88 from time to time.

89 (c) No health care professional shall enter into any written or oral  
90 agreement or understanding with a person who utilizes the services of  
91 such health care professional that makes or has the effect of making the  
92 amount of the health care professional's commissions, fees or charges  
93 contingent upon the health care professional certifying an application or  
94 renewal application for a removable windshield placard that an  
95 applicant meets the definition of a person with a disability which limits  
96 or impairs the ability to walk, as defined in 23 CFR 1235.2, as amended  
97 from time to time.

98 (d) Any person who violates any provision of this section may be  
99 assessed a civil penalty of not more than one thousand dollars. The  
100 Attorney General, upon complaint of the Commissioner of Motor  
101 Vehicles, shall institute a civil action to recover such penalty in the  
102 superior court for the judicial district of Hartford.

103 Sec. 3. Subsection (b) of section 14-253c of the 2024 supplement to the  
104 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
105 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

106 (b) The advisory council shall consist of (1) the Commissioner of  
107 Motor Vehicles or the commissioner's designee, (2) the Commissioner of  
108 Aging and Disability Services or the commissioner's designee, (3) two  
109 members appointed by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, who are  
110 licensed physicians, physician assistants or advanced practice registered  
111 nurses who certify applications for removable windshield placards  
112 while in the course of employment, (4) one member appointed by the  
113 Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services who represents an  
114 organization that advocates on behalf of persons with physical  
115 disabilities, (5) one appointed by the House chairperson of the joint  
116 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
117 matters relating to transportation, [who is a municipality planner,] (6)  
118 one appointed by the Senate chairperson of the joint standing committee  
119 of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to

120 transportation, who uses accessible parking or advocates on behalf of  
 121 such users, [of accessible parking,] (7) one appointed by the House  
 122 ranking member of the joint standing committee of the General  
 123 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to transportation, who  
 124 uses accessible parking or advocates on behalf of such users, [of  
 125 accessible parking,] (8) one appointed by the Senate ranking member of  
 126 the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having  
 127 cognizance of matters relating to transportation, who is a sworn  
 128 member of a municipal police department, and (9) and such other  
 129 members as the advisory council may prescribe. All initial  
 130 appointments to the advisory council shall be made not later than  
 131 September 1, 2023. Each member appointed pursuant to subdivisions (3)  
 132 to (9), inclusive, of this subsection shall serve for a term of two years and  
 133 may serve until such member's successor is appointed. Any vacancy  
 134 shall be filled by the appointing authority. The Commissioner of Motor  
 135 Vehicles, or the commissioner's designee, shall serve as chairperson of  
 136 the advisory council. The advisory council shall meet at such times as it  
 137 deems necessary and may establish rules governing its internal  
 138 procedures.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2024</i>	14-253a(b)
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2024</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	14-253c(b)

**Statement of Legislative Commissioners:**

In Section 1(b) and Section 2, references to "medical professional" were changed to "health care professional" for consistency and in Section 1(b) "as defined in section 2 of this act" was added for clarity.

**TRA**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*