Members Brief

An informational brief prepared by the LSC staff for members and staff of the Ohio General Assembly

Author: Larry Gunter, Research Analyst
Reviewer: Margaret Marcy, Assistant Division Chief

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Motor Vehicle Registration Cost

State law requires payment of certain taxes and fees when registering a passenger car. The registration costs paid by a passenger car owner consists of the base annual license tax ($20), an additional registration application fee ($16), an alternative-fuel vehicle fee (which varies depending on the type of vehicle and applies only to certain vehicles), a deputy registrar fee ($8), and a local motor vehicle tax (which varies from $0-$30 depending on the taxing district). Fees also apply for a new license plate, and there is an annual fee for a county identification sticker to be placed on a license plate. Because of the variability of some of the taxes and fees, individual passenger car owners will pay different amounts to register their vehicles depending on where they live, the type of vehicle, and whether new license plates are purchased.

The Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) in the Department of Public Safety (DPS) is responsible for registering vehicles throughout the state. The vast majority of these vehicles are passenger cars. A passenger car is any motor vehicle that is designed and used for carrying not more than nine persons and includes any motor vehicle that is designed and used for carrying not more than 15 persons in a ridesharing arrangement. According to DPS, over 9 million passenger cars were registered in Ohio in 2025.[1]

Annual passenger car registration cost

The general taxes and fees for registering a standard passenger car, powered only by an internal combustion engine, are specified in Table 1 below. The taxes and fees for registering alternatively fueled passenger cars are specified in Table 2 below. The fees for issuing one license plate are specified in Table 3, and the fees for issuing two license plates are specified in Table 4 (note: Ohio requires only one license plate, but a person may purchase two). Additional fees may apply in nonstandard circumstances, including those highlighted in the footnotes of this memorandum.

[1] See Tax Distribution – Detailed Statement of Motor Vehicle Registrations for a list of vehicles that were registered in Ohio in 2025.

Additionally, the fees listed below are for a single-year registration. Passenger car owners have the option of registering their vehicles for multiple years, up to five years. In that case, the owner generally pays the single year fees multiplied by the number of years the car is being registered.[2]

Table 1. Passenger vehicle registration base cost

Description	Revised Code	Amount
Annual license tax for passenger car registration[3]	R.C. 4503.04(B)	$20
Additional application fee[4]	R.C. 4503.10(C)(1)	$16
Deputy registrar fee	R.C. 4503.10(D) and 4503.038(A)	$8
Permissive local taxes	Chapter 4504.	Up to $30[5]
Total		**Generally, $44 to $74**

Table 2. Motor vehicles using an alternative fuel source

Description	Revised Code	Amount
Additional fee: hybrid motor vehicle	R.C. 4503.10(C)(3)	$100
Additional fee: plug-in hybrid motor vehicle	R.C. 4503.10(C)(3)	$150
Additional fee: battery electric motor vehicle	R.C. 4503.10(C)(3)	$200
Annual license tax + additional application fee + deputy registrar fee + permissive local taxes (see Table 1)	R.C. 4503.04(B), 4503.10(C)(1) and (D), 4503.038, and Chapter 4504.	$44-$74

[2] See BMV Fees for a list of fees that may apply in other circumstances. See also R.C. 4503.103.

[3] R.C. 4503.04. Different fees apply to other types of vehicles, such as a motorcycles or commercial motor vehicles.

[4] R.C. 4503.10(C)(1). Additional fees apply to commercial motor vehicles.

[5] See Taxing District Code Book (PDF) for a list of the permissive local taxes in each taxing district. This amount can be higher if an additional tax has been approved for a transportation improvement district under R.C. 4504.21 or a regional transportation improvement project under R.C. 4504.22.

Description	Revised Code	Amount
Total		**Hybrid motor vehicle: $144-$174** **Plug-in Hybrid: $194-$224** **Battery electric: $244-$274**

Table 3. Issuance of one standard license plate

Fee description	Revised Code	Amount
License plate fee for one license plate	R.C. 4503.19(A)(5)	$6.50
Reflectorizing fee for one license plate	R.C. 4503.10(C)(2)	$0.25
Annual county identification sticker fee (charged at time of registration)	R.C. 4503.10(C)(2)	$0.25
Deputy registrar fee	R.C. 4503.10(D) and 4503.038(A)	$8.00
Total[6]		**$15.00**

Table 4. Issuance of two standard license plates

Fee description	Revised Code	Amount
License plate fee for two license plates	R.C. 4503.19(A)(5)	$7.50
Reflectorizing fee for two license plates	R.C. 4503.10(C)(2)	$0.50
Annual county identification sticker fee (charged at time of registration)	R.C. 4503.10(C)(2)	$0.25

[6] Additional fees apply if a person obtains a special reserved license plate (see R.C. 4503.42), an special state reserved license plate (see R.C. 4503.40), or a special license plate (for example, the "Bald eagle" specialty license plate under R.C. 4503.572), or wants to reserve their current standard license plate number on a new plate (see R.C. 4503.192).

Fee description	Revised Code	Amount
Deputy registrar fee	R.C. 4503.10(D) and 4503.038(A)	$8.00
Total[7]		**$16.25**

[7] See footnote 5, above.