

County of Adams

INVOLUTARY TRANSFER OF VEHICLE TITLE

I. Instructions

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Disclaimer

Court staff is not able to give you legal advice or help you fill out/complete these forms. The information in this packet is not a substitute for professional legal advice. The Court assumes no responsibility and accepts no liability for actions taken by users of these documents, including reliance on their contents. If you want to obtain the services of an attorney but do not know whom to contact, please call the Pennsylvania Lawyer Referral Service at 1-800-692-7375.

Last Updated: April 24, 2025

INSTRUCTIONS INVOLUTARY TRANSFER OF VEHICLE TITLE

THIS FORM IS A GUIDELINE TO BE USED FOR THE FILING OF A PETITION FOR THE INVOLUNTARY TRANSFER OF VEHICLE TITLE IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ADAMS COUNTY. THIS FORM AND THE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS PROVIDING LEGAL ADVICE. THE INVOLUTARY TRANSFER OF VEHICLE TITLE IS AN IMPORTANT LEGAL MATTER. THEREFORE, YOU ARE ADVISED TO SEEK THE ASSISTANCE OF AN ATTORNEY BEFORE PROCEEDING TO FILE SUCH A PETITION.

The steps in this packet are for rare situations that don't involve abandoned vehicles or cases where you can get a title using a Certificate of Title or the Manufacturer's Certificate of Origin. This process includes getting vehicle information from PennDOT, starting a legal action to obtain the title, notifying all interested parties, and presenting your case at a hearing. Keep in mind that following these steps does not guarantee the Court will approve your request for the title transfer.

1. Read the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Fact Sheet (included in this packet).
2. Fill out the DL-135 form (vehicle information request; included in this packet) and send it, along with the fees, to PennDOT.
3. Once you receive the vehicle information from PennDOT in response to the DL-135, and if you are unable to resolve the ownership issue with any known person of interest, you can initiate a legal action in the appropriate court to try to be recognized as the vehicle's owner. You must file these items in the Prothonotary's Office:
 - a. A civil cover sheet (included in this packet)
 - b. A template Scheduling Order (included in this packet)
 - c. A Petition for Involuntary Transfer (included in this packet)
 - d. A proposed Court Order (included in this packet)
 - e. A certificate of compliance (included in this packet)
 - f. A self-addressed, stamped envelope

You must also pay any filing fee required by the Prothonotary.

4. After you file the petition and receive the scheduling order from the Prothonotary's Office, you must follow the requirements outlined in the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Fact Sheet, including notification requirements to all persons with an interest in the ownership of the vehicle and legal notice advertising requirements. Retain proof of certified mailing and proof of advertising as evidence to be provided to the Court at the time of hearing.

NOTE: If, after you have filed your petition and if an interested party has responded, and if you are able to resolve the issue of ownership without the need for Court intervention, you will need to file a praecipe to withdraw the petition for involuntary transfer of title (included in this packet).

5. Appear at the hearing at the scheduled date and time and be ready to show the Court that you've completed all the requirements.
6. If the Court approves your request and issues an Order to award you with ownership, you must follow the requirements outlined in the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Fact Sheet to obtain a Certificate of Title.

Following the steps in this packet does not guarantee that the Court will award ownership to you. Each case is unique based on the circumstances.

FACT SHEET

Transfer of Ownership by Court Order

PURPOSE

This Fact Sheet outlines the procedures that must be followed when applying for a Certificate of Title involving the involuntary transfer of a vehicle's ownership. This procedure involves obtaining a court order and should be used only in those circumstances where it is impossible to transfer ownership of a vehicle by the use of a Certificate of Title or Vehicle Manufacturer's Certificate of Origin. Since every set of facts and surrounding circumstances will be unique, a person attempting to be declared owner of a vehicle where proper ownership documents are not available should seek the advice of a private attorney. **PennDOT WILL NOT OFFER LEGAL ADVICE REGARDING THE INVOLUNTARY TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP OF A VEHICLE.**

PROCEDURES

1. A person attempting to obtain ownership of a vehicle must commence a proceeding with a court of competent jurisdiction setting forth the facts and circumstances of the case. The ownership of the vehicle will be determined by the court. Please note that a sample court order is provided on the reverse side of this fact sheet. **UNLESS THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION IS THE OWNER OF THE VEHICLE IN QUESTION, THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION IS NOT AN INTERESTED PARTY TO THIS COURT PROCEEDING. THEREFORE, THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SHOULD NOT BE A NAMED PARTY IN THE PROCEEDING.**
2. A person attempting to be declared owner of a vehicle by court order must notify all persons with an interest in the vehicle of the pendency of the court proceeding. The notification must be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, and must include the following:
 - (1) A specific description of the vehicle (i.e., year, make, model and VIN);
 - (2) The court of competent jurisdiction where an action will be or has been filed; and
 - (3) The time, date and place of any court proceeding.

AT A MINIMUM, THE NOTICE MUST BE SENT TO THE PERSON(S) TO WHOM THE VEHICLE IS PRESENTLY TITLED AND REGISTERED AND EVERY LIENHOLDER THAT IS LISTED ON THE TITLE RECORD. PLEASE NOTE THAT IF A PERSON ATTEMPTING TO BE DECLARED OWNER OF A VEHICLE IS UNAWARE OF ANY PERSON WITH AN INTEREST IN THE VEHICLE, THE PERSON ATTEMPTING TO OBTAIN OWNERSHIP OF THE VEHICLE MAY OBTAIN A CERTIFIED COPY OF THE VEHICLE'S COMPUTER RECORD BY COMPLETING FORM DL-135 (REQUEST FOR VEHICLE INFORMATION), AND SUBMITTING TO PENNDOT ALONG WITH THE APPROPRIATE FEES.

3. In the event the notice sent to a person with an interest in the vehicle is returned as "Unclaimed," the person attempting to be declared owner of the vehicle must advertise a legal notice at least once in the county legal journal(s) and at least once per week for three consecutive weeks in the newspaper(s) of general circulation where any person known to claim an interest in the vehicle may be located and where the vehicle is located, if these two locations are different. Please refer to the *Pennsylvania Bar Association Lawyers Directory & Product Guide* to determine the appropriate legal journal. The advertisement should include the following:

- (1) A specific description of the vehicle (i.e., year, make, model and VIN);
 - (2) The court of competent jurisdiction where an action will be or has been filed; and
 - (3) The time, date and place of any court proceeding.
4. When the above procedure is followed and the court of competent jurisdiction enters an order declaring an individual the rightful owner of the vehicle, PennDOT may issue a Certificate of Title to the person named in the court order upon receipt of the following:
- (1) A certified copy of the court order entered declaring the individual owner of the vehicle;
 - (2) Form MV-1, "Application for Certificate of Title," and check or money order payable to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. **NOTE:** This is a secure form and can only be obtained from an authorized agent.
 - (3) Appropriate sales tax, title and registration fees.

Unless the petitioner is eligible to claim a Sales Tax Exemption, sales tax must be paid on the Fair Market Value of the vehicle as listed in a current edition of a PennDOT-approved publication. Approved PennDOT publications include the following: *N.A.D.A.*, *The Automobile Red Book*, *The Black Book Official Used Car Guide*, *American Used Car Guide*, and *The Kelley Blue Book Used Car Guide*.

SAMPLE COURT ORDER

AND NOW, this _____ day of _____, 20____, after reasonable notice and an opportunity for hearing having been provided to all interested parties, the Court hereby awards ownership of one [year], [make], [model], bearing vehicle identification number _____ to [name of applicant], and the right, title and interest of any other person to said vehicle is hereby extinguished. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Transportation may accept this order as evidence of ownership in lieu of a Certificate of Title. The Petitioner shall submit the appropriate forms, taxes and fees and comply with any other procedures of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Transportation in order to receive the appropriate Certificate of Title for said vehicle.

BY THE COURT:

Judge

Please Note: Authorized agents are under contract to PennDOT and may charge a market driven service (delivery) fee in addition to any PennDOT statutory fees for temporary, or in some cases, permanent motor vehicle registration plates and cards or other related products and services offered by the agent. The agent's service (delivery) fees are market driven, and vary by agent. To compare service (delivery) fees, you are encouraged to contact the authorized agents in your area for the applicable service (delivery) fees charged.



REQUEST FOR VEHICLE INFORMATION

\$14.00 Fee required for each record requested or \$44.00 Fee for each certified record
The most current version of this form can be found at www.dmv.pa.gov (**see reverse side for instructions and fee information**)

PRINT OR TYPE ALL INFORMATION LEGIBLY • DO NOT SEND CASH

SEE REVERSE FOR INSTRUCTIONS / INFORMATION

A REQUESTER INFORMATION				B END USER OF INFORMATION BEING REQUESTED			
NAME				NAME OF BUSINESS			
ADDRESS: P.O. Box number may be used in addition to the actual address, but cannot be used as the only address.				ADDRESS: (P.O. Box not accepted), need to provide physical location of business/residence			
CITY		STATE	ZIP CODE	CITY		STATE	ZIP CODE
DAYTIME TELEPHONE NUMBER (Required)		REFERENCE NUMBER		CONTACT PERSON		PHONE #	
				NAIC NUMBER		POLICY NUMBER	
SIGNATURE <u>X</u>				CLAIM NUMBER			
NOTARIZATION <u>NOT</u> REQUIRED WHEN REQUESTING YOUR OWN RECORD				D MICROFILM Certified - <input type="checkbox"/> YES (\$44.00 Required)			
C VEHICLE INFORMATION (read instructions for number 2 on the back of the form)				CHECK (✓) ONE ONLY: SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR EXPLANATION OF INFORMATION YOU WILL RECEIVE.			
TAG NUMBER		TITLE NUMBER		<input type="checkbox"/> TITLE - CURRENT RECORD <input type="checkbox"/> ODOMETER - CURRENT RECORD <input type="checkbox"/> TITLE - PREVIOUS RECORD <input type="checkbox"/> ODOMETER - PREVIOUS RECORD <input type="checkbox"/> ENCUMBRANCE <input type="checkbox"/> INSURANCE <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____			
VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER		DATE OF ACCIDENT (if applicable)		E VEHICLE OWNER RELEASE			
NAME				I _____ NAME OF VEHICLE OWNER			
ADDRESS				hereby request the PA Department of Transportation to furnish a copy of my PA vehicle record to,			
CITY		STATE	ZIP CODE	NAME OF REQUESTER _____			
				SIGNATURE OF VEHICLE OWNER _____ DATE _____			
F AFFIDAVIT OF INTENDED USE - YOU MUST CHECK (✓) ONE ITEM							
_____ 1. For use by any government agency, including any court or law enforcement agency, in carrying out its functions, or any private person or entity acting on behalf of a Federal, State, or local agency or political subdivision in carrying out its functions. _____ 2. For use in connection with matters of motor vehicle or driver safety and theft; motor vehicle emissions; motor vehicle product alterations, recalls, or advisories; performance monitoring of motor vehicles, motor vehicle parts and dealers; motor vehicle market research activities, including survey research, and removal of non-owner records from the original owner records of motor vehicle manufacturers. _____ 3. For use in the normal course of business by a legitimate business or its agents, employees, or contractors, but only: a. to verify the accuracy of personal information submitted by the individual to the business or its agents, employees, or contractors; and b. if such information as so submitted is not correct or is no longer correct, to obtain the correct information, but only for the purposes of preventing fraud by, pursuing legal remedies against, or recovering on a debt or security interest against, the individual. _____ 4. For use in connection with any civil, criminal, administrative, or arbitral proceeding in any Federal, State, or local court or agency or before any self-regulatory body, including the service of process, investigation in anticipation of litigation, and the execution or enforcement of judgments and orders, or pursuant to an order of a Federal, State, or local court. _____ 5. For use in research activities, and for use in producing statistical reports, so long as the personal information is not published, redisclosed, or used to contact individuals. _____ 6. For use by an insurer or insurance support organization, or by a self-insured entity, or its agents, employees, or contractors, in connection with claims investigation activities, antifraud activities, rating or underwriting. _____ 7. For use in providing notice to the owners of towed or impounded vehicles. _____ 8. For use in connection with the operation of private toll transportation facilities.							
NOTARIZATION	SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME: MONTH DAY YEAR			I hereby certify that _____ will NAME OF REQUESTER use the vehicle information requested pursuant to Section 6114 of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code, for the purpose checked above only and for no other reason. This affidavit is filed in compliance with Section 607 of the Fair Credit Reporting Act and the Federal Drivers Privacy Protection Act. I/We state that I/we have read and signed this form after its completion, and I/we swear or affirm that the statements made herein are true and correct, and that any statement made on or pursuant to this form is subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. Section 4904(b) (relating to unsworn falsifications), which shall include punishment of a fine not exceeding \$2,500, or to a term of imprisonment of not more than one year, or both.			
	SIGNATURE OF PERSON ADMINISTERING OATH						
	SIGN IN PRESENCE OF NOTARY						
	S E A L				SIGNATURE OF REQUESTER		TITLE OF REQUESTER (if applicable)

THIS FORM MAY BE PHOTOCOPIED

MESSENGER NO.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. A \$14.00 non-refundable fee (\$44.00 for certified requests) is required for each request. If the Bureau has no record for the information requested or the data supplied is insufficient, the fee will be applied to the cost of the search.
2. **PRINT OR TYPE** all requested information on front of form. Submitting **ONLY** a name or name and address does not provide enough information for a proper search of the vehicle files. If the TAG Number is the only vehicle information available, Section B must be completed and must include NAIC Number, Policy Number and Claim Number or attach a copy of the accident report or parking ticket.

A school district requesting vehicle information under Section 3345.1 (relating to enforcement of failure to stop for school bus with flashing red lights) of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code (Title 75) is not required to complete Section B or pay a fee when the TAG Number is the only vehicle information available.

Reference Number - Is a unique identifier assigned by the Requestor. This information will be printed on the vehicle record that is returned to the Requestor. The Reference Number can assist you in processing the record when it is returned to your office. This information is not required.

3. **If requesting your own record**, complete Sections A, C and D only. Notarization is NOT required. If you currently own/owned the vehicle but are requesting a Title History, you must complete Section F and have the application notarized.
4. **If requesting someone else's record**, complete Sections A, C, D, and either E or F (Notarization & Signature required).
5. **If requesting a record on behalf of another person**, complete Sections A, B, C, D, and either E or F (Notarization & Signature required). NAIC Number, Policy Number and Claim Number are only required when the only vehicle information available is the TAG Number.
6. **When requesting a title history**, a \$14.00 fee (\$44.00 for certified requests) is required for each title record. To determine the appropriate fee, please contact the number listed below to determine the number of title records available.
7. **If choosing "Other" in Section D**, please include documentation stating what you are requesting.
8. Make check or money order payable to: **"Commonwealth of PA"**.

DO NOT SEND CASH. Attach your check or money order and send to:

**Department of Transportation
Bureau of Driver Licensing
Vehicle Record Services
P.O. Box 68691
Harrisburg, PA 17106-8691**

DESCRIPTION OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE

Vehicle record information is available for the past 10 years only

NOTE: Sales tax and purchase price are considered confidential and will only be provided to the individual who purchased the vehicle, and the dealership that sold the vehicle. Otherwise, this information will not be provided.

- **Title History**.....A copy of the title transaction documents and basic information will be provided.
- **Odometer**.....A copy of the title/renewal transaction and basic information will be provided.
- **Insurance**A copy of the title/renewal transaction and basic information will be provided.
- **Encumbrance**Includes owners name, address, title number, tag, vehicle identification number (VIN), make and expiration date of tag and lienholder(s) name, address and expiration date of lien(s).

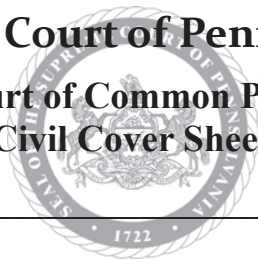
IMPORTANT INFORMATION CONCERNING THE USE OF VEHICLE INFORMATION

- Vehicle record information is confidential and restricted information and the Requestor/End User is responsible for establishing procedures to protect the confidentiality of these records.
- Vehicle record information can only be used for the purpose stated in Section F.
- Vehicle record information cannot be sold, assigned, or otherwise transferred to any party, other than the End User.
- PennDOT retains exclusive ownership of all vehicle record information and the Requestor/End User shall not combine and/or link in with any other data on any database except as may be required by law.
- The vehicle record information cannot be used for direct mail advertising or any other type or types of mail or mailings.
- The vehicle record information cannot be disseminated or published on the Internet without the express written permission of PennDOT.
- PennDOT reserves the right to audit each request for vehicle record information. If the Requestor/End User is found to have requested vehicle record information for an unauthorized purpose, access to Pennsylvania vehicle record information will be terminated.

Visit us at www.dmv.pa.gov or call us at 1-717-412-5300

Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

Court of Common Pleas Civil Cover Sheet



County _____

For Prothonotary Use Only:

Docket No: _____

TIME STAMP

The information collected on this form is used solely for court administration purposes. This form does not supplement or replace the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law or rules of court.

SECTION A

Commencement of Action:

- ☐ Complaint ☐ Writ of Summons ☐ Petition
☐ Transfer from Another Jurisdiction ☐ Declaration of Taking

Lead Plaintiff's Name: _____

Lead Defendant's Name: _____

Are money damages requested? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Dollar Amount Requested: ☐ within arbitration limits
(check one) ☐ outside arbitration limits

Is this a *Class Action Suit*? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is this an *MDJ Appeal*? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of Plaintiff/Appellant's Attorney: _____

☐ **Check here if you have no attorney (are a Self-Represented [Pro Se] Litigant)**

SECTION B

Nature of the Case: Place an "X" to the left of the ONE case category that most accurately describes your **PRIMARY CASE**. If you are making more than one type of claim, check the one that you consider most important.

TORT (do not include Mass Tort)

- ☐ Intentional
☐ Malicious Prosecution
☐ Motor Vehicle
☐ Nuisance
☐ Premises Liability
☐ Product Liability (does not include mass tort)
☐ Slander/Libel/ Defamation
☐ Other: _____

MASS TORT

- ☐ Asbestos
☐ Tobacco
☐ Toxic Tort - DES
☐ Toxic Tort - Implant
☐ Toxic Waste
☐ Other: _____

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY

- ☐ Dental
☐ Legal
☐ Medical
☐ Other Professional: _____

CONTRACT (do not include Judgments)

- ☐ Buyer Plaintiff
☐ Debt Collection: Credit Card
☐ Debt Collection: Other

☐ Employment Dispute:
Discrimination
☐ Employment Dispute: Other

☐ Other: _____

REAL PROPERTY

- ☐ Ejectment
☐ Eminent Domain/Condemnation
☐ Ground Rent
☐ Landlord/Tenant Dispute
☐ Mortgage Foreclosure: Residential
☐ Mortgage Foreclosure: Commercial
☐ Partition
☐ Quiet Title
☐ Other: _____

CIVIL APPEALS

- Administrative Agencies
☐ Board of Assessment
☐ Board of Elections
☐ Dept. of Transportation
☐ Statutory Appeal: Other

☐ Zoning Board
☐ Other: _____

MISCELLANEOUS

- ☐ Common Law/Statutory Arbitration
☐ Declaratory Judgment
☐ Mandamus
☐ Non-Domestic Relations
Restraining Order
☐ Quo Warranto
☐ Replevin
☐ Other: _____

NOTICE

Pennsylvania Rule of Civil Procedure 205.5. (Cover Sheet) provides, in part:

Rule 205.5. Cover Sheet

(a)(1) This rule shall apply to all actions governed by the rules of civil procedure except the following:

- (i) actions pursuant to the Protection from Abuse Act, Rules 1901 et seq.
- (ii) actions for support, Rules 1910.1 et seq.
- (iii) actions for custody, partial custody and visitation of minor children, Rules 1915.1 et seq.
- (iv) actions for divorce or annulment of marriage, Rules 1920.1 et seq.
- (v) actions in domestic relations generally, including paternity actions, Rules 1930.1 et seq.
- (vi) voluntary mediation in custody actions, Rules 1940.1 et seq.

(2) At the commencement of any action, the party initiating the action shall complete the cover sheet set forth in subdivision (e) and file it with the prothonotary.

(b) The prothonotary shall not accept a filing commencing an action without a completed cover sheet.

(c) The prothonotary shall assist a party appearing pro se in the completion of the form.

(d) A judicial district which has implemented an electronic filing system pursuant to Rule 205.4 and has promulgated those procedures pursuant to Rule 239.9 shall be exempt from the provisions of this rule.

(e) The Court Administrator of Pennsylvania, in conjunction with the Civil Procedural Rules Committee, shall design and publish the cover sheet. The latest version of the form shall be published on the website of the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts at www.pacourts.us.

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ADAMS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
CIVIL ACTION - LAW

In Re: _____
Year, Make, Model

No.: _____

VIN

ORDER OF COURT

AND NOW, this _____ day of _____, 20____, upon consideration of the foregoing Petition, a hearing is fixed for the _____ day of _____, 20____, at _____ in Courtroom No. _____ of the Adams County Courthouse, 117 Baltimore Street, Gettysburg, PA 17325. Petitioner shall provide Notice of the Hearing, including a copy of this Petition for Involuntary Transfer of Vehicle Title, by certified mail, to the last known person on the title: _____.

BY THE COURT:

Judge

Petitioner

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ADAMS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
CIVIL ACTION - LAW

In Re: _____
Year, Make, Model

No.: _____

VIN

PETITION FOR INVOLUNTARY TRANSFER OF VEHICLE TITLE

1. Petitioner is _____, an adult individual residing at _____, Adams County, Pennsylvania.
2. Petitioner is currently in possession of one (1) vehicle: Year: _____; Make: _____; Model: _____; Vehicle Identification Number (VIN): _____; which was acquired under the following circumstances (include date acquired and how acquired):
3. I am unable to obtain a Certificate of Title from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Transportation for the following reasons:
4. The individuals or entities and addresses who have an interest or assert an interest in the above property are as follows (from DL-135 Request for Vehicle Information, attached):

5. There are no liens or encumbrances on the described Vehicle.

6. All parties:

☐ agree;

☐ do not agree;

☐ unknown;

that the Petitioner is the owner of the Vehicle.

WHEREFORE, Petitioner requests the Court to enter an order directing the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to issue a title in Petitioner's name, provided Petitioner complies with the costs, fees, taxes and other paperwork required by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to accomplish this purpose.

Petitioner:

Signature

Print Name

Date: _____

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ADAMS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
CIVIL ACTION - LAW

In Re: _____
Year, Make, Model

No.: _____

VIN

COURT ORDER

AND NOW, this _____ day of _____, 20____, after reasonable notice and an opportunity for hearing having been provided to all interested parties, the Court hereby awards ownership of one _____ [year, make, model], bearing Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) _____ to _____ [name of applicant], and the right, title and interest of any other person to said vehicle is hereby extinguished. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Transportation may accept this order as evidence of ownership in lieu of a Certificate of Title. The Applicant shall submit the appropriate forms, taxes, and fees and comply with any other procedures of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Transportation in order to receive the appropriate Certificate of Title for said vehicle.

BY THE COURT,

Judge

In re: _____ :
Year, Make, Model :
 _____ :
VIN : **CASE NO.** _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Petitioner

Print Name: _____