

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2003 SESSION

CHAPTER 768

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 46.2-208 and 46.2-819.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to installation and use of photo-monitoring system in conjunction with certain toll facilities; penalty.

[S 721]

Approved March 20, 2003

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 46.2-208 and 46.2-819.1 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 46.2-208. Records of Department; when open for inspection; release of privileged information.

A. All records in the office of the Department containing the specific classes of information outlined below shall be considered privileged records:

1. Personal information, including all data defined as "personal information" in § 2.2-3801;
2. Driver information, including all data that relates to driver's license status and driver activity; and
3. Vehicle information, including all descriptive vehicle data and title, registration, and vehicle activity data.

B. The Commissioner shall release such information only under the following conditions:

1. Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, medical data included in personal data shall be released only to a physician as provided in § 46.2-322.

2. Insurance data may be released as specified in §§ 46.2-372, 46.2-380, and 46.2-706.

3. Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, information disclosed or furnished shall be assessed a fee as specified in § 46.2-214.

4. When the person requesting the information is (i) the subject of the information, (ii) the parent or guardian of the subject of the information, (iii) the authorized representative of the subject of the information, or (iv) the owner of the vehicle that is the subject of the information, the Commissioner shall provide him with the requested information and a complete explanation of it. Requests for such information need not be made in writing or in person and may be made orally or by telephone, provided that the Department is satisfied that there is adequate verification of the requester's identity. When so requested in writing by (a) the subject of the information, (b) the parent or guardian of the subject of the information, (c) the authorized representative of the subject of the information, or (d) the owner of the vehicle that is the subject of the information, the Commissioner shall verify and, if necessary, correct the personal information provided and furnish driver and vehicle information in the form of an abstract of the record.

5. On the written request of any insurance carrier, surety, or representative of an insurance carrier or surety, the Commissioner shall furnish such insurance carrier, surety, or representative an abstract of the record of any person subject to the provisions of this title. The abstract shall include any record of any conviction of a violation of any provision of any statute or ordinance relating to the operation or ownership of a motor vehicle or of any injury or damage in which he was involved and a report of which is required by § 46.2-372. No such report of any conviction or accident shall be made after ~~sixty~~ 60 months from the date of the conviction or accident unless the Commissioner or court used the conviction or accident as a reason for the suspension or revocation of a driver's license or driving privilege, in which case the revocation or suspension and any conviction or accident pertaining thereto shall not be reported after ~~sixty~~ 60 months from the date that the driver's license or driving privilege has been reinstated. This abstract shall not be admissible in evidence in any court proceedings.

6. On the written request of any business organization or its agent, in the conduct of its business, the Commissioner shall compare personal information supplied by the business organization or agent with that contained in the Department's records and, when the information supplied by the business organization or agent is different from that contained in the Department's records, provide the business organization or agent with correct information as contained in the Department's records. Personal information provided under this subdivision shall be used solely for the purpose of pursuing remedies that require locating an individual.

7. The Commissioner shall provide vehicle information to any business organization or agent on such business' or agent's written request. Disclosures made under this subdivision shall not include any personal information and shall not be subject to the limitations contained in subdivision 6 of this subsection.

8. On the written request of any motor vehicle rental or leasing company or its designated agent, the Commissioner shall (i) compare personal information supplied by the company or agent with that contained in the Department's records and, when the information supplied by the company or agent is different from that contained in the Department's records, provide the company or agent with correct information as contained in the Department's records and (ii) provide the company or agent with driver

information in the form of an abstract of any person subject to the provisions of this title. Such abstract shall include any record of any conviction of a violation of any provision of any statute or ordinance relating to the operation or ownership of a motor vehicle or of any injury or damage in which the subject of the abstract was involved and a report of which is required by § 46.2-372. No such abstract shall include any record of any conviction or accident more than ~~sixty~~ 60 months after the date of such conviction or accident unless the Commissioner or court used the conviction or accident as a reason for the suspension or revocation of a driver's license or driving privilege, in which case the revocation or suspension and any conviction or accident pertaining thereto shall cease to be included in such abstract after ~~sixty~~ 60 months from the date on which the driver's license or driving privilege was reinstated. No abstract released under this subdivision shall be admissible in evidence in any court proceedings.

9. On the request of any federal, state, or local governmental entity, law-enforcement officer, attorney for the Commonwealth, court, or the authorized agent of any of the foregoing, the Commissioner shall (i) compare personal information supplied by the governmental entity, officer, attorney for the Commonwealth, court, or the authorized agent of any of the foregoing, with that contained in the Department's records and, when the information supplied by the governmental entity, officer, attorney for the Commonwealth, court, or the authorized agent of any of the foregoing, is different from that contained in the Department's records, provide the governmental entity, officer, attorney for the Commonwealth, court, or the authorized agent of any of the foregoing, with correct information as contained in the Department's records and (ii) provide driver and vehicle information in the form of an abstract of the record showing all convictions, accidents, driver's license suspensions or revocations, and other appropriate information as the governmental entity, officer, attorney for the Commonwealth, court, or the authorized agent of any of the foregoing, may require in order to carry out its official functions.

10. On request of the driver licensing authority in any other state or foreign country, the Commissioner shall provide whatever classes of information the requesting authority shall require in order to carry out its official functions.

11. On the written request of any employer, prospective employer, or authorized agent of either, and with the written consent of the individual concerned, the Commissioner shall (i) compare personal information supplied by the employer, prospective employer, or agent with that contained in the Department's records and, when the information supplied by the employer, prospective employer, or agent is different from that contained in the Department's records, provide the employer, prospective employer, or agent with correct information as contained in the Department's records and (ii) provide the employer, prospective employer, or agent with driver information in the form of an abstract of an individual's record showing all convictions, accidents, driver's license suspensions or revocations, and any type of driver's license that the individual currently possesses, provided that the individual's position or the position that the individual is being considered for involves the operation of a motor vehicle.

12. On the written request of any member of or applicant for membership in a volunteer fire company or volunteer rescue squad, the Commissioner shall (i) compare personal information supplied by the volunteer fire company or volunteer rescue squad with that contained in the Department's records and, when the information supplied by the volunteer fire company or volunteer rescue squad is different from that contained in the Department's records, provide the volunteer fire company or volunteer rescue squad with correct information as contained in the Department's records and (ii) provide driver information in the form of an abstract of the member's or applicant's record showing all convictions, accidents, license suspensions or revocations, and any type of driver's license that the individual currently possesses. Such abstract shall be provided free of charge if the request is accompanied by appropriate written evidence that the person is a member of or applicant for membership in a volunteer fire company or volunteer rescue squad and the abstract is needed by a volunteer fire company or volunteer rescue squad to establish the qualifications of the member or applicant to operate equipment owned by the volunteer fire company or volunteer rescue squad.

13. On the written request of any person who has applied to be a volunteer with a Virginia affiliate of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, the Commissioner shall (i) compare personal information supplied by a Virginia affiliate of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America with that contained in the Department's records and, when the information supplied by a Virginia affiliate of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America is different from that contained in the Department's records, provide the Virginia affiliate of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America with correct information as contained in the Department's records and (ii) provide driver information in the form of an abstract of the applicant's record showing all convictions, accidents, license suspensions or revocations, and any type of driver's license that the individual currently possesses. Such abstract shall be provided free of charge if the request is accompanied by appropriate written evidence that the person has applied to be a volunteer with a Virginia affiliate of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America.

14. On the written request of any person who has applied to be a volunteer with a court-appointed special advocate program pursuant to § 9.1-153, the Commissioner shall provide an abstract of the applicant's record showing all convictions, accidents, license suspensions or revocations, and any type of driver's license that the individual currently possesses. Such abstract shall be provided free of charge if the request is accompanied by appropriate written evidence that the person has applied to be a volunteer

with a court-appointed special advocate program pursuant to § 9.1-153.

15. Upon the request of any employer, prospective employer, or authorized representative of either, the Commissioner shall (i) compare personal information supplied by the employer, prospective employer, or agent with that contained in the Department's records and, when the information supplied by the employer, prospective employer, or agent is different from that contained in the Department's records, provide the employer, prospective employer, or agent with correct information as contained in the Department's records and (ii) provide driver information in the form of an abstract of the driving record of any individual who has been issued a commercial driver's license, provided that the individual's position or the position that the individual is being considered for involves the operation of a commercial motor vehicle. Such abstract shall show all convictions, accidents, license suspensions, revocations, or disqualifications, and any type of driver's license that the individual currently possesses.

16. Upon the receipt of a completed application and payment of applicable processing fees, the Commissioner may enter into an agreement with any governmental authority or business to exchange information specified in this section by electronic or other means.

17. Upon the request of an attorney representing a person in a motor vehicle accident, the Commissioner shall provide vehicle information, including the owner's name and address, to the attorney.

18. Upon the request, in the course of business, of any authorized representative of an insurance company or of any not-for-profit entity organized to prevent and detect insurance fraud, the Commissioner shall provide all vehicle information, including the owner's name and address, descriptive data and title, registration, and vehicle activity data to such person.

19. Upon the request of an officer authorized to issue criminal warrants, for the purpose of issuing a warrant for arrest for unlawful disposal of trash or refuse in violation of § 33.1-346, the Commissioner shall provide vehicle information, including the owner's name and address.

20. Upon written request of the compliance agent of a private security services business, as defined in § 9.1-138, which is licensed by the Department of Criminal Justice Services, the Commissioner shall provide the name and address of the owner of the vehicle under procedures determined by the Commissioner.

21. Upon the request of the operator of a toll facility, or an authorized agent or employee of a toll facility operator, for the purpose of obtaining vehicle owner data under subsection H I of § 46.2-819.1.

22. On the written request of any person who has applied to be a volunteer with a Virginia affiliate of Compeer, the Commissioner shall (i) compare personal information supplied by a Virginia affiliate of Compeer with that contained in the Department's records and, when the information supplied by a Virginia affiliate of Compeer is different from that contained in the Department's records, provide the Virginia affiliate of Compeer with correct information as contained in the Department's records and (ii) provide driver information in the form of an abstract of the applicant's record showing all convictions, accidents, license suspensions or revocations, and any type of driver's license that the individual currently possesses. Such abstract shall be provided free of charge if the request is accompanied by appropriate written evidence that the person has applied to be a volunteer with a Virginia affiliate of Compeer.

23. Upon the request of the Department of Environmental Quality for the purpose of obtaining vehicle owner data in connection with enforcement actions involving on-road testing of motor vehicles, pursuant to § 46.2-1178.1.

C. Whenever the Commissioner issues an order to suspend or revoke the driver's license or driving privilege of any individual, he may notify the National Driver Register Service operated by the United States Department of Transportation and any similar national driver information system and provide whatever classes of information the authority may require.

D. Accident reports may be inspected under the provisions of §§ 46.2-379 and 46.2-380.

E. Whenever the Commissioner takes any licensing action pursuant to the provisions of the Virginia Commercial Driver's License Act (§ 46.2-341.1 et seq.), he may provide information to the Commercial Driver License Information System, or any similar national commercial driver information system, regarding such action.

F. In addition to the foregoing provisions of this section, vehicle information may also be inspected under the provisions of §§ 43-33, 43-34, 46.2-633, and 46.2-1200.1 through 46.2-1237.

G. The Department may promulgate regulations to govern the means by which personal, vehicle, and driver information is requested and disseminated.

H. Driving records of any person accused of an offense involving the operation of a motor vehicle shall be provided by the Commissioner upon request to any person acting as counsel for the accused. If such counsel is from the public defender's office or has been appointed by the court, such records shall be provided free of charge.

I. The Department shall maintain the records of persons convicted of violations of subsection B of § 29.1-738, and §§ 29.1-738.02, 29.1-738.2, and 29.1-738.4 which shall be forwarded by every general district court or circuit court or the clerk thereof, pursuant to § 46.2-383. Such records shall be electronically available to any law-enforcement officer as provided for under clause (ii) of subdivision B

9.

§ 46.2-819.1. Installation and use of photo-monitoring system in conjunction with certain toll facilities; penalty.

A. The operator of any toll facility or the locality within which such toll facility is located may install and operate or cause to be installed and operated a photo-monitoring system at locations where tolls are collected for the use of such toll facility. The operator of a toll facility may send an invoice or bill to the registered owner of a vehicle as part of an electronic or manual toll collection process, prior to seeking remedies under this section.

B. The operator of a vehicle shall be liable for a civil penalty of ~~no more than twenty-five dollars~~ \$25 for a first offense or ~~no more than fifty dollars~~ \$50 for any subsequent offense *plus the toll due, and applicable court costs if the matter proceeds to court or if the operator of the toll facility incurs costs of court*, if the vehicle is found, as evidenced by information obtained from a photo-monitoring system as provided in this section, to have used such a toll facility without payment of the required toll.

C. *Any action under this section shall be brought in the General District Court of the city or county in which the toll facility is located.*

D. Proof of a violation of this section shall be evidenced by information obtained from a photo-monitoring system as provided in this section. A certificate, sworn to or affirmed by a technician employed or authorized by the operator of a toll facility or by the locality wherein the toll facility is located, or a facsimile of such a certificate, based on inspection of photographs, microphotographs, videotapes, or other recorded images produced by a photo-monitoring system, shall be prima facie evidence of the facts contained therein. Any photographs, microphotographs, videotape, or other recorded images evidencing such a violation shall be available for inspection in any proceeding to adjudicate the liability for such violation under this section.

~~D.~~ E. It shall be prima facie evidence that the vehicle described in the summons issued pursuant to subsection ~~G~~ H of this section was operated in violation of this section.

Upon a finding by a court of competent jurisdiction that the vehicle described in the summons issued pursuant to subsection ~~G~~ H of this section was in violation of this section, the court shall impose a civil penalty upon the registered owner of such vehicle in accordance with the amounts specified in subsection B of this section, *together with applicable court costs and the toll due*. Such civil penalty shall constitute a lien on such vehicle, subordinate to any other liens on the vehicle, unless such civil penalty is paid ~~to the court~~ within ~~thirty~~ 30 days of imposition of *judgment* for such civil penalty, *costs and toll due*. Penalties assessed as the result of action initiated by the Virginia Department of Transportation shall be remanded to the Virginia Department of Transportation's Toll Facilities Revolving Fund. *Penalties assessed as the result of action initiated by an operator of a toll facility other than the Virginia Department of Transportation shall be remanded to the toll facility's account for expenses associated with operation of the facility and payments against any bonds or other liens issued as a result of the construction of the facility.*

The registered owner of such vehicle shall be given reasonable notice by way of a summons as provided in subsection ~~G~~ H of this section that his vehicle had been used in violation of this section and such owner shall be given notice of the time and place of the hearing as well as the civil penalty and costs for such offense.

Such summons shall be dismissed upon the filing of an affidavit by the registered owner of the vehicle stating that he was not the driver of the vehicle on the date of the violation.

In addition thereto, if the registered owner of the vehicle produces a certified copy of a police report showing that the vehicle had been reported to the police as stolen prior to the time of the alleged offense, then the court shall dismiss the summons.

~~E.~~ F. For purposes of this section, *"operator of a toll facility other than the Virginia Department of Transportation" means any agency, political subdivision, authority, or other entity authorized by the Code of Virginia to operate such toll facility; "owner" means the registered owner of such vehicle on record with the Department of Motor Vehicles. For purposes of this section, "owner" does not mean a vehicle rental or vehicle leasing company. For purposes of this section,; and "photo-monitoring system" means a vehicle sensor installed to work in conjunction with a toll collection device that automatically produces one or more photographs, one or more microphotographs, a videotape, or other recorded images of each vehicle at the time it is used or operated in violation of this section. Any vehicle rental or vehicle leasing company, if named in a summons, shall be released as a party to the action if it provides the operator of the toll facility a copy of the vehicle rental agreement or lease or an affidavit identifying the renter or lessee prior to the date of hearing set forth in the summons. Upon receipt of such rental agreement, lease, or affidavit, a summons shall be issued for the renter or lessee identified therein. Release of this information shall not be deemed a violation of any provision of the Government Data Collection and Dissemination Practices Act (§ 2.2-3800 et seq.) or the Insurance Information and Privacy Protection Act (§ 38.2-600 et seq.).*

~~F.~~ G. Imposition of a civil penalty pursuant to this section shall not be deemed a conviction as an operator and shall not be made part of the operating record of the person upon whom such civil penalty is imposed nor shall it be used for insurance purposes in the provision of motor vehicle insurance

coverage.

~~G.~~ *H.* A summons for a violation of this section may be executed pursuant to § 19.2-76.2. Notwithstanding the provisions of § 19.2-76, a summons for a violation of this section may be executed by mailing by first-class mail a copy thereof to the address of the owner of the vehicle as shown on the records of the Department of Motor Vehicles. If the summoned person fails to appear on the date of return set out in the summons mailed pursuant to this section, the summons shall be executed in the manner set out in § 19.2-76.3. No proceedings for contempt or arrest of a person summoned by mailing shall be instituted for failure to appear on the return date of the summons.

~~H.~~ *I.* The operator of a toll facility may enter into an agreement with the Department of Motor Vehicles, in accordance with the provisions of subdivision 21 of subsection B of § 46.2-208, to obtain vehicle owner information regarding the registered owners of vehicles that fail to pay tolls required for the use of toll facilities *and with the Department of Transportation to obtain any information that is necessary to conduct electronic toll collection.*

~~I.~~ *J.* Where any photo-monitoring system provided for in this section is in operation, no person shall be subject to both the provisions of this section and to prosecution under § 46.2-819 for actions arising out of the same transaction or occurrence.