

# AUTOMOTIVE SALES, USE & LEASE TAX GUIDE

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PREPARED BY THE

**Alabama  
Department  
of Revenue**



IN COOPERATION WITH



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with live links to important  
laws and regulations go to  
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# Guidelines for Automobile Dealers

## Sales Tax

The state sales tax on automotive vehicles is 2 percent of the gross proceeds of the sale. In addition to light duty vehicles, an automotive vehicle also includes a truck, truck trailer, or house trailer; motorcycle; certain boats; and other items (§ 40-23-2(4), Code of Alab. 1975). The same rules apply regardless of whether the vehicle is new or used.

When a used automotive vehicle or vehicles are taken in trade as a credit or partial payment on the sale of a new or used automotive vehicle, the sales tax is levied on the net difference. Other items exchanged for full or partial payment are to be included in the measure of the tax. (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.22](#)). When a trade-in vehicle is resold, it is subject to sales tax (Administrative Rule [810-6-2-104.02](#)). Trade-in provisions do not apply when a rental or leased vehicle is exchanged for a new or used vehicle. If a trade-in exceeds the selling price of the vehicle being purchased, the dealer cannot add the amount of the trade-in allowance to its sales tax return as a deduction (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.22](#)). If a dealer allows a trade in on a wholesale, exempt, or out-of-state sale, the amount cannot be deducted on the sales tax return.

When a certain type of automotive vehicle is removed from the state within 72 hours or delivered out of state, special rules apply as outlined later in this guide.

Other items sold at a dealership such as parts and accessories are generally taxed at the fullstate rate of 4 percent. Exemptions will be outlined later in this guide.

## Licenses

**Sales Tax License:** Automotive dealers must register for a sale tax license if they make retail or wholesales sales. This license will allow the automotive dealer to purchase vehicles tax-exempt that are for resale. Sales tax is a privilege tax imposed on the retail sale of tangible personal property sold in Alabama by businesses located in Alabama. The tax is collected by the seller from their customer and remitted directly to the state at the rate of 2 percent for vehicles and 4 percent for other items, such as parts and accessories. Local taxes may be applicable. All sales of tangible personal property are retail sales except those defined as wholesale sales. The tax is due monthly, with returns and remittances to be filed through the [My Alabama Taxes](#) portal at [www.myalabamataxes.alabama.gov](http://www.myalabamataxes.alabama.gov) on or before the 20th of the month for the previous month's sales.

**Rental Tax License:** Automotive dealers must register for a rental tax /leasing tax license if they rent or lease automotive vehicles. This license will allow the automotive dealer to purchase vehicles tax-exempt that are for rental/leasing. Rental/leasing tax is a privilege tax levied on the lessor for the leasing or renting of tangible personal property. The gross receipts, including any rental tax invoiced, from the rental or leasing of tangible personal property are subject to the State rental tax at the rate of 1.5 percent. Local taxes may be applicable. The tax is due monthly, with returns and remittances to be filed through the [My Alabama Taxes](#) portal at [www.myalabamataxes.alabama.gov](http://www.myalabamataxes.alabama.gov) on or before the 20th of the month for the previous month's rentals.

## General Sales Tax Collection Issues

Sales tax must be added to the purchase price and collected from the retail customer. It is illegal to refund or offer to refund, or absorb or advertise to absorb all or any part of the amount of tax collected (§ 40-23-26(b), Code of Ala. 1975, and Administrative Rule [810-6-4-20](#)). For purposes of the sales tax law, a retailer may advertise the sale of tangible personal property by (i) stating the sales price alone without reference to the tax, (ii) stating separately the sales price and the amount of tax to be collected thereon, or (iii) stating the sales price “plus tax” or “exclusive of tax”. Retailers must maintain records that separately state the amount of state, county, and city tax collected and furnish that information to the customer upon request (§ 40-23-104(b), Code of Ala. 1975, and Administrative Rule [810-5-1-246](#)).

Most cities and counties also levy sales, use, and lease/rental taxes patterned after state law. Some are collected by the Alabama Department of Revenue (ALDOR), while other localities collect the taxes themselves or hire third-party firms to administer their taxes. Dealers must collect the city and county taxes where the dealership is located. Be sure to check with the city and county where your dealership is located to determine their filing requirements.

**Reciprocity for City and County Taxes** (Administrative Rule [810-6-5-04.01](#)): Only one city and/or county sales, use, or rental/leasing tax may be collected irrespective of rate. For example, a Montgomery resident who purchases a vehicle in Prattville and pays the City of Prattville and Autauga County sales or use taxes cannot be charged the City of Montgomery or Montgomery County sales or use tax when the vehicle is registered in Montgomery County.

**Tax-Exempt Sales:** Charitable and nonprofit organizations or institutions have no special exemption from sales or use taxes. However, certain entities may purchase items tax exempt. All entities are required to annually obtain a certificate of exemption from ALDOR to make tax exempt purchases. Exemption numbers and sales tax account numbers may be verified using the state’s My Alabama Taxes website at [www.myalabamataxes.alabama.gov](http://www.myalabamataxes.alabama.gov). To verify a sales tax account number, the dealer must log in to their My Alabama Taxes account. However, exemption numbers may be verified without entering the login information.

**Sales to Military Members (Administrative Rule [810-6-2-51.05](#) ):** Military members will owe the sales and use tax if buying a car in Alabama for use in Alabama.

## Automobile Dealer Sales Transactions

**Rebates:** Manufacturers’ rebates of any type are taxable when applied to the purchase price of an automotive vehicle. A rebate assigned to a customer is taxable when used as a down payment on a vehicle. If the customer accepts the rebate in cash and does not apply it to the purchase of a vehicle, it is not subject to sales tax. A dealer rebate is treated the same.

Example:

\$50,000	Vehicle selling price
\$500	Dealer fee
\$50,500	Total
<u>(\$5,000)</u>	Manufacturer’s rebate assigned to customer

\$45,500

Cost to customer (taxable amount would be \$50,500)

**Federal Rebates and Tax Credits:** Rebates and tax credits offered by the federal government for electric vehicles are considered part of the gross proceeds of sales and subject to the sales and use tax.

**Credit Card Transaction Fees:** Credit card transaction fees imposed on retail transactions are subject to sales and use taxes and should be included in the seller's gross sales as reported on the Sales Tax return. This includes state, city and county taxes. If a transaction is subject to sales tax, (an auto part), the tax is due on the fee. If the transaction is not subject to sales tax (labor), tax is not due on the fee. If the transaction contains taxable and non-taxable items, sales tax is due on the entire amount unless the transaction is split into two separate transactions—one taxable item and one non-taxable item.

**Vehicles Purchases at Auction:** The auctioneer must obtain a copy of the purchaser's sales tax license for all tax-exempt vehicles sales. Act 2019-244 requires every automotive dealer whether a retailer or wholesaler to maintain a valid sales tax license.

**Demonstrators/Dealer's Use of Vehicles in Inventory/Driver's Ed Vehicles (Administrative Rule [810-6-2-.04](#)):** When an automotive vehicle is withdrawn from a dealer's inventory for use by the dealer or an employee, a \$5 annual fee is due. The fee is not due on vehicles withdrawn from inventory for leasing or rental purposes if the vehicle is subject to lease tax. A vehicle sold to a salesperson or other customer as a demonstrator is subject to sales tax. A vehicle provided by a dealer to a school for driver's education purposes is subject to the \$5 fee, but not sales tax.

**Accessories (Administrative Rule [810-6-2-.02](#)):** Accessories purchased from a dealer after a vehicle is purchased are subject to the 4 percent general sales tax rate. Accessories added to the vehicle before the sale and added in the sales price of the vehicle are subject to the automotive sales tax rate of 2 percent. The original invoice must show the accessory sold at the time of the sale with the vehicle.

**Adaptive Equipment (§ 40-23-4(52), [Code of Ala. 1975](#)):** Equipment not generally used by persons with normal mobility, that is appropriate for use in a motor vehicle and that is not normally provided by a motor vehicle manufacturer, is not subject to Alabama sales tax. However, charges on the initial sale of adaptive equipment permanently affixed to a motor vehicle must be stated separately on the dealer invoice to the customer for such equipment charges to be exempt.

**Automobile Seat Covers, Top Linings, Vinyl Tops (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.10](#)):** Upholstery repairs performed on automobile seats, top linings, and vinyl tops are considered repair jobs. The upholsterer must collect and report sales tax on the sales of items which do not lose their identity, such as cloth, leather, vinyl, foam rubber, and springs. If a separate agreement is made to sell the materials and perform the labor and service required, the separate amount received for labor or service will not be subject to the tax. Materials which pass to the upholsterer's customers, but which lose their identity when used by the upholsterer or which are inconsequential in amount such as, but not limited to, tacks, glue, thread, binding twine, webbing, gimp tape, welting, padding, stain, and varnish are considered to have been used or consumed by the upholsterer and are taxable at the time of purchase by him. Any custom items that are fabricated and sold, with or without installation, such as, but not limited to, auto seat slipcovers, boat covers, and car covers are subject to sales tax on the full sales price without any deduction for labor or service. If stated separately, a reasonable installation fee may be excluded from the measure of the tax.

**School Buses (Administrative Rule [810-6-2-.88.02](#)):** A school bus purchased by an individual for use under the direction of and control of a board of education is subject to sales and use tax. School buses purchased by the school and paid for directly with school funds or obligating school funds are exempt from sales and use tax.

**Courtesy Deliveries (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.12.01](#)):** An Alabama dealer who makes a courtesy delivery of an automotive vehicle in Alabama for an out-of-state dealer is not the seller and is not liable for collecting Alabama sales tax; the out-of-state dealer is the seller. The purchaser must pay tax when registering the vehicle.

**Discounts (Administrative Rules [810-6-1-.53](#) and [810-6-1-.54](#)):** Cash and volume sales discounts are not taxable.

**Sales to Licensed Dealers (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.89.02](#)):** Sales to licensed dealers of tangible personal property to be put in the stock of the purchasing dealer are not subject to sales tax, even though that dealer may occasionally take from stock some part of the inventory for use or consumption, whereupon, it would be taxable to that dealer. Sales to a licensed dealer for his own use rather than for resale purposes are subject to sales tax.

**Vehicles Purchases at Auction:** The auctioneer must obtain a copy of the purchaser's sales tax license for all tax-exempt vehicles sales. Act 2019-244 requires every automotive dealer whether a retailer or wholesaler to maintain a valid sales tax license.

**Sales of New Cars to Used Car Dealers:** Independent used car dealers who have valid retail sales tax licenses may purchase new vehicles without payment of sales tax; however, the exemption only applies if the sole intent and purpose is to place the vehicle immediately into inventory for resale. The used car dealership must also title the new car in the name of the dealership. If a used car dealer purchases a new vehicle with the intent for any purpose other than a sale to the public, sales tax is due.

**Dealer Transfers:** A dealer transfer is usually treated as an adjustment to an inventory account and is not charged to sales. Dealer transfers handled in this manner should not be deducted as wholesale sales.

**Fleet/Rental Company Sales (Administrative Rule [810-6-5-.09](#)):** Sales to fleets are generally subject to sales tax unless they are made to leasing or rental companies that have an Alabama rental tax account number and will be rented in a transaction subject to Alabama rental tax. Sales tax is due on the sale to an unqualified out-of-state lease company that takes possession in Alabama for leases solely outside of Alabama. In order for sales tax not to be due on a vehicle that is going to be first registered out of the state, a drive-out certificate should be completed at the time of the sale. **Special rules may apply. Refer to the section entitled, "Vehicle Sales to Out-of-State Residents."**

**Giveaway Programs (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.196](#)):** Vehicles withdrawn from a dealer's inventory to be given away as a prize or promotion are subject to sales tax based on the cost to the dealership. The dealership is responsible for taxes on these transactions. Since it is a gift to the customer, the customer will not owe use tax. Vehicles sold to and paid for by the Poarch Band of Creek Indians are not subject to sales tax if the vehicles are delivered to reservation land.

**Trade-Ins for Family Members:** A vehicle may be traded-in to a dealer by the titled owner on behalf of another individual without first being titled in the individual's name. For example, a father may trade in a vehicle titled in his name on behalf of his son without titling it first in the son's name.

**Trade-Ins Made Separate from a Vehicle Purchase:** A vehicle traded in without the purchase of another vehicle is simply a sales transaction whereby a dealer is buying a used vehicle for resale. The transaction will not be considered a trade-in and will be viewed as a separate transaction from a future vehicle purchase and will have no effect on a future transaction.

**Loaned Vehicles:** A vehicle loaned by the dealership to a celebrity spokesperson or other person supplying a business or service to the dealership is subject to rental tax on the value of the vehicle.

**Vehicles Loaned to Universities/Coaches:** Vehicles loaned to college sports teams and their coaches free of charge that remain in the inventory of the dealer for sale and display dealer tags are not subject to sales tax, but the dealer must pay the \$5 annual demonstrator fee.

**Sales in Interstate Commerce (Administrative Rule [810-6-3-.35.02](#)):** Sales are considered to be made outside of Alabama and are not subject to Alabama sales tax where the seller is required by the sales agreement to deliver the goods outside the state using seller's equipment, common carrier or U.S. Postal Service, or independent trucker. It is also exempt if the buyer contracts with a common carrier or the Postal Service to accept delivery of goods in the state for delivery outside the state. When a buyer or an agent of the buyer, who is not a common carrier, takes actual possession of the goods in the state, the goods are subject to sales tax. (Shipping documents must be maintained by the dealer to substantiate mode of delivery.)

**Out of State/City/County Deliveries (Administrative Rule [810-6-3-.03.02](#)):** When a dealer sells an automotive vehicle and delivers it outside of the state, city, or county where the dealership is located, the dealer and the customer must complete the form "Certificate of Exemption-Out of State/City/County Delivery." The dealer must maintain a copy of the form to substantiate the tax exempt sale. Dealers may print a copy of the form at: <https://www.revenue.alabama.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/stex1.pdf>.



**IMPORTANT**  
 Exemption will be disallowed  
 if complete and correct  
 information is not furnished.

# Certificate of Exemption – Out of State/City/County Delivery

Required by the Provisions of Sales and Use Tax Rule 810-6-3-.03.02

SALES TAX REGISTRATION NUMBER		INVOICE NUMBER	DATE OF SALE
SELLER			
SELLER'S ADDRESS		CITY	STATE ZIP
BUYER			
BUYER'S ADDRESS		CITY	STATE ZIP
<b>DESCRIPTION OF THE AUTOMOBILE, OTHER MOTOR VEHICLE, OR TRAILER</b>			
MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	
VIN (VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER)		<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Used	
TOTAL SALES PRICE	TRADE-IN ALLOWANCE	NET AMOUNT PAID	WILL BE TITLED IN OR REGISTERED IN WHAT STATE
\$	\$	\$	

### OATH

We, the undersigned seller and buyer, or representative thereof, being duly sworn according to law, hereby certify that the above described tangible personal property has been sold and will be delivered in interstate/intrastate commerce as indicated herein, and that the information contained herein is true and correct.

SELLER'S SIGNATURE	BUYER'S SIGNATURE
SELLER'S PRINTED NAME	BUYER'S PRINTED NAME

This certificate must be executed by the seller and buyer at the time of the sale of the vehicle or trailer.

### CERTIFICATE OF OUT OF STATE/CITY/COUNTY DELIVERY

State of \_\_\_\_\_ County of \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, being duly sworn according to law, depose and say that I have personally delivered the automobile, other motor vehicle, or trailer described above outside \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY / COUNTY / STATE

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ At \_\_\_\_\_ PLACE OF DELIVERY (CITY/COUNTY/STATE) On \_\_\_\_\_ DATE

Check the status of the person making the delivery:  Seller  Employee of Seller

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONS:** The Certificate of Exemption — Out of State/City/County Delivery must be prepared by the seller and buyer at the time of the sale of the vehicle or trailer. The Certificate of Out of State/City/County Delivery must be executed by the person actually making delivery of the motor vehicle or trailer within two days of the time of delivery. The original affidavits, fully completed, must be kept with the seller's copy of the invoice.

**Vehicle Sales to Out-of-State Residents (Administrative Rule 810-6-3-.42.03) :** Residents of other states that do not allow Alabama vehicle purchasers to purchase a vehicle without the payment of tax to that state for first titling and registering in Alabama will be required to pay 2 percent to the state of Alabama when those residents purchase a vehicle in Alabama. Dealers will not be required to collect any city or county taxes on these sales if they use Form DOC-1 7/22 entitled "Automotive Vehicle Drive-Out Certificate for Nonresidents". Additionally, sales tax collected on these sales cannot exceed the amount of sales tax that would otherwise be due in the state where the vehicle will be registered or titled for first use. Dealers should follow the Alabama sales tax rules when calculating the tax.

This partial exemption law does not impact lease or rental tax.

Alabama sales tax must be collected on sales to residents of the following states at the rates listed below:

<b>STATE</b>	<b>STATE ABBREVIATION</b>	<b>SALES TAX DUE TO STATE OF ALABAMA</b>
<b>Arizona</b>	<b>AZ</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>California</b>	<b>CA</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Florida</b>	<b>FL</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Indiana</b>	<b>IN</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Massachusetts</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Michigan</b>	<b>MI</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>South Carolina</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>2% (capped at \$500)</b>

ALDOR will annually publish a list of states that do not allow a full exemption to Alabama residents purchasing vehicles in those states. That list, which will be posted on ALDOR's website, may be relied upon by dealers, and should the list be incorrect, dealers will be relieved from liability.

#### Examples of Taxation Options

##### Florida Resident Purchases Vehicle from Alabama Dealer

- Option 1: Florida resident takes possession at Mobile, Alabama, dealership: Alabama dealer collects state, city, and county sales taxes.
- Option 2: Florida resident takes possession at Mobile, Alabama, dealership: Alabama dealer collects the 2 percent Alabama sales tax but does not collect city of Mobile and Mobile County sales taxes by completing form DOC-1 7/22 if the vehicle is removed from the Alabama within 72 hours. Dealer should retain this form in the dealer's files or where other tax records are maintained. Florida will give the Florida resident credit for the 2 percent sales tax paid to Alabama.
- Option 3: Alabama dealer delivers vehicle to Florida resident outside Alabama: no state, city, or county taxes are collected and at the time of delivery, dealer completes the "Certificate of Exemption-Out of State/City/County Delivery" form. Dealer should retain this form in the dealer's files or where other tax records are maintained.
- Option 4: Alabama dealer delivers vehicle out of state in dealer's equipment or by common carrier: no Alabama taxes collected. Dealer should retain proof of delivery in the dealer's files or where other tax records are maintained. That proof could include a Certificate of Exemption-Out of State/City/County Delivery" form, affidavit signed by the purchaser when the vehicle is delivered, an invoice from the third-party common carrier that delivers the vehicle, etc.

(Note: Some dealers have historically sent the title, registration documents, and a check for sales tax to

the county official in the purchaser's home state to ensure that the vehicle is registered and the lien perfected. If the purchaser from one of the states listed above takes possession of the vehicle in Alabama, the dealer must collect the 2 percent Alabama state sales tax. For example, for sales to Florida residents, the dealer could collect 2 percent for Alabama and send a check for 4 percent to Florida. To avoid collecting county and city sales taxes, the dealer should continue to use form DOC-1 7/22.)

#### Alabama Resident Purchases Vehicle from Florida Dealer

Option 1: Florida dealer delivers vehicle out of state: no Florida taxes collected.

Option 2: Alabama resident takes possession at Florida dealership:  
If a Florida dealer sells a vehicle to a resident of another state that imposes a sales tax of less than 6 percent (Florida vehicle sales tax rate) and the buyer takes possession of the vehicle in Florida, the buyer's home state sales/use tax rate may be applied to the sale.

For example, an Alabama resident would sign an affidavit and pay 2 percent sales tax to Florida because Alabama has a 2 percent state sales tax rate on motor vehicles. The Alabama resident must still pay applicable local (county and city) sales/use tax at the time of registration in Alabama. Credit is given for the 2 percent state sales tax paid to Florida, so no state sales/use tax is due in Alabama.

#### Vehicle Sale to Out-of- State Residents of Reciprocating States (States not on the List Above)

The Automotive Vehicle Drive-Out Certificates for Nonresidents form may be used for sales of automobiles, motorcycles, trucks, truck trailers, travel trailers, campers, housecars, or semitrailers that will be (i) registered or titled outside Alabama and (ii) are exported or removed from Alabama within 72 hours by the purchaser or purchaser's agent for first use outside Alabama.

The Automotive Vehicle Drive-Out Certificates for Nonresidents form may not be used for the sale of mobile homes, all-terrain vehicles, or boats. State, city, and county sales taxes must be collected on the sale of these type of vehicles to any out-of-state purchasers.

Note: The Automotive Vehicle Drive-Out Certificate must be executed by both the seller and the purchaser at the time of sale. Certificates completed after the transaction is concluded will be invalid. The certificate must be retained in the seller's records along with the corresponding sales invoice and if applicable, the additional documentation. The seller will be liable for the Alabama sales tax on any sale for which the Drive-Out Certificate of Exemption has been claimed, but the required records are not maintained.



ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE  
**Automotive Vehicle Drive-Out Certificate for Nonresidents**

DOC-1  
7/22

This form must be executed by both the seller and the purchaser or the purchaser's agent at the time of sale. Forms executed after the sale are invalid.

SELLER'S INFORMATION		PURCHASER'S INFORMATION	
NAME _____		NAME _____	
ADDRESS _____		ADDRESS _____	
CITY _____	STATE _____ ZIP _____	CITY _____	STATE _____ ZIP _____
INVOICE NUMBER _____		TELEPHONE NUMBER _____ DRIVER'S LICENSE/PASSPORT NUMBER _____	
AUTOMOTIVE VEHICLE MAKE _____		MODEL NUMBER _____	
VIN _____	DATE OF SALE _____	TIME OF SALE _____ A.M. _____ P.M.	

The facts set forth in this document are true and correct to the best knowledge and belief of the below-signed seller and purchaser or purchaser's agent. The automobile, motorcycle, truck, truck trailer, semitrailer, travel trailer, camper, or housecar referenced above will be exported or removed by the purchaser or purchaser's agent from Alabama within 72 hours from the time of sale to the State of \_\_\_\_\_ for first use and registration or titling in accordance with the laws of that state. In order to qualify as a travel trailer, camper, or housecar that will be registered or titled for use in another state, the purchaser must provide documentation of a valid state-issued identification card, state-issued driver's license, or U.S. passport, or for entities, a copy of the same for the individual signing for the purchase. Therefore, the seller's record requirements for such a sale will include maintaining a valid copy of the documentation with the Form DOC-1 and the bill of sale to substantiate the tax-exempt sale. If the state in which the nonresident will title and register the vehicle does not allow an Alabama resident to purchase a motor vehicle for first titling and registration in Alabama without the payment of tax to that state, the sale does not qualify for the drive-out provision. In these instances, the seller must collect the two percent (2%) Alabama state sales tax, not to exceed the amount of sales tax that would otherwise have been due in the state where the vehicle will be registered or titled for first use.

SIGNATURE OF SELLER \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF PURCHASER OR PURCHASER'S AGENT \_\_\_\_\_

*NOTICE: This form does not apply to and may not be used in conjunction with the sale of mobile homes, all terrain vehicles, or boats. The 72 hour drive-out provision does not apply to sales of these automotive vehicles.*

**FAILURE TO PROPERLY COMPLETE AND MAINTAIN THIS CERTIFICATE AND THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED BY RULE 810-6-3-.42.03 IN THE SELLER'S FILES WILL RESULT IN THE SELLER BEING HELD LIABLE FOR THE ALABAMA SALES TAX.**

Dealers may change the printer settings to print "portrait" so that the form is a standard 8"x11" form.

### Heavy Duty Truck Transactions

**Truck Bodies (Administrative Rule [810-6-2-103](#)):** A truck body which is not a part of an automotive vehicle at the time of the purchase is taxed at the general 4 percent rate. However, if a truck chassis and truck body are purchased out of Alabama in separate transactions but are assembled into a unit for importation into Alabama, the applicable tax would be the automotive rate of 2 percent.

**Federal Excise Tax (Administrative Rule [810-6-4-.07.05](#)):** A truck dealer who bills and collects the federal excise tax from the customer and remits it directly to the federal government is not required to collect sales tax on the federal excise tax.

### Finance and Insurance Transactions

**Warranties/Extended Service Contracts (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.186.05](#)):** Sales tax is not due on the sale of a warranty or extended service contract; however, parts used in performing repairs under the contract are taxable based on the cost of the parts to the dealer. Sales or use tax is not due on parts used in performing repairs free of charge for a customer under the terms of a manufacturer's extended warranty or service contract, when the manufacturer provides full credit to the dealer performing the repairs. Labor costs that are separately stated are not taxable in either case.

**Tire and Wheel/Dent and Ding/Road Hazard:** These products are taxed like service contracts. Sales tax is not due on the sale of the contract, but parts used to perform the repairs are taxable. Labor costs that are separately stated are not taxable.

**Window Etching:** Window etching is a service and is not subject to sales tax.

**Dealer Fees** (§ 40-23-2(4), Code of Ala. 1975): Dealer fees (also known as clerical fees, doc fees, dealer prep charge, processing fees, etc.) are taxable at the automotive rate. If clearly labeled and separately stated, the title fee is not subject to sales tax. If not separately stated, it is taxable.

**Debt Waiver/GAP Insurance:** These items are not subject to sales tax.

**Key Replacement Programs:** Key replacement programs are taxed similar to service contracts. The key replacement contract is not taxable, but parts used to perform repairs or replacement are taxable.

**Maintenance Agreements (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.186.05](#)):** If a maintenance agreement is required and mandatory as a condition of a sale, sales or use tax is due on the purchase of or withdrawal from inventory of parts used in performing repairs or services pursuant to the maintenance agreements. Tax is to be computed on the cost of the parts to the dealer. In *Warrior Tractor & Equipment Company, Inc. v. State of Alabama*, the ALJ determined, "Because the Taxpayer factored the cost of the filters into the cost of the equipment, the Taxpayer was selling the filters to its customers with the equipment per the Logan's Roadhouse rationale." Based on this case, the oil filters used in the free oil change services will not be subject to tax if the service is part of the sale, and the cost is figured into the selling price of the vehicle.

### **Service/Parts/Body Shop Transactions**

**Automobile Repair Shops:** The retail sales to a consumer of parts, batteries, tires, etc., are taxable. Labor is not taxable if separately stated. Supplies consumed by the repair shop such as paint and solder, as well as tools and machinery used, are taxable at the time of the sale to the repair shop and collected by the supplier or paid to ALDOR as use tax if the supplier is not licensed to collect sales tax.

**Automotive Supply Jobbers (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.08.01](#)):** Automotive supply jobbers (anyone who makes retail sales of auto parts and supplies) must collect sales or use tax on sales to all customers who do not have a valid sales tax number or certificate of exemption. Invoices that do not show the purchaser's name but are made out to "cash" are always taxable. Sales to purchasers with sales tax numbers are only tax free if the items are being purchased for resale. It is the responsibility of the jobber to know the nature of the customer's business, so that the jobber will know when to collect sales tax on items purchased for use.

The automotive jobber must collect sales or use tax on sales of supplies unless the customer is purchasing the supplies for resale. Supplies include but are not limited to cleaning compounds, chamois, rags, drill bits, shop files, welding gases and supplies, metal bars and rods, masking tape, fire extinguisher fluid, hydraulic jack oil, friction tape, signs, white sidewall cleaner, brooms, mops, window cleaner, rivets, tacks, cotter pins, repair parts for shop equipment, degreaser, bolts, nuts, washers, screws, oil measures, wiping cloths, drop light cords, auto body soap, hand soap, vixen files, light bulbs, rubbing compound, floor oil absorbent compounds, brushes of all kinds, tar remover, and polishing cloths. Sales of any new, used, or rebuilt automotive parts are taxed on the net trade difference. Sales or use tax is due on taxable sales of batteries without any deduction for the trade in. If labor is

performed in connection with the sale of repair parts, invoices covering the transaction must clearly show the amount charged for each part and the amounts charged for labor. The amount charged for labor is not subject to sales or use tax. If the invoices are not itemized, the entire amount of the transaction is subject to tax. (Note: Dealers should refer to the rule for additional information concerning this complicated area.)

**Retail Sales of Parts and Accessories (Administrative Rule [810-6-5-.04.02](#)):** The sale of parts and accessories to retail customers at the dealership are subject to state, city, and county sales tax where the dealership is located. The sale of parts and accessories to retail customers in other cities and counties where the dealership delivers the parts in a dealership owned vehicle are subject to state sales tax plus the applicable city and county taxes where the customer is located and must be collected by the dealer. The same is true if a dealership salesperson calls on customers in other cities and counties irrespective of how the parts are delivered. If parts are sold to retail customers in other cities and counties where the dealer has not established nexus and delivery is made by common carrier (i.e., postal service, UPS, Fed Ex., etc.), the transaction would be subject to state sales tax, but not the city and county where the customer is located. The customer would be responsible for accruing and paying the local city and county use taxes.

(Note: Sales to licensed wholesale customers, such as another dealership or independent repair facility, that will use the parts on customer cars and charge sales tax on the parts are not subject to state, city, or county sales taxes.)

**Parts Used to Recondition or Repair Dealer-Owned Vehicles (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.116](#)):** When a licensed dealer purchases parts and materials to repair or recondition vehicles held in inventory for sale, the purchases are tax-free if they become part of the vehicle that will later be sold and taxed on the total sales price. Parts and materials used to repair or recondition vehicles for others are taxable. "Materials" mean items such as paint, body lead, and wax which become part of the reconditioned vehicle. Supply items not becoming part of the vehicle such as sandpaper, masking tape, and rags are taxable retail sales when purchased by the dealer. "Parts" mean such items that are passed on substantially intact by the dealer, such as fan belts and batteries. Labor charges are not taxable if separately stated.

**Automobile Painting (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.06](#)):** The painting of an automotive vehicle is a service by the painter and not taxable; however, the paint, supplies, etc., used or consumed by the painter are taxable when sold to the painter.

**Bedliner Chemicals:** Bedliner chemicals are taxable to the franchisee creating the bedliner, not the customer. (Alabama Tax Tribunal Docket No. S. 18-369LP)

**Gasoline, Motor Fuel, and Lubricants (Administrative Rule [810-6-3-.28](#)):** Gasoline and similar substances and lubricating oil and greases are exempt from sales and use taxes. Diesel and other similar substances, otherwise taxed, are not subject to sales and use taxes.

**Oil Filters:** Oil filters are subject to sales taxes. See the section entitled "Warranties/Extended Service Contracts" and "Maintenance Agreements" for information on taxability of oil filters used for warranty repairs, service contracts, or maintenance agreements.

**Cores: (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.08.01](#))** Sales of any new, used, or rebuilt automotive parts are taxed on the net trade difference; however, sales or use tax is due on taxable sales of batteries without any deduction for the trade-in.

**Lubricating Oil** (§ 40-23-4(a)(1), Code of Ala. 1975): Lubricating oil is subject to the excise tax levied in § 40-17-171 and § 40-17-220, Code of Ala. 1975. Lubricating oil is not subject to sales tax when the excise tax has been paid.

**Oil Additives:** Additives to oil will be subject to sales tax or motor fuel tax. The additive is subject to excise tax if the additive is a substitute for oil. Products are either taxable as excise tax or sales tax but not both.

**For Example:**

**Excise Taxable**

Motor Oils  
Grease  
Transmission Fluid  
Rerefined Oil  
2 Or 4 Cycle Oil (No Fuel Mixture)  
Synthetic Oils  
Bar & Chain Oil  
Machine Oil (Usage)  
Tractor Hyd/Trans Fluid\* (Tdh)  
Engine Slick  
Slick 50\*\*  
STP Engine Treatment\*\*  
T-Plus\*\*  
Sewing Machine Oil  
Engine Armour\*\*  
Torque Fluid  
Turbine Oil  
Nu Power\*\*

**Sales Taxable**

Hydraulic Oils  
Brake Fluids  
Power Steering Fluid  
Antifreeze  
Carburetor Cleaner  
Fuel Additives  
Engine Degreasers  
STP Gas Treatments  
STP Oil Treatments  
WD-40  
Cutting Oils  
Rust Preventatives  
White Oils  
Process Oils  
Metal Working Oils  
2-Cycle Gas/Oil Mix\*\*\*  
4-Cycle Fuel Only\*\*\*\*

\*Must Have The Word Transmission Fluid On Package. Product Also Known As Universal Tractor Hydraulic.

\*\*Products Are Substituted For 1 Quart Of Regular Engine Oil.

\*\*\*Ex. 50:1, 40:1, Etc.

\*\*\*\*Ex. Ethanol Free 92+ Octane Fuel Synthetic Oil Mix Listed As Product Overview

**Warranty Parts (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.186.05](#) and [810-6-3-.73](#)):** Parts taken from the dealer's inventory used to fulfill original or extended manufacturer's warranties are not subject to sales tax. A flat deductible charged to the customer has no bearing on the tax status of the parts, if the dealer receives full credit for the parts from the manufacturer. When a dealer uses parts in repair work pursuant to any warranty agreements other than those granted by the manufacturer, the parts used in the repair are subject to tax.

**Sublet Repairs (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.141](#)):** A dealer who sublets all or part of a repair job purchases the parts at wholesale tax-free to be installed by the outside subcontractor; however, sales tax should be collected on the retail price of parts when billed to the consumer. Labor charges are not subject to sales tax if separately billed. A subcontractor who consumes materials and supplies, such as paint, are subject to tax on the cost of the materials and supplies at the time of purchase by the subcontractor.

**Freon:** Freon may be purchased tax-free to be used to repair a vehicle in a dealer's inventory if it becomes a part of the vehicle that will be resold. Freon used to repair or recondition customers' vehicles are subject to sales tax.

**Shop Supplies** (§ 40-23-1(6), Code of Ala. 1975): Shop supply fees included on an invoice with a retail sale of property are subject to sales tax.

**Wheel Weights:** Wheel weights may be purchased tax-free if used to balance the tires on vehicles in inventory that are resold; however, those used in servicing customers' vehicles are subject to sales or use tax.

**Pollution Control Devices (Administrative Rule [810-6-3-.46](#)):** Parts that are primarily used for pollution control, such as catalytic converters, are exempt from sales and use tax.

**Returned Merchandise** (Administrative Rule [810-6-1-.147](#)): When property is returned by the purchaser and the seller refunds the full amount paid, there is no sale and the sales price of the returned property is not to be included in the gross proceeds of sales. However, when property is returned and a part, but not all, of the sales price is refunded, the full sales price is to be included in the gross proceeds of sales. This would include, but not be limited to, property returned, and a restocking fee is charged before refunding the balance of the purchase price. Furthermore, if the property returned was previously purchased for resale, tax exempt, no sale tax is due on a restocking fee charged before refunding the balance of the purchase price.

**Tax on Technician's Tools:** Business personal property tax is due on technicians' tools whether they are purchased by the technician or dealership.

## Use Tax

Use tax is designed to prevent out-of-state vendors from having an unfair competitive advantage against in-state vendors who must collect sales tax. The liability for paying use tax falls on the purchaser if the vendor from whom a dealer purchases items to be used by the dealership does not collect sales or use tax. It is the responsibility of the dealer to register for a use tax account to self-assess and report use tax due directly to ALDOR. City and county use tax is also due.

Examples of items on which use tax might be due include computers purchased from out of state companies to be used at the dealership, shop equipment, advertising supplies, office supplies, shop supplies, etc. The majority of any large liability for use tax will be on new dealership construction or renovations where items are purchased out of state and sales or use tax was not collected at the time of purchase.

**Simplified Sellers Use Tax Program (SSUT):** The SSUT program allows an out-of-state eligible seller to collect, report and remit a flat 8 percent tax on sales made into Alabama, regardless of the locality shipped to in Alabama. However, sales of automotive vehicles are not included in the SSUT program, and the sales tax collected on sales of automotive vehicles should continue to be collected at the current state and local rates.

Use tax is not due on items purchased for resale.

**Use Tax Filing:** To use file taxes, go to [www.mylabamataxes.alabama.gov](http://www.mylabamataxes.alabama.gov).

## Lease/Rental Tax

**(§ 40-12-222, Code of Ala. 1975/Administrative Rule 810-6-5-.09)**

The leasing or renting of any automotive vehicle, truck trailer, semitrailer, or house trailer is subject to lease tax at the state rate of 1.5 percent of the gross proceeds of the lease. Leases of automotive vehicles to the state, cities, or counties are taxable to the lessor. However, the gross proceeds accruing from a motor vehicle lease transaction for at least 180 days with the federal government, or any state, county or municipal entity within the state, including a public-school board or an individual public school, or any entity eligible for a sales tax exemption under federal law or § 40-23-5, Code of Ala. 1975 is exempt from lease tax.

Many cities and counties also impose a lease tax. Those rates may be obtained at <https://www.revenue.alabama.gov/sales-use/tax-rates/>.

Lease tax is levied against the lessor (leasing company) and not the lessee (customer); however, the tax may be passed on to the customer. The tax that is passed on, however, must be included in the monthly taxable gross proceeds subject to lease tax. In other words, lease tax is a tax due on the total amount received.

Example:

\$500	monthly automotive lease tax payment	$\times 1.5\%$
	state lease tax	
\$507.50	lease payment with tax to consumer	$\times 1.5\%$
	state lease tax	
\$7.61	amount due to state from lessor	

**Short Term Leases:** On vehicles leased to customers from a fleet of rental cars, lease tax is due on the total rental contract, including insurance, damage waiver, etc. even if separately stated on the contract. Local tax rates are based on the location of the leasing company.

**Long Term Leases:** In long term leases with an option to purchase at the end of the lease, the typical transaction involves the leasing dealership, the leasing company to which the lease is assigned by the dealer, and the customer. In this type of transaction, lease proceeds are usually received by both the dealership and leasing company.

**A. Taxable Proceeds at Dealership:** Capitalized cost reductions or down payments by the customer whether by cash, manufacturer rebate, federal rebates, or other means are subject to lease tax. Dealer fees and other acquisition fees are subject to lease tax. § 40-12-220, Code of Ala. 1975 defines the gross proceeds for rental/leasing transactions. The state, city, and county lease tax due is based on the dealership location. The first payment, including any non-recurring charges not separately stated to the customer, made at the dealership is subject to rental tax due by the leasing company and is based on the customer's garage location of the vehicle. Bear in mind, some separately stated non-recurring charges could be subject to the leasing tax when the charge adds value to the lease. (Example: The dealer tinted the windows at the customer's request and added a one-time charge to the lease.)

The lease tax law does not allow a deduction for trade-ins, as in the sales tax law. If the customer trades in a vehicle that he owns and applies his equity in the vehicle as all or part of a cap cost reduction on the new leased vehicle, that amount is subject to lease tax. The net amount (vehicle ACV less any lien payoff) allowed for the trade-in constitutes gross receipts derived from the lease and is subject to lease tax. The dealership's records should clearly indicate the lien payoff by the dealership and the net trade-in allowance calculation. If the trade-in allowed has negative equity and that amount is added back to the price of the vehicle to be leased, the negative equity amount is subject to lease tax.

**Federal Government Rebates:** Rebates offered by the federal government for the lease of certain electric vehicles are considered part of the lease payment and is taxable. It is a capital cost reduction, and therefore, subject to tax.

**B. Taxable Proceeds Received by Leasing Company:** When the dealership sells or assigns the lease to a leasing company, the leasing company would owe rental tax on the first payment made at the dealership and the subsequent monthly amounts received from the customer based on the customer's garaging location of the vehicle.

(Note: The guidelines discussed in A and B above are applicable when the dealership writes up the lease in its name, receives the down payment, and then sells or assigns the lease to a leasing company. However, if the dealer is acting as an agent of the leasing company, the leasing company is liable for all rental taxes due on the transaction including rental tax on the cap cost reduction and the first payment if taken at the dealership.)

**Security Deposit:** A refundable security deposit is considered part of the lease proceeds. Lease tax can be charged when the deposit is received, then refunded when it is returned at the termination of the lease. Another option would be for the lessor to defer payment of the tax on the security deposit until the termination of the lease. If the lessor retains the deposit, lease tax would be due on it at the termination of the lease.

**Dealer Loaner Vehicles:** If a dealer loans a vehicle out of its inventory, the customer is not charged, and the dealer is not reimbursed by the manufacturer, no lease tax is due. If the customer is not charged, but the dealer is reimbursed by the manufacturer, lease tax is due on the amount paid to the dealer. Even if the dealer has a separate loaner vehicle entity, lease tax is due if the entity is reimbursed by the manufacturer. The same is true for a vehicle loaned under an extended warranty or service contract; if the dealer is reimbursed, tax is due.

**Loaners from Rental Car Companies:** If a dealer arranges a loaner vehicle for a customer through a separate rental car company (i.e., Enterprise) and the dealer is reimbursed from the manufacturer, the dealer should provide the rental car company with the dealership's rental tax number. The rental car company would not collect rental tax from the dealer, but the dealer would pay rental tax on the amount reimbursed by the manufacturer. If the dealer does not have a rental tax account, the dealer would pay rental tax to the rental car company.

**Leasing to someone in another state/delivery:** There is no drive-out provision for lease/rental tax. If a customer picks up a vehicle in Alabama, the transaction is taxable in Alabama. **Refer to the section entitled "Taxable Proceeds Received by Leasing Company."**

**Fleet/Rental Company Sales (Administrative Rule [810-6-5-.09](#))** : Sales to fleets are generally subject to sales tax unless they are made to leasing or rental companies that have an Alabama rental tax number and are rented in a transaction subject to Alabama rental tax. Sellers may check the validity of the license on My Alabama Taxes. Sales tax is due on the sale to an unqualified out-of-state lease company that takes possession in Alabama for a lease solely outside of the state. A drive-out certificate should be completed at the time of the sale if the vehicle is going to be first registered out of state for no sales tax to be due on such a transaction. **Special rules may apply. Refer to the section entitled “Vehicle Sales to Out of State Residents.”**

**Sale of a Previously Leased Vehicle:** If an automotive vehicle that was previously leased is later sold, sales tax is due on the gross proceeds of the sale.

**Proceeds Received by the Lessor (Administrative Rule [810-6-5-.09.01](#))**

The gross proceeds received by the lessor for services provided which are incidental to the lease and included in the lease agreement are subject to lease tax, even if the charges for such services are separately stated. When under a separate optional agreement, the lessor of tangible personal property performs independent services that are separate, distinct, and not incidental to the leasing of the property, the gross proceeds from those services are not subject to lease tax if separately stated.

When a lessor requires maintenance of the item leased as part of the leasing contract, the gross proceeds derived from the maintenance charge are subject to lease tax. Tax is not due on a separate, optional maintenance contract.

If delivery and pickup charges are part of the lease agreement, they are subject to lease tax. If those charges are imposed in a separate, optional agreement, they are not taxable.

**Lease Tax Filing:** To file lease taxes, go to [www.myalabamataxes.alabama.gov](http://www.myalabamataxes.alabama.gov).

## Casual Sales and Use Tax

Casual Sales and Use taxes (§ 40-23-101, Code of Ala. 1975) are designed to uniformly tax all vehicle sales and purchases that are not otherwise taxed. This commonly involves sales between individuals. The tax rates are the same as the sales and use tax rates.

Licensed dealers are required to collect sales taxes for the state, city, and county. If an individual purchases a vehicle other than at wholesale from any seller in Alabama that is not a licensed dealer or from outside the state of Alabama, the purchaser must pay both state and local use tax when registering the vehicle with the county licensing official in the county where the purchaser resides.

§ 40-23-106, Code of Ala. 1975 provides that an Alabama taxpayer will be given credit for taxes legally required to be paid to another state when such property is imported for use, storage, or consumption in Alabama.

## **Sales And Use Tax Direct Pay Permit**

(Administrative Rules [810-6-4-.14](#) and [810-6-5-.11.05](#))

ALDOR may issue a Sales And Use Tax Direct Pay Permit to manufacturers to purchase tangible personal property without the payment to the vendor of the sales tax, and providing for such manufacturer to report and pay such tax directly to ALDOR, in instances where ALDOR determines that it is practically impossible at the time of purchase for such manufacturer or his vendors to determine with any degree of certainty the applicability of such tax, and that such provisions will facilitate and expedite the collection of the tax which may be due from such consumer. Automotive vehicles purchased by direct pay permit holders from in-state licensed dealers should be purchased tax-free and the sales tax reported directly to ALDOR by the permit holder under the direct pay permit account.

## **Sales And Use Taxes on Electric Vehicles**

Licensed dealers are required to collect sales taxes for the state, city, and county on electric vehicles.

Funds received for allowing someone to charge their vehicle are not subject to sales or use tax, since this is a service.

The operator of such services should pay taxes on all tangible personal property they consume, and the utility company should be taxing the seller of this service on the electricity.

§ 40-12-242, Code of Ala. 1975, that deals with the license taxes and registration fees of private passenger automobiles and motorcycles; electric vehicles and the Electric Transportation Infrastructure Grant Program provides the state, counties, and cities with a revenue stream from the registrations of these type of vehicles.

This report is intended to provide information to automobile dealers and other recipients on the subject matters covered. ADAA is not rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services or advice and assumes no liability whatsoever in connection with its use. Please consult with the dealership's professional advisors.