

FACTSHEET

High-Occupancy Vehicle Lane Stickers

California law allows qualifying single-occupant, clean, alternative-fuel vehicles to use High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) or carpool lanes in order to improve air quality and ease freeway congestion. In order for a vehicle with just one occupant to use an HOV lane, it must display a Clean Air Vehicle Sticker issued by the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). State law generally requires toll bridge and toll road operators to impose the same toll — or free passage — on vehicles with Clean Air Vehicle stickers as they do on carpools.

White HOV stickers: White HOV stickers allow single-occupant, super-clean vehicles that meet the federal definition of an Inherently Low Emission Vehicle to drive in carpool lanes. These vehicles are typically pure battery electric vehicles; dedicated compressed natural gas or liquid petroleum gas vehicles; and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles, such as the BMW i3EV, Chevy Spark EV, Fiat 500e, Ford Focus EV, Honda Civic CNG, Honda Fit EV, Hyundai Tucson Fuel Cell, Mitsubishi i-MiEV, Nissan Leaf, Tesla Model S, and Toyota RAV4 EV, among others. As of September 18, 2014, DMV had issued 57,231 white stickers. State law places no limit on the number of white stickers DMV can issue. White stickers are valid until January 1, 2019.

Green HOV stickers: Green stickers allow single-occupant vehicles that meet California's enhanced advanced technology partial zero-emission vehicles (Enhanced AT PZEV) or transitional zero-emission vehicles (TZEV) requirements to drive in carpool lanes. The vehicles eligible to date for green stickers are the BMW i3 Rex, Cadillac ELR, Chevrolet Volt, Ford C-Max Energi, Ford Fusion Energi, Honda Accord Plug-In Hybrid, and Toyota Prius Plug-In. State law limited the number of green stickers that DMV may issue to 40,000. This program began on January 1, 2012; on May 9, 2014, DMV issued the 40,000th sticker. Legislation passed as part of the 2014-15 budget agreement raised the cap to 55,000 effective July 1, 2014. Subsequent legislation further increased the cap to 70,000 effective January 1, 2015. As of September 8, 2014, DMV had issued 53,024 green stickers. As with the white stickers, green stickers are valid until January 1, 2019.

A list of qualifying vehicles for these HOV stickers is available from the California Air Resources Board website: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/carpool/carpool.htm#FAQ>.

Legislation passed in 2004 established yellow stickers, which granted HOV access to hybrid or alternatively fueled vehicles (primarily the Toyota Prius). State law capped eligibility for yellow stickers at 85,000 vehicles, a limit that DMV reached in 2007; all yellow stickers expired on July 1, 2011.

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