

The Missouri License Plate: Frequently Asked Questions

The Voters Have Spoken! Over 258,000 votes were cast, with more than 56% selecting a new standard Missouri license plate depicting a bluebird sitting on a hawthorn branch. The state bird and tree truly represent Missouri, coupled with the state moniker “Show-Me State.”



Ribbon
54,014 votes
20.9%

“WINNER”
Bluebird
145,121 votes
56.2%

Reflection
58,949 votes
22.8%

Why are we changing our license plate?

State law requires the Department of Revenue to begin a full reissuance of plates by January 1, 2009. There are a number of reasons to change Missouri’s plate design: to improve the plate’s visibility, to reduce tab theft, and to ensure collection of state and local sales taxes and local property taxes. The Missouri State Highway Patrol aided the advisory committee to help ensure that Missouri’s new plate would be easier to read for law enforcement and would provide features to reduce tab theft. The license plate is a vital tool for law enforcement.

How will new plates reduce tab theft?

The new plates will feature a new, larger size of tab with other security features which will aid in eliminating tab theft. The month will be embossed in the upper left corner, and the new year tab will assist law enforcement in determining whether a plate is expired.

Who decided on the new plate designs?

According to state law (Section 301.129), an advisory committee is responsible for determining a new plate design. The committee is made up of the director of revenue, the superintendent of the highway patrol, the correctional enterprises administrator, and the chairpersons of the senate and house of representatives transportation committees.

When will I need to get a new plate?

You won’t need to make a special trip to the license office to obtain the new plates. Once the Department of Revenue begins issuing the new plate, you will trade in your old plate for a new one the next time you are scheduled to renew your plates.

Why does “Show-Me State” appear on the current and proposed plates?

State law requires the words SHOW-ME STATE to appear on the standard license plate.

What did the plate look like before we switched to the current plate?

Prior to the current design, Missouri’s license plates were white-on-maroon. The white-on-maroon plates started being issued in 1979.

What material makes up the Missouri license plate?

Missouri’s license plates are made of aluminum and are manufactured by the Missouri Department of Corrections at the Jefferson City Correctional Center. State law requires the plates to be produced by Missouri Vocational Enterprises.