

How to fill out VR-481 — Application for Exemption from Estate Administration to Transfer a Decedent's Vehicle

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/forms/maryland/vr-481-exemption-
from-estate-administration/

Maryland · written against VR-481 (05-26), issued under Maryland Transportation Article, Section 13-114

The short way round probate, for one narrow set of circumstances. Where the only thing a person left behind is up to two vehicles and their spouse is the sole heir, this application transfers the car without letters of administration and without a court. Five conditions are printed on it and all five have to be true, which is what makes it worth reading before you go looking for a solicitor.

This sheet is not the form. Download the blank VR-481 from the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration at <https://mva.maryland.gov/media/563?f=VR-481.pdf> — always take the current revision from the agency rather than a copy. Print this and keep it beside you while you complete theirs.

Every line, in the order you meet it

1	YOU	Title Number, Year, Make, Body Style, VIN	Five boxes across the top row, from the certificate the decedent held. Watch out: If there is a second vehicle, it needs its own application. The exemption covers up to two vehicles but the form describes one.
2	YOU	Full Name of Applicant (Spouse of the Decedent)	Your name, exactly as your own identification has it. Watch out: The name on this line and the name on the marriage documentation have to be reconcilable. Where a name changed at marriage, the marriage certificate is doing double duty here.
3	YOU	Date of Birth and MDID	Two boxes beside your name. Watch out: MDID is the Maryland identification number - your driver's licence number if you hold one. It is the same number the certificate calls a soundex.
4	YOU	Phone Number and Email Address	One row under the applicant block. Watch out: Give both. This is an application the MVA is likely to have a question about, and a question that takes three weeks by post is a question that delays the transfer.
5	YOU	Full Name of Decedent, Date of Birth, MDID	Three boxes describing the person who has died. Watch out: The MDID here is what lets the MVA match the vehicle record. If it is not to hand, it is printed on the face of the certificate as the owner's soundex.
6	YOU	The five conditions	Not fields - five numbered statements about the estate, all of which your signature certifies to be true. Watch out: Condition one is the one that catches people. It is about everything the decedent owned, not just the vehicles, and a house or a bank account puts the estate outside this route entirely.
7	YOU	Signature, Printed Name, Date	The last row, under a penalty-of-perjury certification and an indemnity. Watch out: The indemnity binds your heirs and personal representatives as well as you. It is a serious undertaking on a short form, and it is the price of skipping the court.

What gets this one rejected

- An applicant who is not the surviving spouse. The heading on the name box is a limit, not a description.
- A decedent who left more than two vehicles, or who left anything else at all. Condition one is about the whole estate, not just the cars.
- No proof of the marriage, which condition four asks for by name along with the death certificate.
- An open lien with nothing from the lender, which condition five requires to be sorted before the transfer rather than after.
- Unpaid debts or taxes, which condition three asks you to certify are settled.
- Using it where the estate is being administered anyway, in which case the personal representative signs the certificate and a letter of administration travels with it.

☒ Amber is what you write ☐ Grey is a block somebody else completes The completed example follows overleaf.

Read off VR-481 (05-26) and the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration's own pages, current as of 2026-08-23. Plain-language help with a form, not legal advice — where this and the agency differ, the agency governs. sellmycarhub.com



6601 Ritchie Highway, N.E.
Glen Burnie, Maryland 21062

VR-481 (05-26)

Application for Exemption from Estate Administration to Transfer a Decedent's Vehicle

1	Title Number 38774106	Year 2016	Make Honda	Body Style Utility	Vehicle Identification Number 2HKRW2H5XGH612480
2	Full Name of Applicant (Spouse of the Decedent) Rosalind T. Purnell			Date of Birth 07-19-1974	MDID P-641-208-573-914
4	Phone Number (410) 555-0163	Email Address r.purnell@example.com			
5	Full Name of Decedent Wilbur A. Purnell			Date of Birth 11-03-1969	MDID P-224-380-661-057
Note: The applicant must meet the criteria below to qualify for this exemption. In applying for a title for the above vehicle, the applicant states that: - The only property owned by the decedent is not more than two motor vehicles and the decedent's surviving spouse is the only heir or legatee; and - Administration of the estate of the decedent is not required; and - All debts and taxes owed by the decedent have been paid; and - Proof of the existence of the marriage is provided to the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) including the decedent's death certificate if applicable. - If lien(s) exist on this vehicle at the time of the decedent's death, either a lien release or letter of authorization from the lien holder must be obtained prior to the transfer of ownership.					
Certification					
I certify, under penalty of perjury, that the statements made above are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I further certify that should any legal action arise as a result of issuing a Certification of title my application for same, herein described, I hereby bind myself, my heirs, assigns and personal representatives to indemnify and save harmless the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration for any loss or damage which may be asserted against or which may be sustained as a result thereof. Any willful misinformation provided with fraudulent intent may be prosecuted under Maryland law.					
7	Signature Rosalind Purnell		Printed Name Rosalind T. Purnell		Date 08/12/2026

For more information, please call: **410-768-7000** (to speak with a customer service representative),
TTY for the hearing impaired: **800-735-2258**. Visit our website at: www.MVA.Maryland.gov