

# Handicapped Parking

## An Informational Guide



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**6 Allens Lane**  
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On behalf of the City of Peabody and the Peabody Police Department, I would like to thank you for your interest in this Handicap Placard Informational Guide. Raising awareness for legal handicap placard use and clarifying any confusion is a priority for The City of Peabody Parking Division and Peabody Police Department. I hope that you benefit from this guide and apply for a handicap placard, if qualified.

Should you have any questions after reading this guide, I strongly encourage you to contact one of the resources listed on Page 19 by phone or to come to the Peabody Police Department, located at 6 Allens Lane. The Parking Clerk is available during Parking Division business hours.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chief Thomas M. Griffin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Thomas M. Griffin  
Chief of Police

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# **Massachusetts General Law Ch. 90 §2**

## **Fact Sheet:**

An applicant may be issued both a **plate** displaying the “International Symbol of Access” and a **handicap placard** by the registrar.

### **APPLICANTS ISSUED ONLY HANDICAP PLACARDS:**

- Only a vehicle with private passenger registration or a vehicle designated to transport handicap persons may use a handicap placard.
- An authorized placard must be used when a vehicle is parked in a designated handicap space, including immediate drop off or pick up.
- Authorized placard users shall display the placard visibly through the windshield of the vehicle and in accordance with instructions provided.

### **APPLICANTS ISSUED HANDICAP PLACARDS AND/OR HANDICAP PLATES:**

- Any person who wrongfully displays a handicap plate or placard on or in a motor vehicle that is parked in a designated handicap, regular, or commercial parking space shall be subject to a fine of \$500 for a first offense and \$1,000 for a second or subsequent offense.

- If any person is found to have violated the use or display of a handicap plate or parking placard, the registrar shall suspend the operator's license for 30 days for a first offense, 90 days for a second offense, and for one year for a third or subsequent offense.
- The suspension shall be in addition to any other penalty, fine, suspension, revocation, or requirement that may be imposed for such a violation.
- The registrar may revoke the issued plate or placard if the authorized person willingly (without coercion or duress) authorized, permitted, or allowed it to be used by another person.

**Examples of misusing handicap placards are:**

- Using someone else's disability placard or handicap plate.
- Using an expired placard.
- Using a placard or plate that was issued based on incorrect or long-outdated information.
- Making a counterfeit placard or altering an existing one.
- Using the placard of a deceased person.

## Placard Eligibility Standards:

### Who is Eligible for a Handicap Parking Placard?

An individual is eligible for a handicapped parking placard if s/he:

- Cannot walk 200 feet without stopping to rest.
- Cannot walk without the assistance of another person, prosthetic aid, or other assistive device.
- Is restricted by lung disease to such a degree that their forced (respiratory) expiratory volume (FEV) in one second is less than one (1) liter when measured by spirometry.
- Uses portable oxygen.
- Has a Class III or Class IV cardiac condition as defined by the standards set by the American Heart Association.
  - **Note:** A person with a Class IV cardiac condition **must** surrender his or her license.
- Has Class III or Class IV functional arthritis according to the standards set by the American College of Rheumatology.
- Has Stage III or Stage IV anatomic arthritis according to the standards set by the American College of Rheumatology.
- Has been declared legally blind (please attach a copy of certification).
  - **Note:** A person who is legally blind **must** surrender his or her license
- Has lost one or more limbs or has permanently lost the use of one or more limbs.

## **Temporary Placard Eligibility:**

To be eligible for a temporary handicap parking placard, a medical professional must certify that a person's disability is predicted to last at least two (2) months.

*The qualification standards for disabled parking is set by Massachusetts's Regulation 540 CMR 17.00.*

## Application Content:

A.) Applicant's information:

- Full name, gender, address, city/town, zip code, DOB, SSN, height, telephone number, driver's license/MA ID number

B.) Is this the first time you have applied for a disabled parking placard/plate?

C.) What you are applying for:

- Placard
- Plate
- Motorcycle Plate
- Disabled Veteran Plate

D.) Important information regarding the misuse of handicap placards and plates

E.) Applicant's signature and certification

**Note:** A signature signifies that you understand and take responsibility for the use of your placard or plate, certifies that the information you have provided is the truth, and provides the authorization to release your medical records.

F.) To be completed by your healthcare provider

# **Handicap Placard Information**

## **Types of MA Disability Placards and Plates:**

- Temporary Disability Placards
- Permanent Disability Placards
- Disability License Plates
- Disabled Veterans Plates

## **Application for Disabled Parking Placard/Plate:**

### **An application must contain:**

A medical certification from one of the following:

- Physician (including podiatrists)
- Chiropractor
- Physician Assistant
- Registered Nurse
- Optometrist (for eye conditions **ONLY**)

For a Disabled Veterans Plate: a letter from the Veteran's Administration stating that your disability is at least 60% (as determined by the medical board) **AND** related to your military service

## **Costs of Disabled Parking Placards and Plates:**

**Placards:** Free

**Disability License Plate:**

- Passenger Vehicle: \$60 for two (2) years
- Motorcycle: \$20 for one (1) year

**Disabled Veterans Plate:** Free

Link to application: [Disabled Veteran Form](#)

### **Disabled Placard and Parking Facts:**

- Must have a photo ID on the placard to identify the owner
  - A white plastic covering is available if you wish to conceal your photo and/or name for privacy reasons.
- The sleeve must be removed if requested by law enforcement.
- It could take 4 to 6 weeks from the date of receipt for mailed-in applications to be processed.
- Medical Affairs will process walk-in applications the same day.
- A Handicap Placard is for the use of the disabled person only.

### **Placard Warnings:**

- Always make sure your issued placard is **current** and **Visible when displayed** while in use.
- Do **not** let any friends or family members use your legally obtained placard.
  - *The person misusing your placard could be fined and you may lose the privilege of having/using the placard for legitimate reasons.*
- **Expired placards must be destroyed.**

### **Placard Use in Other States:**

- If you have a legitimate Massachusetts license, you are a resident of Massachusetts, and you have a Massachusetts placard, you are allowed to use that placard out of state.
- If you relocate to another state, you must apply for a placard in that state.

## **Questions and Answers:**

### **Can I convert my disability plates to a placard?**

Yes. Submit a written request for a transfer to the RMV. State your current Disability Passenger Plate Number and enclose a photocopy of the vehicle registration.

### **Will applying for Disabled Parking affect my driver's license status?**

- There are a few conditions that automatically disqualify a person from holding a driver's license:
  - Legal blindness
  - Class IV heart disease as defined by the American Heart Association
  - Oxygen Saturation Rate of 88% or less at rest or with minimal exertion.

*The medical professional who completes your application may comment on other conditions that could affect your medical or physical ability to operate a motor vehicle safely.*

### **Can I use my placard in other states?**

- Yes. If you have a legitimate Massachusetts license, you're a resident of Massachusetts, and you have a Massachusetts placard, you are allowed to use that placard out of state.
- If you relocate to another state, you must apply for a placard in that state.

## **DO**

- **Do** display your placard while parking in a Handicapped Parking location. It should be hung from your rearview mirror facing **toward the front of the vehicle**. You may use the privacy sleeve to cover personal information. This privacy sleeve **MUST** be removed if so requested by law enforcement.
- **Do** park in a Handicapped Parking location when you need to exit the vehicle.
- **Do** use your disabled parking privileges in any designated Handicapped Parking location.
- **Do** realize that (when used and displayed properly) your disabled parking privilege exempts you from parking meter fees in Massachusetts.
- **Do** lock your vehicle and close the windows when using your placard.
- **Do** obey all parking rules and regulations.
- **Do** destroy **expired placards**.

**USE OF A PHOTOCOPY OF YOUR  
DISABLED PLACARD IS UNLAWFUL  
AND PUNISHABLE BY A FINE OR  
IMPRISONMENT.**

## **DO NOT**

- **Do Not** drive while your disabled placard is hung from your rearview mirror.
- **Do Not** let anyone use your disabled placard parking privileges. The abuse of your disabled placard is punishable by a \$500 fine, loss of your disabled parking privileges, and a 30-day suspension of your operator's license.
- **Do Not** park illegally. You must obey all parking rules and regulations or be subject to the fines imposed.
- **Do Not** park in cross-hatch areas (zebra stripes), which are reserved for van ramp/lift access. Parking on a cross-hatch is subject to a \$100-\$300 fine.
- **Do Not** use your Disabled Placard and/or Plate or Disabled Veteran plate parking privileges if you are not entering or exiting the vehicle.
- **Do Not** use your disabled placard in a vehicle weighing 10,000 pounds or more.
- **Do Not** display your disabled placard when the vehicle is in motion. This is potentially a \$50.00 fine.
- **Do Not** leave your disabled placard in an unlocked vehicle.
- **Do Not** use your disabled placard after its expiration date. You may be fined.

# **Handicap Placard Abuse:**

## **What is Placard Abuse?**

Handicap placard abuse is when an able-bodied person uses a handicap placard (issued to someone else) to reap the benefits of the placard.

## **Examples of placard abuse include:**

- Using someone else's placard (including a family member, friend, or stranger)
- Using a placard that is expired or no longer valid
- Making counterfeit placards or using an altered placard
- Using the placard of a deceased person

## **What are the penalties for committing placard abuse?**

- Parking ticket for \$100-\$300 (MGL c40 §22A)
- A RMV Citation of \$500 for a first offense and \$1,000 for a second or subsequent offense
- Suspension or revocation of the placard
- A 30-day suspension of the abuser's driver's license for a first offense, a 90-day license suspension for a second offense, and a year-long license suspension for a third offense

## **Why should you report placard abuse to authorities?**

- People with real disabilities are deprived of parking in the designated handicapped parking spaces when needed.

### **How can you report handicap placard abuse?**

- Please call or email the parking administrator.  
Phone: 978-538-6312  
Email: [parking@peabodypolice.org](mailto:parking@peabodypolice.org)

### **To Have a Placard Reinstated by RMV Medical:**

Write a letter to RMV Medical stating that you, the applicant, understand the rules of ownership of a Massachusetts Placard and will not allow anyone other than yourself to use it.

# Public and Private Lot Handicap Parking Regulations:

For a list of streets with handicapped parking spaces reference Peabody City Ordinance §19-81

## **PARKING SPACE NUMBER:**

### TOTAL SPACES

### REQUIRED ACCESSIBLE SPACES

1-14 (ADA ONLY)	1 SPACE
15-25	1 SPACE
26-50	2 SPACES
51-75	3 SPACES
76-100	4 SPACES
101-150	5 SPACES
151-200	6 SPACES
201-300	7 SPACES
301-400	8 SPACES
401-500	9 SPACES
501-1000	2% OF TOTAL



For more information, go to:

<http://www.mass.gov/anf/docs/mod/hp-parking-regulations.doc>

**For parking lots with 15 or more spaces:**

- Handicap parking spaces shall be the spaces in the lot located closest to the accessible entrance(s).
- If designated handicapped parking spaces cannot be located within 200 feet of the accessible entrance(s), an accessible drop-off area shall be provided within 100 feet of said entrance(s).
- **Width:** There are two acceptable options for handicapped spaces:
  - One 12-foot wide space to allow persons in wheelchairs to enter and leave an automobile on a uniform surface suitable for wheeling and walking, **or**
  - Two 8-foot wide spaces, separated by a 4-foot center aisle, which is painted or striped yellow.
- **Sidewalks:** If sidewalks are provided at these spaces, a curb cut (sidewalk ramp) shall be installed at each space or pair of spaces so that the handicapped persons are not required to enter the stream of traffic to access the sidewalks
- **Identification:** Spaces shall be identified by a sign at each pair of spaces. The sign shall be located at a height no lower than 5 feet and no greater than 8 feet to the top of the sign. The sign shall contain the “International Symbol of Accessibility.”

## **Benefits Associated with the Disabled Veteran Plate:**

Veterans issued a Disabled Veteran Plate are eligible:

1. To obtain a driver's license for no fee.
2. To register the Disabled Veteran Plate for no fee.
3. For exemption from sales tax on the vehicle registered to the Disabled Veteran Plate Holder, if the vehicle was purchased on or after November 1, 2006 for non-commercial purposes.
4. For an excise tax exemption on the vehicle described above.

## **Important Telephone Numbers:**

### **City of Peabody:**

Veterans Services.....	978-538-5925
Council on Aging.....	978-531-2254
Parking Clerk.....	978-538-6312
Peabody Police Department Non-Emergency Line	978-531-1212

### **Registry of Motor Vehicles:**

Medical Affairs Branch.....	857-368-8020
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# **PERSONAL NOTES:**

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On behalf of the Peabody Police Department, we would like to give a special thank you to Theresa Palmisano of the City of Peabody Parking Division and Peabody Police Department Interns, specifically Thomas Price and Andrew Truong, under the guidance of Maria Aiello for their assistance in the creation of this informational guide.

