

# POST 291 VEHICLE DONATION



## Donor FAQs

### **What are the benefits of donating my vehicle to Post 291?**

- Donating is easy and the pick-up is free.
- Donating skips the costs and hassles associated with selling a car, like paying for advertising and insurance, or for car repairs to keep your car in running condition while you wait for a buyer.
- Donating avoids the costs associated with keeping a car, such as registration, insurance, car repairs, and more.
- You can free up space at home and/or stop paying for extra parking.
- It's better than a low trade-in offer.
- Vehicle donations are tax-deductible, and you could reduce your taxable income when taxes are itemized.

### **What does CARS do with donated vehicles?**

Donated vehicles are sold through the used-car markets and provide crucial funding for nonprofit programs and services making an impact in communities all over the world. CARS works with a very large network of nationwide and independent suppliers to sell the vehicle and maximize donation proceeds. This includes analyzing vendor pricing and performance on a regular basis to improve the process and ensure the best possible return for our nonprofit partners and to maximize their donors' tax benefit. For unique or specialty items that have been donated, we may use other means to sell the vehicle to help ensure the maximum funds are received for each donation.

### **What type of paperwork will I need to donate my car?**

You will need a current and clear title. Any lien holder listed on the title must be cleared and/or released by the bank. This law varies by state.

### **What types of vehicles do you accept?**

All vehicles are considered! We strive to accept all types of donated vehicles (running or not) including cars, trucks, trailers, boats, RVs, motorcycles, campers, off-road vehicles, planes, heavy equipment, farm machinery, and most other motorized vehicles. To find out if we can accept your vehicle, please complete our secure online vehicle donation form, or call us toll-free at 855-500-RIDE (7433) during regular hours of operation.

### **Are there any costs?**

There is no cost to the donor. All expenses are deducted from the gross sales price, and if the costs ever exceed the price, those costs are covered by CARS (Charitable Adult Rides & Services).

### **When can I schedule my pick-up?**

When you are contacted by the towing/vendor company, you will most likely be given a time period to choose from for your pick-up window. These windows are based on your needs as a donor and what fits the realities of the traffic and volume in the geographic area of the vehicle.

**How long is the entire process from the vehicle pick-up to when the nonprofit receives its funds?**

The entire sale process can take approximately four to 12 weeks. The net cash proceeds from your generous vehicle donation are sent to Post 291 within five business days upon the receipt of the sale proceeds from CARS auction or direct buy vendors.

**How will my vehicle be picked up?**

Once you have provided us with all necessary information via the online vehicle donation form or over the phone with one of our Vehicle Donor Support Representatives, we will arrange to have a licensed tow company pick up your vehicle at a time convenient for you. The vehicle will be picked up and taken to one of our many sale locations where it will be sold—all at no cost to you.

**How quickly can I have my vehicle picked up?**

In many cases, once the donation record has been created, we can arrange to have the vehicle be picked up on the initial call. In other cases, within two to three business days, our tow vendor representative for your donation will be calling/texting and/or emailing you using the information you provided on the donation form to schedule a convenient appointment time for your vehicle to be picked up. If you need your car picked up sooner, please let one of our Vehicle Donor Support Representatives know during your initial call. We will do our best to accommodate your time frame.

**Do I need to have a title in order to donate my vehicle? What if I have title issues?**

In most states, you will need a current and clear (no liens) title for the nonprofit to accept your donation. Some states have exceptions. Any lien holder listed on the title must be cleared and/or released by the bank. Please refer to the motor vehicle division in your state for clear instructions. We are also available seven days a week during regular hours of operation. If you do not have it, or have problems with your title, please call us anyway at 855-500-RIDE (7433). It is possible that other arrangements may be made.

**Does my car have to be registered?**

This requirement varies from state to state. Give us a call at 855-500-RIDE (7433), and we will confirm for you. Each Vehicle Donor Service Representative is equipped with a 50-state guide for the steps necessary in each state and will advise you of these steps during the donation process.

**Do I need a smog certificate to donate my car?**

No. For states that require a smog certificate or safety inspection, you may still donate your vehicle without a smog certificate or safety inspection.

**My car doesn't run or hasn't been used in years. Can I still donate it?**

Yes! We can accept most vehicles, running or not. However, it must be in one piece and towable, have an engine, and be tow truck accessible. To find out if we can accept your vehicle, please choose a nonprofit, complete the secure online vehicle donation form, or call 855-500-RIDE (7433). Our Donor Support Team is available seven days a week during regular hours of operation.

**Will you take the vehicle if the engine has been removed/missing?**

In most cases, vehicles donated must be complete. However, we consider all donations. If it's missing any major parts, please let us know. We may request photos so it can be evaluated.

**What is considered accessible for safe towing?**

Vehicle donations considered accessible for safe towing are typically parked in the front driveway, in front of the home or apartment building, or on the street and without any other vehicles or other items blocking the intended donation. The tow operators typically cannot access areas that do not have a direct path to the vehicle

backyards and back alleyways, nor underground structures or other. Usually, all four tires should be inflated as well. We strive to consider every vehicle donation, so if you're not sure whether or not your vehicle is accessible for safe towing, please let us know and we will do our best to support you.

**My car does not run, and it is parked in a location in which I need the driver to help me push it out (i.e. garage, in an underground structure, etc.). Will the driver help me push it out?**

Vehicle donations need to be openly accessible for safe towing. We cannot guarantee our vendor will take on the liability. Some vendors cannot go under garages or in underground structures with their larger trucks. Please let us know if you are concerned about accessibility, and we will do our best to support you.

**What if I'm donating a camper shell, boat, trailer, etc.?**

For unique or specialty items that have been donated, we may use other means to sell the vehicle to help ensure the maximum funds are received for each donation. In order to continue with the donation process, please email pictures of each vehicle you intend to donate to [photos@careasy.org](mailto:photos@careasy.org). Please have each donation pictured by itself, not in a group.

**Do you accept junk/salvage titles?**

Yes; however, this varies by state. Salvage titles are different from junk titles. Salvage titles have been inspected and approved to be back on the road. A Junk title is basically a non-operational vehicle, usually sold for parts. Please give us a call at 855-500-RIDE (7433) to find out if we can accept your salvage title.

**My car is in another state and I can't be there at the pick-up. Can I still donate it?**

Yes! You may designate someone as the point of contact (POC) to be present on your behalf at the time of the pick-up of your donated vehicle. Please provide us with the name of your POC and prepare the person meeting the tow vendor by explaining that they'll need to hand over the signed title and keys. If you are not able to appoint anyone, please let us know and we will try our best to help. Please also remember to remove all personal belongings from the vehicle.

## Prepare for the Tow

**Do I have to pay for towing?**

No. Vehicle Donors do not pay for towing; it's free! The vehicles are picked up at no charge to you. All expenses are deducted from the gross sales price, and if the costs ever exceed the price, those costs are covered by CARS.

**Who will be calling me to schedule the pick-up?**

Our vendor representative for your donation will be calling/texting and/or emailing you using the information you provided on the donation form for scheduling. Please be aware you will very possibly receive a call from a phone number that you don't recognize pertaining to your donation; this is the vendor.

**How do I get ready for the tow driver and what can I expect?**

Please remove all personal belongings from the vehicle and have the title ready at the time of the pick-up (unless otherwise directed). The tow operator will pick up the title, keys and vehicle. Please wait to mark the title; the tow vendor will assist you in signing the title. In most cases, the tow operator will also provide a donation receipt. Should you not receive a receipt, please give our Donor Support Team a call and we will get one out to you.

**Do I remove the license plates or leave them on the vehicle?**

This depends on the state in which your vehicle is registered. In some states, you are required to surrender or

return the license plates after donating. If your state requires you to remove the plates before donating your vehicle, please do what you can to remove your own plates. We cannot guarantee the driver will be able to assist you with plate removal. To find out what's expected for your state, give our Vehicle Donor Support Team a call and we'll walk you through it.

### **Can I drop the vehicle off to save on towing costs to the nonprofit?**

You may ask the representative scheduling your vehicle pick-up with the vendor about this option.

### **Do I have to wash my car before the pick-up?**

No need! Our vendors will make your vehicle donation as sale ready as possible, including possibly making minor repairs and/or fixes, and washing the vehicle.

### **Does my title need to be notarized?**

Whether or not you need notarization depends on the state that holds your vehicle title. Currently, CARS is aware that notarization is a requirement for the following states: Arizona, Kentucky, Louisiana, Montana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Wyoming. However, each state's requirements are subject to change. If you would like to confirm if your state requires notarized title transfers, go to your state's motor vehicle department's website and click on your state to see your state's title transfer requirements. (Notarization is used to deter fraud by ensuring proper identification has been provided and approved prior to signing over the title, and some states require notarization of the title prior to donating).

## **After the Pick-up**

### **What do I do after my vehicle is picked up?**

Depending on the registered state of the vehicle, the next step for you after your vehicle is picked up is to notify the state about your recent vehicle donation and that you are no longer in possession of the vehicle. Please only notify your state after the vehicle is picked up. Call CARS to learn the steps required for notifying your state that you've donated your vehicle.

### **What is State Notification?**

State notification releases a donor from liability over the vehicle, including registration fees and from having to keep the vehicle insured. State notification is a way for the state to create a record that the owner is no longer in possession of the vehicle. The steps needed to release your liability of a donated vehicle vary by state. Depending on the state, this step may require surrendering your license plates, cancelling your registration, or submitting a report of sale or notice of transfer. State notification should be completed before cancelling your insurance.

### **Do I have to notify my local Motor Vehicle Division or DMV when I donate my vehicle?**

If state notification is required, it is up to the donor or owner of the donated vehicle to complete this process. Please do not rely on the pick-up driver or vendor to report to the State/Motor Vehicle Department that you are no longer in possession of the vehicle. If you need support, please call our Vehicle Donor Support Team at 855-500-RIDE (7433) seven days a week during regular hours of operation, or email [donorsupport@careasy.org](mailto:donorsupport@careasy.org). Our Donor Support Representatives can provide you with the steps necessary for each state.

### **When do I cancel my insurance?**

Only cancel your vehicle's insurance AFTER you have notified the state that you've donated your vehicle. If your state requires notification, please be aware that you should never cancel your insurance prior to reporting to the state you are no longer in possession of the vehicle. This is a general rule for States/Motor Vehicle Departments that require Notification be submitted or license plates returned.

### **What if there is a problem with my car after it's donated?**

After we have picked up the vehicle, we take full responsibility. In the rare event that you receive any notification of a lien sale, DMV actions, infractions, evasions or other activity related to your donated vehicle, please contact us at 855-500-RIDE (7433) immediately for assistance. Please note that you are liable for all fines/fees related to your vehicle prior to the pick-up. To get answers for your specific DMV questions, please refer to the DMV in your state for clear instructions.

## **Title Transfer & Sale**

### **What is the Title Transfer Process? Who takes care of that?**

The title transfer is different in each state. Our vehicle donation program and our vendors/auction yards will help you take the correct steps to ensure that your title paperwork is transferred correctly at the time of your vehicle pick-up.

### **What is a title?**

A title is a document that proves legal ownership of the donated vehicle. This is provided by your state's local motor vehicle division or DMV.

### **Where do I find my title number?**

The location of the title number on the title varies from state to state. It will usually indicate 'Title Number', 'Control Number', 'Certificate Number' or Document Number'. You can also call our Vehicle Donor Support Team at 855-500-RIDE (7433), and we can help.

### **When should I sign over the title?**

Please wait to mark the title until after you have discussed it with the tow vendor as they will assist you in showing you the correct location in which to sign the title.

### **Who is considered the purchaser of the donated vehicle? Is it the nonprofit/charity to which I'm giving my vehicle?**

The purchaser of your donated vehicle is not the charity. It will either be the vendor or Charitable Adult Rides & Services.

### **If there is more than one person listed as owner on the title, do all parties have to sign the title?**

If the word "and/or" is not listed between the names of the parties/owners, then all parties will need to sign the title.

### **How do I know if I have a lien on my title?**

Typically, if there is a lienholder/finance company listed, it is printed on the face of the title indicating a lien. It may be accompanied by a signature from a representative of the lender. If this is not on your title, then you will need to include a lien release letter. If you have questions about this, please email [titles@careasy.org](mailto:titles@careasy.org).

### **During the sale process, how do I check on the status of my car or get other answers?**

We are available seven days a week. Please call 855-500-RIDE (7433) or email [donorsupport@careasy.org](mailto:donorsupport@careasy.org).

### **Will I be notified when it sells?**

Once your vehicle sells, our Vehicle Donor Support Team will either email and/or mail a thank-you letter on behalf of the nonprofit receiving your donation, which serves as a copy of your tax receipt. Please note that if your vehicle sells for more than \$500 and your tax identification number has been provided, an IRS Form 1098-C,

'Contributions of Motor Vehicles, Boats, and Airplanes', will be mailed to you within 30 days of the sale stating the amount of gross proceeds received from your donation.

### **How do you sell the vehicles?**

CARS works with more than 400 vendors throughout the country to sell vehicles. Every donation is personally reviewed to determine the most effective sales process. In most markets, we have the flexibility of multiple sales outlets to route vehicles to the right buyer. Vehicles may be sold through the auction, to a private buyer, or to a salvage yard. Our expansive network of vendors allows us to be more competitive with your inventory as well as leverage our volume to increase prices, providing the nonprofit with maximum returns and maximizing the donor's tax benefit.

### **Are CARS sold at auction?**

In most cases, vehicles are sold through an auction facility. We carefully evaluate each vehicle to find the best buyers. We assess the year, make, model, location, and resale potential then monitor the sale to ensure maximum returns. High-end or specialty vehicles are individually evaluated and sold for the highest market value.

### **Do you fix the vehicle before selling it?**

This depends on the condition of the vehicle as represented by the donor. We strive to get the vehicle in the best sale-ready condition as possible to maximize the value.

### **How long is the sale process?**

The entire sale process can take approximately four to 12 weeks. However, there are times the sale process can exceed 12 weeks. This occurs if we are holding onto the vehicle for a better sales price, etc.

## **Tax Benefits**

### **Are vehicle donations tax-deductible?**

Yes; vehicle donations are tax-deductible. Individual tax situations vary. For specific tax-related questions, please consult your tax advisor or refer to IRS Publication 4303.

### **How is the value of my tax deduction determined?**

Most vehicles are sold through local wholesale auctions, and we work to get the highest return per vehicle for the nonprofit. According to the IRS Guidelines, donors may claim fair market value for their vehicle donation up to the actual sale value. If a vehicle is sold for more than \$500, the maximum amount of your deduction will be the sales price of the vehicle which will be listed on your IRS Form 1098-C.

A special rule may apply if the donated vehicle sells for \$500 or less. In this case, a deduction for the lesser of the vehicle's fair market value on the date of the contribution may be claimed, or \$500, provided you have written acknowledgment (i.e. the initial donation receipt or the thank-you letter you receive once the donation process is complete).

### **Define the Fair Market Value**

The "fair market value" of a vehicle is the price that you could sell it for in its current condition to another individual, willing seller and willing buyer, and it represents the cash that you give up to make the donation. A convenient source of this information is the private party sale value as shown in online valuation guides such as Kelley Blue Book (<https://www.kbb.com/company/faq/new-cars/#whatIsFairMarketRange>).

**How do I request a donation/tax receipt?**

Please call us at 855-500-RIDE (7433) during regular hours of operation, or email [donorsupport@careasy.org](mailto:donorsupport@careasy.org), and we would be happy to help you.

**Will my donation count for the year I submit my donation form, even if I don't receive a receipt until the following year?**

Yes! As long as you submit your donation form by December 31st for a vehicle with a clear title, you could qualify to receive a tax deduction for the same tax year.

Where can I find additional IRS tax deduction requirements for a charitable car donation?

- IRS Publication 526, Charitable Contributions
- IRS Publication 561, Determining the Value of Donated Property
- IRS Publication 4303, A Donor's Guide to Vehicle Donations
- IRS Form 8283, Noncash Charitable Contributions
- IRS Instructions for Form 8283, Noncash Charitable Contributions

If you still have questions, please feel free to reach out to us toll-free at 855-500-RIDE (7433) seven days a week during regular hours of operation.

**Will I get a donation tax receipt?**

In most cases, donors will receive an initial donation receipt from the tow driver at the time of the vehicle pick-up. This initial acknowledgement will indicate the donor's name as well as the year, make, model and condition of the donated vehicle. Should you not receive a receipt, please give our donor support team a call and we will get one out to you.

Donors will also be mailed a thank-you letter on behalf of the receiving nonprofit within 30 days of the sale of the vehicle, which serves as a tax receipt. This will be the donor's final tax document if their vehicle sells for \$500 or less.

If the vehicle sells for more than \$500 and the donor has provided their tax identification number, CARS will also mail an IRS Form 1098-C, 'Contributions of Motor Vehicles, Boats, and Airplanes', to the donor within 30 days of the sale stating the amount of gross proceeds received from their donation.

**What if my vehicle is valued over \$5,000?**

The value a vehicle donor may claim will be the amount of gross proceeds received from their vehicle. If the vehicle sells for more than \$5,000, the donor will need to complete Section B of Form 8283 and obtain an acknowledgment signature on the form prior to claiming the deduction, and the completed form will need to be included with donor's income tax return.

If the vehicle sells for more than \$5000 and the donor contacts CARS (Charitable Adult Rides & Services) directly requesting an 8283 Tax Form, one of our Donor Support Representatives will tag the record for 8283 Form Assistance. The Sr. Accounting Representative will email the donor the 8283/8282 Tax Form with the donor's information to the nonprofit who received the donation. The nonprofit then completes the signature portion and mails the hard copy of the 8283 Tax Form to the donor. The nonprofit keeps a copy of the 8283 Tax Form and Hard copy for the 8282 Tax Form for their records, and the donation record is noted.

If the vehicle sells for more than \$5000 and the donor contacts the nonprofit directly requesting an 8283 Tax Form, the nonprofit then emails CARS, to assist with providing the pre-filled 8283 Tax Form. CARS then emails the pre-filled 8283/8282 Tax Forms to the nonprofit. The nonprofit then mails the hard copy 8283 Tax Form with

signature to the donor. The nonprofit also keeps a copy of the 8283 Tax form and a hard copy for the 8282 Tax Forms for their records. The donation record is noted.

**What is the latest date and time that I can donate my vehicle and still count it as a tax deduction for the same year?**

CARS literally gives donors until the very last minute (11:59pm, 12/31) to contact us and pledge their vehicle donation to their preferred nonprofit, so they can have an opportunity to count it as a charitable contribution for the same year\*. The donation is time stamped from the day that the donor calls in and provides their personal/donation information. For instance, your donation receipt would reflect December 31st even if the pick-up was scheduled sometime in January. \*For a donation to qualify for a contribution, the vehicle must be picked up and sold in a timely fashion with all paperwork submitted and completed.

**I donated earlier this year—but did not receive or may have misplaced my tax receipt. Can you resend it?**

We would be happy to help you. Please call us at 855-500-RIDE (7433) during regular hours of operation, or you may email [donorsupport@careasy.org](mailto:donorsupport@careasy.org), and simply let us know you need a replacement.

**Will my donation count for the year I submit my donation form, even if I don't receive a receipt until the following year?**

Yes! As long as you submit your donation form by December 31st for a vehicle with a clear title, you can still count it as a charitable contribution for the same tax year. \*For a donation to qualify for a contribution, the vehicle must be picked up and sold in a timely fashion with all paperwork submitted and completed.

**Donate Now**

Newport Harbor Post 291 of The American Legion  
is tax exempt under IRC 501(c)19 with tax  
ID number 95-1049145.

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