

Referee inspection update

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Bureau of Automotive Repair

Background (1 of 3)

- AB 2496 (Petrie-Norris, Chapter 595, Statutes of 2022) included provisions that took effect on January 1, 2023 and deferred provisions that will take effect on January 1, 2027

Background (2 of 3)

- Existing law
 - Requires light-duty vehicles up to 6,000 pounds (other than motorcycles) to be equipped with an adequate muffler to prevent any excessive or unusual noise (95 dbA) and prohibits a cutout, bypass, or similar device
 - Prohibits the modification of an exhaust system in a manner that will amplify or increase the noise emitted
 - Requires BAR Referee stations to provide for the testing of exhaust systems for vehicles that have received a citation for excessive noise
 - Prohibits a person from modifying the exhaust system of a vehicle with a whistle tip

Background (3 of 3)

- January 1, 2027 changes
 - Courts shall require a certificate of compliance for a violation of excessive exhaust noise within three months of the violation date
 - If a certificate of compliance is not provided to the courts within three months, the courts shall issue a registration hold and notify the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
 - Before renewing the registration of any vehicle, DMV shall check whether a court has issued a registration hold, and refuse to renew the registration until a certificate of compliance has been received by the court
 - Expands exhaust noise limits, Referee testing, and registration holds to include motorcycles and vehicles up to 14,000 pounds GVWR

Implementation update

- Noise inspection module has been added to the California Vehicle Inspection System (Cal-VIS) for Referee stations
 - Fully electronic inspection process
 - Noise inspection results already appearing on BAR's website at:
<https://www.bar.ca.gov/inspection>
- Referee facilities are prepared to inspect motorcycles and heavier-duty vehicles
- Process for courts and DMV to verify a certificate of compliance is in place

Other considerations

- Ongoing collaboration with DMV and courts
- Referee noise inspection fee is currently set in BAR regulations at \$108
- Fee will likely increase in planned regulation package to establish fees for various Referee inspection services, as authorized in Health and Safety Code section 44014(c)
- Compliance scenarios that create an unreasonable hardship for motorists without resulting in a sufficient corresponding benefit to controlling a vehicle's exhaust system noise level

Thank you

For comments and questions, please contact:

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