

**Questions/Answers and Discussion Questions
for the Florida Association of Local Arts Agencies'
August 3, 2010, Conference Call about the Florida Arts License Plate**

Some of the following questions are from Florida's local arts agencies; and some of the answers are from notes from Terry Olson who attended the July 26, 2010, DHSMV workshop, and from the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles' Web site.

1. When was the Florida Arts License Plate established?

The Florida Arts License Plate Program was created by the Legislature in 1994. Funds collected through the sale of these specialty plates are distributed to the counties where the plates are sold and are used to support arts organizations, programs, and activities within that county. The law was enacted on February 1, 1995.

2. What is the *Florida Statute* reference?

Florida Statutes 320.08058 reads as follows:

(12) FLORIDA ARTS LICENSE PLATES.--

(a) The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles shall develop a Florida arts license plate as provided in this section. In small letters, the word "Florida" must appear at the top of the plate, and the word "Art" or "Arts" or a combination of words including the word "Art" or "Arts" may appear at the bottom of the plate.

(b) The license plate annual use fees are to be distributed quarterly to the single arts council officially designated by the county in direct proportion to the amounts of fees collected in each county. If there is no county arts council, fees collected must be forwarded to such other agency in the county as the highest ranking county administrative official designates, to be applied by the arts council or agency to support arts organizations, arts programs, and arts activities within the county.

3. What is the annual fee for the Florida Arts License Plate?

\$20, plus the regular registration fee

4. How much money has been raised from the sell of the Florida Arts License Plate?

Refer to the attached document that shows revenue generated for each county from Fiscal Years 2000 through 2007 – this report was generated from data available at www.flhsmv.gov.

5. How many specialty plates are there in Florida?

There were 42 specialty license plates in 2000; and in 2009, 113 specialty license plates.

6. How much money does the sell of special license plates generate?

Of the \$13.7 million in 2000-license-plate transactions, \$990,000 were from specialty plates; of the \$15.5 million in 2009-license-plate transactions, \$1.623 million were from specialty plates. Specialty license plates have gone from 7.2% of the total to 10.6% of the total. For 2010 to date, that percentage is down a little to 9.87%.

7. How can one purchase a Florida Arts License plate?

When you go to renew your registration at your local tax collector's office (<http://www.flhsmv.gov/offices/>), simply let them know you wish to replace your current license plate with a specialty license plate. If it is not time in your license plate's cycle to replace the metal license plate, you will pay a few additional dollars to switch to a specialty license plate; so, the best time to switch is when you're going to have to replace your metal license plate (was five years; now, it is ten years). Specialty license plates cost a set fee (annually) above the standard Florida license plate, and the fees vary based on the type of license plate – the fee for the Florida Arts License Plate is \$20. These additional funds go to support the cause for which the specialty license plate was designed. For more information, see Specialty License Plate Reports at <http://www.flhsmv.gov/html/revrpts.html>.

There are issues with on-line purchasing the Department of Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles is working the problems out.

8. Who is the contact person at the Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicle agency who is responsible for the Florida Arts License Plate?

Jeanette Collins, 850-617-3870, jeanettecollins@flhsmv.gov

9. How often do people have to pay the fee for the Florida Arts License Plate?

Annually when they renew their tags or they can pay for two years at a time. Specialty plates can be retained for 10 years before replacing them.

10. What are the challenges to accurately estimate specialty-plate revenue?

Biennial funds can be confusing. The first year's registration money comes in the month when purchased. The second year's portion is held and comes in July of the following year. Going from five to ten years before replacing the actual metal tag means it will be 2014-2015 before "new" tag sales pick up. The ARTS, EDUCATION, and the CHOOSE LIFE plates are the only three that are divided up by county.

11. What recommendations do we have to share with the Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles concerning reports?

There are many types of reports available and the department is asking for format types the groups' desire. The department is changing its Web site where many reports are listed.

The department is very interested in building relationships with us and will send a survey to find out more information about how we think the process should work. They wondered if they should do another workshop.

12. How are these specialty license plate funds distributed and reported?

Currently, they distribute funds collected on Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week. They will, however, explore other options for monthly distribution of funds. When they send you a notice of funds being distributed, the date they indicate is the date it goes to the department that mails checks. This department can take 5 days to get the checks out.

Three counties may charge more for license plates because they use outside agencies to collect registrations.

Each specialty license may have different regulations about how the revenue can be spent. It can't be used for lobbying. The Florida Arts License Plate revenue can be used for promotion. Administration expenses can only be related to the license-plate program. If you report part of a person's salary for that purpose, you need to produce time sheets.

If reports aren't filed correctly, your county funds can be withheld and eventually lost.

13. Can new license plates be created?

There is a moratorium on new plates until July 1, 2014. To apply for a plate, a group needs to send a letter of intent and a draft sample plate and pay a \$60,000 application fee. Then, they need to pre-sell 1,000 plates within a two-year period. Two groups made it this year: Veterans of Foreign Wars and Children First. Three other groups did not make it and had their \$60,000 refunded.

The Law

Section 320.08053, *Florida Statutes*, outlines the requirements an organization must meet to request a new specialty license plate be created. Section 320.08056, *Florida Statutes*, provides the responsibilities of the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles in developing and issuing specialty license plates when legislation authorizes a new specialty license plate to be established.

Application Requirements

With the exception of specialty license plates that were authorized during the 2008 Legislative Session or submitted requirements by a specific date, the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles may not issue any new specialty license plates pursuant to ss. 320.08056 and 320.08058, Florida Statutes, between July 1, 2008 and July 1, 2011.

Legislation must be enacted to establish a new specialty license plate design. Proposals for specialty license plates may only be considered by the legislature upon compliance with statutory requirements. The Division of Motor Vehicles Procedure RS-20, Creation of A Specialty License Plate, contains the proper requirements that organizations must follow to pursue legislation for specialty license plates. [Click here to view DMV Procedure RS-20.](#)

The basic requirements are: The organization must hire an independent survey company to conduct a survey on Florida registered motor vehicle owners, an application fee of \$60,000, a long-term and short-term marketing plan, financial analyses and the design of the license plate. The requirements must be submitted to the Department 90-days before the first day of the legislative session.

Once you have reviewed the procedure and you have questions, contact the Specialty License Plate office at (850) 617-2807. **PLEASE NOTE: This number is not for personalized/vanity license plates. For information or questions regarding personalized/vanity license plates contact your [local county tax collectors office.](#)**

14. Can we design a new Florida Arts License Plate? Before a new design can be submitted, we must first purchase the unsold inventory of the current plate.

15. Can we get the names of those who purchase the Florida Arts License Plates?

The Driver's License Privacy Act means that the local group getting license plate funds can only get the contact information of those who've agreed to share their information with the sponsoring organization. The Driver's License people are prompted to ask that question.

16. Do our local grant panels that make decisions about how these Florida Arts License Plate funds are allocated need to meet under the Sunshine State laws?

Consult a lawyer about whether your grant panels need to follow Sunshine State laws.

17. Can a specialty license plate be canceled from the list of choices?

A specialty plate is retired if it sells less than 1,000 UNLESS it is a collegiate one. The “Corrections” plate was dropped this year, but no others are in danger of falling below that.

18. How can I find out additional information about the Florida Arts License Plate and other specialty license plates?

Here are some links to information:

- a. The index link for Specialty License Plates at the Department of Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles: <http://www.flhsmv.gov/specialtytags/SLP.html>
- b. Link to Florida Arts License Plate Information: http://www.flhsmv.gov/dmv/specialtytags/miscellaneous/florida_arts.html
- c. Link to download Florida Arts License Plate Image: <http://www.florida-arts.org/programs/images/licenseplate.tif>
- d. Link to License Plate Revenue Reports: <http://www.flhsmv.gov/html/revrpts.html>

19. Does anyone have ideas or suggestions for promotion that has worked well for them?

20. One problem encountered in Key West is that due to tight parking regulations in the Old Town area, certain spaces are designated residential which means your license tag must say Monroe County or you may be ticketed even if you are in fact a resident. We have encountered some resistance to purchasing the tag because nowhere on the tag does it indicate the county name. We are working with the City on this, but I wonder if that is a problem unique to us or have others encountered this and if so is there any way for the tag to show the name of the county?

21. Regarding the record keeping, yesterday we received a summary e-mail for license plates purchased over a period of time. Are we correct in assuming that this will be the new system? What is the period of time that is summarized? This summary system is much appreciated; it is more efficient than processing numerous checks for small amounts.

22. Can we commission a new artwork design for the license plate? Many of our members and supporters have suggested that the plate be redesigned to give it a fresh look. This could also give us a reason to revitalize our marketing efforts with the plate program. Is there any chance of have a new design or the Arts plate? Can we have multiple designs?

23. Can we figure out an easy way to purchase the arts license plate online?

24. Can we do a statewide advertising plan?

25. My understanding is that there is not a standard state brochure/flyer for the FL Arts Tag. If that is correct, what (if any) are the requirements for any advertising I do for Okaloosa County's FL Art Tags? If there is a standard brochure/flyer, how do I order them?

26. Are there any uses of the Florida Arts License funds that are strictly forbidden?

Other Questions for Discussion or Research?