

Trespass Towing Rules & Regulations

What Every Vehicle Owner Should Know



CITY OF
TALLAHASSEE
POLICE DEPARTMENT

TRESPASS TOWING

Trespass towing involves removing a vehicle illegally parked on private property at the owner's request. This is legal under Florida law and Tallahassee ordinance, allowing towing 24/7. Property owners can hire towing companies to remove and store vehicles, with the vehicle owner covering all costs.

There are two types of trespass towing:

1. Request-Based Towing: Property owners can request towing at any time. Commercial and multi-unit residential properties must have signs indicating that unauthorized vehicles will be towed at the owner's expense.
2. Roam Towing: Between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m., residential property owners can authorize towing without a specific request if:
 - Signs state: "This property authorizes Roam Towing between the hours of 7 p.m. - 7 a.m. per city code section 20-166."
 - A photo of the vehicle is taken before towing to show the violation.

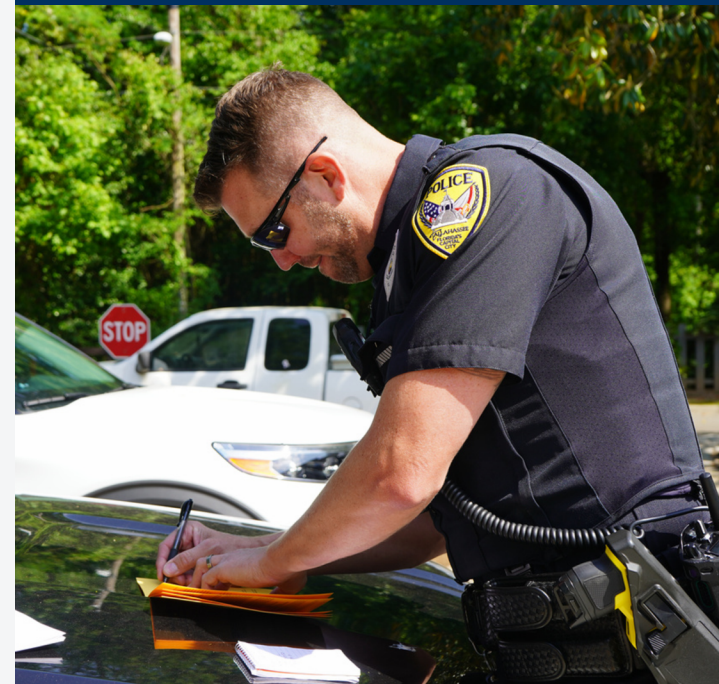
This type of tow is also allowed on commercial properties 24/7.



PARKING GUIDELINES

Residential Property: Check if a parking decal is needed and get one immediately upon moving in. Ask for the property's rules on visitor and overnight guest parking, as many require permits and have limited spaces. Request a written copy of these rules when signing your lease.

Commercial Property: Look for signs at the entrance indicating parking restrictions for certain businesses or hours. Be aware that compliance is often monitored.



DURING THE TOW

If your vehicle is being towed, you may avoid paying for the tow if you act quickly. There are three stages to a towing situation:

- **No Fee:** Before the vehicle is physically connected to the tow truck, you can have it released without charge. "Physically connected" means the tow apparatus is attached to the vehicle.
- **Drop Fee:** After the vehicle is connected but before it is removed from the property, you can have it released for half the tow fee (\$65). The operator must give you time to pay.
- **Full Tow:** Once the vehicle leaves the property, you must pay the full tow fee.

CRIMINAL ACTS

Once towed, the towing company has a legal lien for fees and costs. Removing the vehicle without paying or consent is unlawful, with a penalty of up to \$500 or 90 days in jail (Section 713.58, Florida Statutes).

CHALLENGING A TOW

If you believe your vehicle was improperly towed you can:

- Pay fees to retrieve your vehicle and file a small claims action against the towing company.
- Alternatively, file a lawsuit in county court with a bond matching towing and storage charges. Once bonded, retrieve your vehicle with a court-issued certificate.

To report violations of Florida law or City Ordinance, contact the Tallahassee Police Department Towing Administrator at (850) 891-4766 or TPDTowingAdminstrator@talgov.com



Scan this QR code for quick access to more information on towing regulations and procedures.



AFTER THE TOW: TRESPASS TOW "BILL OF RIGHTS"

If your vehicle is towed

- **Finding Your Vehicle:** Look for signage with the towing service's name and phone number.
- **Fees:** The maximum tow fee is \$130. An additional \$35 dolly fee may apply if used, with a photo provided as proof.
- **Payment:** You can pay with cash, debit, or credit card (Visa/MasterCard). Paying in cash reduces the fee by \$5.
- **Storage:** No storage fees for the first 24 hours; \$25/day after that.
- **After-Hours Fee:** A \$30 fee applies for releases between 11 p.m. and 8 a.m. Consider waiting until after 8 a.m. to avoid this fee.
- **Administrative Fee:** A \$45 fee plus postage may be charged after three days if a certified letter is sent.
- **Inspection:** You can inspect your vehicle before paying fees. The tow company is liable for any damage caused without reasonable care.
- **Personal Property:** Retrieve personal items during business hours without paying a fee.
- **Receipt:** A detailed, signed receipt must be provided at payment.