

Frequently Asked Questions

What if someone other than the owner was driving the vehicle when it was impounded?

The owner of the vehicle is responsible for paying all fees and charges associated with the immobilization prior to having the vehicle released. The owner may seek civil action against the driver for any expenses incurred as a result of the immobilization.

What will happen if I cannot claim my vehicle?

Under Arizona law, the tow company may file for an abandoned title and seek ownership of the vehicle if it is left at the tow yard unclaimed for more than ten (10) days. If you have difficulty in paying the tow and storage fees, you should contact the tow company if you wish to retain ownership of your vehicle.

At the end of the 30 days can I just go to the tow company and claim my vehicle?

No. The tow company cannot release an immobilized vehicle without paperwork from the Pima County Sheriff's Department authorizing the release.

May I request a hearing about the immobilization of my vehicle?

Yes. Hearings are generally only needed if you are challenging the validity of the immobilization. If you are now in compliance with the law and are eligible to get your vehicle back, **you do not need a hearing**—simply contact the Pima County Sheriff's Department to make the necessary arrangements.

You may request a hearing by writing or calling the Pima County Sheriff's Department at the address and telephone number listed on the back of this pamphlet.

How much will it cost to have my vehicle released?

A 30-day impound would cost not less than \$685 plus mileage.

- Administrative fee: \$150.00
- Tow charges: \$50.00 plus \$3.00 per mile
- Storage charges: \$15.00 per day
- Gate fee: Varies per tow company

The administrative fee must be paid to Pima County at the Sheriff's Department's Records Unit. All other fees and charges are paid directly to the tow company.

You Need to Know . . .

- In most cases you must wait 30 days before you can get your vehicle back.
- The minimum cost for a 30-day immobilization is \$685, which must be **paid** before your vehicle will be released.
- Only the Pima County Sheriff's Department can authorize the release of your vehicle. The tow company **cannot** release the vehicle without prior permission from the Sheriff's Department.
- In some limited cases you may be able to get your vehicle back prior to the end of the 30 days. But, you are still required to pay all fees and charges prior to the release of the vehicle.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Tow Information Line 351-6155

Frontier Towing 748-1100
3630 S. Dodge Boulevard, Tucson, AZ 85713

Del-Sur Towing / NAPA 520-387-6962
2050 N. Arizona Highway 85, Ajo, AZ 85321



PIMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
1750 E. Benson Highway
Tucson, Arizona 85714
(520) 351-4600
www.pimasheriff.org

Clarence W. Dupnik
Sheriff of Pima County

Pima County Sheriff's Department

Highlights of the Vehicle Immobilization Procedure



Sheriff Clarence W. Dupnik

1750 E. Benson Highway
Tucson, Arizona 85714

How Do I Get My Vehicle Back?

If your vehicle was immobilized by a Pima County Sheriff's deputy, this pamphlet will provide answers to some frequently asked questions and important information on how to get your vehicle released.

If your vehicle was impounded as evidence of a crime, these procedures do not apply to you. Please contact the Pima County Sheriff's detective who is handling your case for additional information. If you do not know who is handling your case, contact the PCSD Records Maintenance Unit at 351-4650.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

If your vehicle was impounded by another law enforcement agency, such as the Tucson Police Department or the Arizona Department of Public Safety, you must contact that agency for assistance in obtaining the release of your vehicle.

Arizona Revised Statute requires that law enforcement agencies immobilized (tow) a motor vehicle when the driver is in violation of one of the following provisions:

- The driver is in an accident,
AND
is in violation of Arizona's insurance law,
AND
has a suspended, revoked, or cancelled driver's license for any reason, or is unlicensed in any State.
- The driver has never been issued a driver's license or permit in Arizona and is not licensed in any other jurisdiction.
- The driver's operating privilege is suspended or revoked for any reason.
- The driver is arrested for either Extreme DUI or Aggravated DUI.
- The driver is under the legal drinking age of 21 and has any alcohol in their body.

On or after the 30th day of immobilization, OR if your driver's license is reinstated earlier, your vehicle will generally be eligible for release to you. The Pima County Sheriff's Department must authorize the release of your vehicle.

Follow these steps to get your vehicle:

You must come to the following location during normal business hours to start the process.

Pima County Sheriff's Department
Records Maintenance Unit
1650 E. Benson Highway, Suite C
Tucson, Arizona 85714
Monday through Friday (excluding holidays)
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

You must bring a valid driver's license, proof of insurance, and valid vehicle registration. It may be necessary for you to go to court and / or the Motor Vehicle Division to obtain the necessary documentation. **The Pima County Sheriff's Department cannot release your vehicle until these documents are valid and current.**

If your driving privilege cannot be restored by the end of the 30-day immobilization period (i.e., license has been suspended for one year), you may bring a fully licensed driver with you to drive the vehicle upon release. Valid vehicle registration and proof of insurance are still required.

If an administrative fee is assessed, you must pay \$150 to Pima County. Payment is accepted in the form of cash, certified check, cashier's check, or money order.

Sheriff's personnel will provide an "Authorization for Release of Impounded Vehicle" form to you, which you must present to the tow company.

Proceed to the Tow Company

You must pay all towing and storage fees. Payment shall be made directly to the tow company in cash, by cashier's check, or credit card (Mastercard, Visa, or Discover). You may be charged an additional fee for releases made after normal business hours. **You must present proof of your identity and ownership to the tow company to obtain the vehicle.**

If you do not claim your vehicle within ten (10) days of the available release date, the tow company may file for an abandoned title to the vehicle.

Is Early Release Possible?

Under certain limited circumstances, you may be able to have the vehicle released to you prior to the expiration of the 30-day period. In some cases this may require a hearing.

You may be eligible to have your vehicle released early **only if you meet one (1) of the following conditions or circumstances:**

- If the owner presents satisfactory proof that the owner's driving privilege has been reinstated.
- If the vehicle was reported stolen at the time it was impounded.
- If the vehicle is subject to bailment and was driven by an employee of a business establishment, including a parking service or repair garage, who is subject to A.R.S. § 28-3511-A or B.
- **If ALL OF THE FOLLOWING APPLIES:**
 - The owner or owner's agent was not the person driving in violation at the time of the impound,
AND
 - the owner or the owner's agent is in the business of renting motor vehicles without drivers,
AND
 - the vehicle is registered pursuant to A.R.S. § 28-2166.

In certain situations, a vehicle may be released to another person, but only if they are listed on the title and registration. The co-owner may enter into an agreement with the Pima County Sheriff's Department in that they will not allow an individual who has been arrested for Extreme or Aggravated DUI, or a minor who has been arrested for operating a vehicle with spirituous liquor in their system, to drive the vehicle within one (1) year from the date of impound. Should the agreement be violated, there is no relief available from the 30-day impound period if the vehicle is impounded in the future.