

## **MOTOR VEHICLE TITLE LENDING IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**

### **BORROWER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Please take the time to carefully review the information contained in this pamphlet. It is designed to advise you of your rights and responsibilities in connection with obtaining a motor vehicle title loan in Virginia under Chapter 22 (§ 6.2-2200 et seq.) of Title 6.2 of the Code of Virginia.

If you have any questions about motor vehicle title lending or want additional information, you may contact the Virginia State Corporation Commission's Bureau of Financial Institutions toll-free at (800) 552-7945 or on the Internet at <http://www.scc.virginia.gov/bfi>.

**In General:** You are responsible for evaluating whether a motor vehicle title loan is right for you. Alternatives may include among other things less expensive short-term financing from another financial institution, family, or friends, a cash advance on a credit card, or an account with overdraft protection.

**Notice from Lender:** A motor vehicle title lender is required to provide you with a clear and conspicuous printed notice advising you that a motor vehicle title loan is not intended to meet your long-term financial needs; that the interest rate on a motor vehicle title loan is high; and that if you fail to repay your loan in accordance with your loan agreement, the motor vehicle title lender may repossess and sell your motor vehicle.

**Prohibition on Obtaining Loan if Motor Vehicle has Existing Lien / One Loan at a Time:** Virginia law prohibits a motor vehicle title lender from making a motor vehicle title loan to you if (i) your certificate of title indicates that your motor vehicle is security for another loan or has an existing lien; or (ii) you currently have another motor vehicle title loan from either the same motor vehicle title lender or any other motor vehicle title lender conducting a motor vehicle title lending business in Virginia.

**Prohibition on Obtaining Loan on Same Day Another Loan was Repaid:** Virginia law prohibits a motor vehicle title lender from making a motor vehicle title loan to you on the same day that you repaid or satisfied in full a motor vehicle title loan from either the same motor vehicle title lender or any other motor vehicle title lender conducting a motor vehicle title lending business in Virginia.

**Prohibition on Loans to Covered Members of the Armed Forces and their Dependents:** Virginia law prohibits a motor vehicle title lender from making motor vehicle title loans to covered members of the armed forces and their dependents. If you are (i) on active duty under a call or order that does not specify a period of 30 days or less; or (ii) on active guard and reserve duty, then you are a covered member of the armed forces and a motor vehicle title lender is prohibited from making a motor vehicle title loan to you. A motor vehicle title lender is also prohibited from making a motor vehicle title loan to you if (i) you are married to a covered member of the armed forces; (ii) you are the child, as defined in 38 USC § 101(4), of a covered member of the armed forces; or (iii) more than one-half of your support during the past 180 days was provided by a covered member of the armed forces.



**Certificate of Title / Other Security Interests:** Prior to obtaining a motor vehicle title loan, you will be required to give a motor vehicle title lender the certificate of title for your motor vehicle. The motor vehicle title lender is required to record its lien with the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles and hold the certificate of title until your loan is repaid or satisfied in full. The motor vehicle title lender cannot take an interest in more than one motor vehicle as security for a motor vehicle title loan. Apart from your motor vehicle and any accessories that are attached to it, the motor vehicle title lender cannot take an interest in any other property you own as security for a motor vehicle title loan.

**Maximum Loan Amount:** A motor vehicle title lender cannot loan you more than 50% of the fair market value of your motor vehicle. The fair market value is generally based on the loan value for your motor vehicle according to a recognized pricing guide.

**Minimum and Maximum Loan Term / Monthly Payments:** Under Virginia law, your loan term cannot be either less than 120 days or more than 12 months. Your motor vehicle title loan will be repayable in substantially equal monthly installments of principal and interest. However, if you have a longer first payment period, your first monthly payment may be larger than your remaining monthly payments.

**Interest and Other Loan Costs:** The following are the maximum interest rates that a motor vehicle title lender is permitted to charge you PER MONTH on the principal amount of your loan that remains outstanding: (i) 22% per month on the portion of the outstanding balance up to and including \$700; (ii) 18% per month on the portion of the outstanding balance between \$701 and \$1,400; and (iii) 15% per month on the portion of the outstanding balance of \$1,401 and higher. As long as these maximum rates are not exceeded, a motor vehicle title lender is allowed to accrue interest using a single blended interest rate if the initial principal is higher than \$700. In addition to interest, a motor vehicle title lender may charge you for the actual cost of recording its lien with the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.

If you make a payment more than seven calendar days after its due date, a motor vehicle title lender may impose a late charge of up to five percent of the amount of the payment.

A motor vehicle title lender is prohibited from accruing or charging you interest on or after (i) the date the motor vehicle title lender repossesses your motor vehicle; or (ii) 60 days after you fail to make a monthly payment on your loan, unless you are hiding your motor vehicle.

Other than interest and the costs specifically mentioned in this section and the section below ("Costs of Repossession and Sale"), no additional amounts may be directly or indirectly charged, contracted for, collected, received, or recovered by a motor vehicle title lender.

**Costs of Repossession and Sale:** A motor vehicle title lender may charge you for any reasonable costs that it incurs in repossessing, preparing for sale, and selling your motor vehicle if (i) you default on your motor vehicle title loan; (ii) the motor vehicle title lender sends you a written notice at least 10 days prior to repossession advising you that your motor vehicle title loan is in default and that your motor vehicle may be repossessed unless you pay the outstanding principal and interest; and (iii) you fail to pay the amount owed prior to the date of repossession. A motor



vehicle title lender is prohibited from charging you for any storage costs if the motor vehicle title lender takes possession of your motor vehicle.

**Written Loan Agreement:** A motor vehicle title lender must provide you with a written loan agreement, which must be signed by both you and an authorized representative of the motor vehicle title lender. Your motor vehicle title loan agreement is a binding, legal document that requires you to repay your loan. Make sure you read the entire loan agreement carefully before signing and dating it. A motor vehicle title lender must provide you with a duplicate original of your loan agreement at the time you sign it. If any provision of your loan agreement violates Chapter 22 (§ 6.2-2200 et seq.) of Title 6.2 of the Code of Virginia, the provision will not be enforceable against you.

**Property Insurance:** A motor vehicle title lender may require you to purchase or maintain property insurance for your motor vehicle. However, a motor vehicle title lender cannot require you to purchase or maintain property insurance from or through a particular provider or list of providers.

**Prohibition on Obtaining Funds Electronically:** A motor vehicle title lender is prohibited from electronically debiting your deposit account or obtaining any of your funds by electronic means.

**Loan Proceeds:** You will receive your loan proceeds in the form of (i) cash; (ii) a check from the motor vehicle title lender; or (iii) a debit card. If you receive a check, the motor vehicle title lender is prohibited from charging you a fee for cashing the check. Similarly, a check casher located in the same office as the motor vehicle title lender is prohibited from charging you a fee for cashing the motor vehicle title lender's check. If you receive a debit card, the motor vehicle title lender is prohibited from charging you an additional fee when you withdraw or use the loan proceeds.

**Other Businesses:** A motor vehicle title lender is prohibited from engaging in any other businesses in its motor vehicle title loan offices unless permitted by order of the State Corporation Commission. A motor vehicle title lender is also prohibited by statute from selling you any type of insurance coverage.

**Using Motor Vehicle Title Loan to Purchase Products or Services or Repay Other Loans:** A motor vehicle title lender is prohibited from making you a motor vehicle title loan so that you can purchase another product or service sold at the motor vehicle title lender's business location. A motor vehicle title lender is also prohibited from making you a motor vehicle title loan so that you can repay another loan you may have from either the motor vehicle title lender or an affiliate of the motor vehicle title lender.

**Right to Cancel:** You have the right to cancel your motor vehicle title loan at any time prior to the close of business on the next day the motor vehicle title lender is open following the date your loan is made by either returning the original loan proceeds check or paying the motor vehicle title lender the amount advanced to you in cash or by certified check, cashier's check, money order or, if the motor vehicle title lender is equipped to handle and willing to accept such payments, by using a credit card. If you cancel your motor vehicle title loan, the motor vehicle



title lender must mark your original loan agreement with the word "canceled" and return it to you along with your certificate of title.

**Cash Payments / Partial Payments / Prepayments:** You have the right to receive a signed, dated receipt for each cash payment made in person, which will show the balance remaining on your motor vehicle title loan.

Additionally, you have the right to make a partial payment on your motor vehicle title loan at any time prior to its specified due date without penalty. However, a motor vehicle title lender may apply a partial payment first to any amounts that are due and unpaid at the time of such payment. If your motor vehicle title loan is current, a partial payment will reduce your outstanding balance as well as the total amount of interest that you will be required to pay.

You also have the right to prepay your motor vehicle title loan in full before its specified maturity date without penalty by paying the motor vehicle title lender the total outstanding balance on your loan, including any accrued and unpaid interest and other charges that you may owe on your motor vehicle title loan.

**Lender to Return Original Loan Agreement and Certificate of Title:** Within 10 days after the date that you repay your motor vehicle title loan in full, the motor vehicle title lender must (i) mark your original loan agreement with the word "paid" or "canceled" and return it to you; (ii) take any action necessary to reflect the termination of its lien on your motor vehicle's certificate of title; and (iii) return the certificate of title to you. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your certificate of title, you should contact the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.

**No Rollovers, Extensions, Etc.:** A motor vehicle title lender cannot refinance, renew, extend, or rollover your motor vehicle title loan.

**Failure to Repay:** Pay back your motor vehicle title loan! Know when your payments are due and be sure to repay your motor vehicle title loan on time and in full. IF YOU DO NOT REPAY YOUR MOTOR VEHICLE TITLE LOAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH YOUR LOAN AGREEMENT, THE MOTOR VEHICLE TITLE LENDER MAY REPOSSESS AND SELL YOUR MOTOR VEHICLE (see section below on "Repossession and Sale of your Motor Vehicle").

In general, a motor vehicle title lender cannot seek a personal money judgment against you if you fail to pay any amount owed in accordance with your loan agreement. However, a motor vehicle title lender may seek a personal money judgment against you if you impair the motor vehicle title lender's security interest by (i) intentionally damaging or destroying your motor vehicle; (ii) intentionally hiding your motor vehicle; (iii) giving the motor vehicle title lender a lien on a motor vehicle that has an undisclosed prior lien; (iv) selling your motor vehicle without the motor vehicle title lender's written consent; or (v) securing another loan or obligation with a security interest in your motor vehicle without the motor vehicle title lender's written consent.

In collecting or attempting to collect a motor vehicle title loan, a motor vehicle title lender is required to comply with the restrictions and prohibitions applicable to debt collectors contained



in the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 USC § 1692 et seq., regarding harassment or abuse; false, misleading or deceptive statements or representations; and unfair practices in collections. A motor vehicle title lender is also prohibited from threatening or beginning criminal proceedings against you if you fail to pay any amount owed in accordance with your loan agreement.

**Repossession and Sale of your Motor Vehicle:** If you do not repay your motor vehicle title loan in accordance with your loan agreement, the motor vehicle title lender may repossess and sell your motor vehicle in order to recover any outstanding amounts that you owe.

If a motor vehicle title lender repossesses your motor vehicle, the motor vehicle title lender must send you a written notice at least 15 days prior to the sale of your motor vehicle. The notice will contain (i) the date and time after which your motor vehicle may be sold; and (ii) a written accounting of the outstanding balance on your motor vehicle title loan, the amount of interest accrued through the date the motor vehicle title lender took possession of your motor vehicle, and any reasonable costs incurred to date by the motor vehicle title lender in connection with repossessing, preparing for sale, and selling your motor vehicle. At any time prior to the sale of your motor vehicle, you may obtain your motor vehicle by paying the motor vehicle title lender the total amount specified in the notice. Payment must be made in cash or by certified check, cashier's check, money order or, if the motor vehicle title lender is equipped to handle and willing to accept such payments, by using a credit card.

Within 30 days of a motor vehicle title lender receiving funds from the sale of your motor vehicle, you are entitled to receive any surplus from the sale in excess of the sum of the following: (i) the outstanding balance on your motor vehicle title loan; (ii) the amount of interest accrued on your motor vehicle title loan through the date the motor vehicle title lender repossessed your motor vehicle; and (iii) any reasonable costs incurred by the motor vehicle title lender in repossessing, preparing for sale, and selling your motor vehicle.

See section above on "Costs of Repossession and Sale" for additional information regarding the conditions that must be met in order for a motor vehicle title lender to collect the reasonable costs of repossessing, preparing for sale, and selling your motor vehicle.

**Violation of the Virginia Consumer Protection Act:** Losses suffered as the result of a motor vehicle title lender's violation of Chapter 22 (§ 6.2-2200 et seq.) of Title 6.2 of the Code of Virginia may be pursued under the Virginia Consumer Protection Act (§ 59.1-196 et seq. of the Code of Virginia), which in some cases permits consumers to recover actual and punitive damages.

**Complaints and Contacting the Bureau of Financial Institutions:** For assistance with any complaints you may have against a motor vehicle title lender, please contact the Bureau of Financial Institutions toll-free at (800) 552-7945 or on the Internet at <http://www.scc.virginia.gov/bfi>. Complaints must be filed in writing with the Bureau of Financial Institutions. Complaints should be mailed to the Bureau of Financial Institutions, Attn: Complaints, P.O. Box 640, Richmond, Virginia 23218-0640, or faxed to the Bureau of Financial Institutions, Attn: Complaints, at (804) 371-9416.