

# TRN-17.02 - Private Property Impound Towing Regulations

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## **Purpose**

Portland City Code (PCC) Section 7.24.010 requires that towing from private parking facilities be performed safely and at a reasonable price. Because towing from private parking facilities affects city residents and visitors, regulation is necessary to ensure that the public safety and convenience are protected. This administrative rule defines the requirements a tower must comply with to tow from a private parking facility.

## **Authority**

Under the authority of PCC Chapter 3.12, the City Administrator may adopt administrative rules.

## **Definitions**

Certain terms used in this administrative rule are defined by PCC Section 7.24.030 (Definitions).

## **Effective Date**

This administrative rule takes effect February 15, 2026.

## **Policy**

### **1. Authorization**

- A. It is unlawful to tow a vehicle from a private parking facility located within the city of Portland unless:
  1. The PPI tower holds a current City of Portland Private Property Impound (PPI) permit; and
  2. The private parking facility's authorized representative named on the tow agreement gives the PPI tower express written authorization

identifying the specific vehicle. The facility representative must sign an authorization at the time of the tow request or provide a digital signature with time stamp, as required by Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) Sections 98.812 and 98.854.

B. Patrol towing is prohibited.

C. PPI Towing Agreements

1. If a PPI tower's agreement for towing is with the tenant of a property, such agreement must also include authorization by the property owner or authorized owner's agent.
2. Agreements between PPI towers and private parking facility owners/operators must include the accurate address or Multnomah County property tax ID number of any property from which the PPI tower will impound vehicles.
3. If the agreement with a single owner/operator applies to multiple properties, an addendum listing the accurate address or Multnomah County property tax ID number of each property must be included.
4. If a property has no address assigned, a Multnomah County property tax ID number or a printout of the Portland Maps record for the property may be submitted in order to provide the accurate location.
5. PPI tow agreements must indicate beginning and expiration dates and be valid for not more than 2 years at a time.
6. PPI towers must review towing agreements at least every 2 years to verify that conditions and property ownership have not changed.
  - a. PPI towers must obtain a new signature and assign new effective and expiration dates agreed to by the property owner/operator as part of this review to indicate approval of an extension of the towing agreement.
  - b. Tows performed without current authorization will be subject to penalties and refunds.
7. PPI tow agreements must list the full name, telephone number and position of any person authorized to request towing services.
  - a. Any personnel not listed on the tow agreement may not request towing services. A tower may not use a code, password or similar mechanism in lieu of a tow request from a named authorized person.

## **2. Signage**

A. It is unlawful to tow a vehicle from a private parking facility unless the facility meets the following signage requirements:

1. One or more signs must be posted at a height and frequency to be clearly visible and readable from every parking space subject to the towing rules. The tower must provide photos that demonstrate the signage complies with the City Code and Administrative Rules.
2. One or more signs must be posted and clearly readable by an operator in a motor vehicle at each driveway into the parking lot, not more than 10 feet from the public right of way or driveway. Such signs must:
  1. Be posted so that the center of the sign is not more than 8 feet or less than 3 feet above the ground;
  2. Be at least 18" x 24" in size;
  3. State that parking is prohibited, reserved or otherwise restricted; and,
  4. State who is authorized to park and the hours during which parking is restricted;
  5. If a permit is required to park, clearly state the requirement and how to obtain a permit,
  6. State that towing and storage of a vehicle will be at the vehicle owner's expense;
  7. Prominently display the PPI tower's name and 24-hour telephone contact number for release of a vehicle;
  8. Be maintained un-obscured by any tree, shrub, bush, vehicle or other obstacle at all times; and
  9. Be printed in letters not less than 2 inches high.
3. When a private parking facility is shared by multiple business operations (e.g. shopping mall, office park, etc.), parking spaces must be individually marked or signs must be posted clearly indicating which spaces are reserved for each business.
4. If a parking lot adjoins another property or may be entered from another property, at least one sign must be posted in plain view not more than 10 feet from the boundary dividing the properties.
5. Fire lanes from which vehicles may be towed must be marked in compliance with Portland Uniform Fire Code (PUFC) Sections 901 and 902.
6. When establishing a new PPI towing account or replacing missing or defaced signs, new signs must be posted for a minimum of 24 hours before towing commences or resumes.

B. A PPI tower may request a variance in sign requirements by submitting a written request.

1. The request must:
  - a. Describe why PPI sign requirements cannot be met,
  - b. Include photographs and/or maps to illustrate the need for the variance, and
  - c. Propose an alternate posting scheme for approval.
2. Towing may not begin at the subject location until the posting has been approved by the City. A determination will be made by the Director or designee within 3 business days of receiving such a request. Such determination regarding a variance is not appealable.