



CHAPTER 20
ARTICLE 3 - MOTOR VEHICLE ACT OF 1937

N.C.G.S. § 20-49.

Police authority of Division.

SOURCE General Statutes of North Carolina, as published by the General Assembly	LAST AMENDMENT IN THIS TEXT S.L. 2024-57, s. 3E.2(d) — ninth act in the lineage	RETRIEVED 21 September 2026, 03:24 UTC	SOURCE FINGERPRINT 4bb68ac929c97326ad86f269 - 4e6dce8428f4d3c8ede3cfc6 - 68db67db89dc4625
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All members of the Highway Patrol and law enforcement officers of the Department of Public Safety shall have the power:

Of peace officers for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of this Article, G.S. 14-160.4, and of any other law regulating the operation of vehicles or the use of the highways.

To make arrests upon view and without warrant for any violation committed in their presence of any of the provisions of this Article or other laws regulating the operation of vehicles or the use of the highways.

At all times to direct all traffic in conformance with law, and in the event of a fire or other emergency or to expedite traffic or to ensure safety, to direct traffic as conditions may require, notwithstanding the provisions of law.

When on duty, upon reasonable belief that any vehicle is being operated in violation of any provision of this Article or of any other law regulating the operation of vehicles to require the driver thereof to stop and exhibit his driver's license and the registration card issued for the vehicle, and submit to an inspection of such vehicle, the registration plates and registration card thereon or to an inspection and test of the equipment of such vehicle.

To inspect any vehicle of a type required to be registered hereunder in any public garage or repair shop or in any place where such vehicles are held for sale or wrecking, for the purpose of locating stolen vehicles and investigating the title and registration thereof.

To serve all warrants relating to the enforcement of the laws regulating the operation of vehicles or the use of the highways.

To investigate traffic accidents and secure testimony of witnesses or of persons involved.

To investigate reported thefts of motor vehicles, trailers and semitrailers and make arrest for thefts thereof.

For the purpose of determining compliance with the provisions of this Chapter, to inspect all files and records of the persons hereinafter designated and required to be kept under the provisions of this Chapter or of the registrations of the Division:

- a. Persons dealing in or selling and buying new, used or junked motor vehicles and motor vehicle parts; and
- b. Persons operating garages or other places where motor vehicles are repaired, dismantled, or stored.

END OF SECTION TEXT

APPARATUS FOLLOWS — DERIVED, NOT ENACTED

APPARATUS I
9 ACTS

Amendment lineage

The State prints this history as a single parenthetical at the foot of the section. It is reproduced verbatim in the colophon and unpacked below in order of enactment.



Nº	YEAR	ACT	CHARACTER
01	1937	c. 407, s. 14	ENACTED
02	1955	c. 554, s. 1	AMENDED
03	1975	c. 716, s. 5	AMENDED
04	1979	c. 93	AMENDED
05	2002	S.L. 2002-159, s. 31.5(b)	AMENDED
06	2002	S.L. 2002-190, s. 5	AMENDED
07	2011	S.L. 2011-145, s. 19.1(g)	AMENDED
08	2022	S.L. 2022-73, s. 4(b)	AMENDED
09	2024	S.L. 2024-57, s. 3E.2(d)	AMENDED

APPARATUS II

1 AUTHORITY

Authorities referenced

Every G.S. cross-reference appearing in the text of this section, in order of first appearance. Nothing is characterized; the operative language is quoted from the section itself.

REFERENCE	APPEARS IN	OPERATIVE LANGUAGE IN THIS SECTION
G.S. 14-160.4	(null)(1)	"enforcing the provisions of this Article,"

APPARATUS III

Citation

FULL SECTION

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-49 (2024).

Pinpoint keys are set in the left margin of the text rather than line numbers: subsection designators are stable across editions and paper sizes, line numbers are not.

COLOPHON

Provenance

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This is not the official text. The official text is published by the General Assembly of North Carolina.

HISTORY PARENTHETICAL, AS PRINTED BY THE STATE

(1937, c. 407, s. 14; 1955, c. 554, s. 1; 1975, c. 716, s. 5; 1979, c. 93; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 5; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2022-73, s. 4(b); 2024-57, s. 3E.2(d).)

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