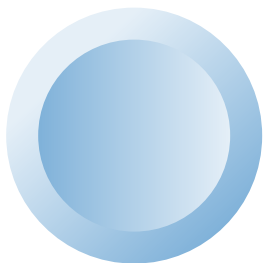


# A GUIDE TO THE AUTO REPAIR LAW

For Mechanics and  
Repair Facilities



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF STATE

**B**ecause you are a state-certified mechanic or a registered repair facility, Michigan motorists depend on you to keep their vehicles running safely and efficiently.

By following the guidelines in this brochure, you can avoid misunderstandings and problems with customers. It covers such important areas as written estimates, itemized final invoices, and mechanic certification.

For more details, consult the Michigan Department of State's *Repair Facility Manual*, which is available on the Department of State's Web site at [www.Michigan.gov/sos](http://www.Michigan.gov/sos) by clicking on "Services to Businesses."

If you have any questions, contact the Department of State at the telephone number

given in this brochure. The department licenses and regulates mechanics and auto repair facilities, informs customers and investigates complaints.

## ■ Be Properly Certified

You must be Michigan-certified to do work in any of the categories of major motor vehicle repair. It is against the law to work in areas for which you are not certified. Your mechanic certificate must be displayed where it can be clearly seen and read by the customer.

If you are not certified in a category, you must hold a trainee permit to work in that area. A trainee must work under the supervision of a certified mechanic at all times.

Some certification categories require periodic recertification. For more information about recertification, check the Department of State's Web site at [www.Michigan.gov/sos](http://www.Michigan.gov/sos) and click on "Services to Businesses."

Mechanics and repair facilities must renew their certifications and registrations with the Department of State every year.

## ■ Always Provide An Estimate

Michigan law requires you to give every customer a written estimate when the cost of repairing a vehicle is \$20 or more. This means you must hand-deliver, fax, mail, or e-mail the written estimate to the customer – whether or not the customer requests it.

When the job will cost less than \$20, you do not have to provide a written estimate prior to the repair unless the customer asks for it. The best advice is to always provide an estimate, no matter what the job will cost.

A written estimate must tell what work will be done, the price of parts, the cost of labor, and an estimate of time to perform the repair. The estimate must be given to the customer before the work begins on the vehicle.

If you ask a customer to sign any written form, you must give him or her a copy of it at that time. Do not ask the customer to sign a blank form.

You may not exceed the written estimate by more than \$10 or 10% (whichever is less) unless you re-contact the customer, either by telephone, in person, or in writing, and advise what the added cost (parts and labor) will be. The customer must approve the added cost.

(Sample Estimate and Final Invoice)

PARTS				TIRES		BATTERIES		ACCESSORIES																															
QTY.	PART NO.	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	ESTIMATED AMOUNT	ACTUAL AMOUNT																																		
1	17111299	EGR Valve		75 33	75 33																																		
All parts new unless otherwise indicated				TOTAL PARTS	75 33	75 33																																	
OUTSIDE REPAIRS																																							
TOTAL OUTSIDE REPAIRS																																							
<small>NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOSS OR DAMAGE TO CARS OR ARTICLES LEFT IN CARS IN CASE OF FIRE, THEFT OR ANY OTHER CAUSE BEYOND OUR CONTROL.</small>																																							
<small>YOU ARE ENTITLED BY LAW TO THE RETURN OF ALL PARTS REPLACED, EXCEPT THOSE WHICH ARE TOO HEAVY OR LARGE, AND THOSE REQUIRED TO BE SENT BACK TO THE MANUFACTURER OR DISTRIBUTOR BECAUSE OF WARRANTY WORK OR AN EXCHANGE AGREEMENT. YOU ARE ENTITLED TO INSPECT THE PARTS WHICH CANNOT BE RETURNED TO YOU.</small>																																							
AUTHORIZED INCREASE		APPROVED																																					
IN ESTIMATE BY: \$ _____		PER: _____																																					
YOU ARE ENTITLED TO A COPY OF THIS ORDER AT THE TIME OF SIGNING.																																							
<small>Printed authorization for the above repair work to be done along with the necessary materials and they grant you and/or your employees permission to operate the car, truck or vehicle described herein on streets, highways or elsewhere for the purpose of testing and/or repairs. An express mechanic license hereby authorizes the above car, truck or vehicle to secure the amount of repairs thereon.</small>																																							
<table border="0" style="width:100%"> <tr> <td colspan="2">REPAIRS PERFORMED BY</td> <td colspan="2">Mechanic Name and Certification Number</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Steve White</td> <td colspan="2">M345123</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Mike Johnson</td> <td colspan="2">T567234</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> </table>										REPAIRS PERFORMED BY		Mechanic Name and Certification Number								Steve White		M345123								Mike Johnson		T567234							
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## ■ Provide An Itemized Invoice

When repairs are complete, Michigan law requires you to provide customers a final invoice that lists the prices for parts and labor, the parts that were installed, and tells whether the parts were new, used or rebuilt.

The invoice must also include the name and certification number of each mechanic who worked on the vehicle or who inspected and approved repairs to the vehicle.

The invoice must be signed by the owner or someone authorized by the owner to certify that repairs were done properly.

A customer must receive a copy of the final invoice.

## ■ Return Replaced Parts

Along with an itemized final invoice, the law entitles the customer to all replaced parts.

If the customer neither asks for a replaced part nor authorizes you to throw it away – in other words, he or she does not mention the part – you must keep it for two business days after the vehicle is picked up.

If you ask and the customer does not want the part, you may throw it away.

If you have an exchange agreement with your supplier for a certain used part, you must show the part to the customer first before giving it to the supplier or hold the part for two business days. The customer may keep the part, provided the customer pays you the core charge.

## ■ Make Sure Your Shop Displays "The Sign"

Michigan law requires all registered repair facilities to post a consumer information sign where it may be clearly seen and read by the customer.

The sign must meet certain requirements, such as size and wording. See the *Repair Facility Manual* for details or contact the Michigan Department of State.

### **Additional automotive brochures published by the Department of State:**

*Auto Repair Rights & Repair Tips*  
*Consumer's Automotive Information & Complaint Kit*

*Consumer's Guide to Automatic Transmission Service*

*Consumer's Guide to Brake Repair Service*

*Consumer's Guide to Buying a Vehicle from a Dealership*

*Consumer's Guide to Collision Repairs*

*Consumer's Guide to Engine Replacement*

*Consumer's Guide to Vehicle Leasing*

*Consumer's Guide to Vehicle Restoration*

**Michigan Department of State**

**Lansing, MI 48918**

**Telephone: 1-888-SOS-MICH**

**(1-888-767-6424)**

**[www.Michigan.gov/sos](http://www.Michigan.gov/sos)**

**Click on "Services to Businesses"**



**Secretary of State**  
**Terri Lynn Land**