

**ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF A
VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER
Penal Law § 170.70(3)(a)
(Committed on or after Nov. 1, 2002)**

The (*specify*) count is Illegal Possession of a Vehicle Identification Number

Under our law, a person is guilty of Illegal Possession of a Vehicle Identification Number when he or she knowingly possesses a vehicle, or part of a vehicle to which by law or regulation must be attached a vehicle identification number, with a vehicle identification number label, sticker, or plate which was not affixed by the manufacturer in accordance with law ¹.

Under our law, with certain exceptions not applicable here, a vehicle identification number must be attached to a vehicle or (*specify part*) of a vehicle by a manufacturer.²

The following terms used in that definition have a special meaning:

POSSESS means to have physical possession or otherwise to exercise dominion or control over tangible property.³

[Add if applicable:

¹The charge substitutes the words "in accordance with law" for the statutory words "in accordance with 49 U.S.C. section 32101, et seq. or regulations promulgated thereunder or in accordance with the provisions of the vehicle and traffic law." See Vehicle and Traffic Law article 17, sections 421, 422, 423-a, 431. If there is an issue as to whether a number affixed by a manufacturer was affixed in accordance with law, charge the applicable law.

² If there is an issue as to whether the law requires that a vehicle identification number be attached to the vehicle or vehicle part, omit this sentence and charge the applicable law.

³See Penal Law § 10.00(8). If necessary, an expanded definition of "possession" is available in the section on Instructions of General Applicability under Possession.

A person is presumed to knowingly possess a vehicle or vehicle part when he possesses any combination of five such whole vehicles or individual vehicle parts, none of which are attached to or contained in the same vehicle.^{4]}

A person KNOWINGLY possesses (specify) when that person is aware that he or she is in possession of (specify).⁵

In order for you to find the defendant guilty of this crime, the People are required to prove, from all of the evidence in the case, beyond a reasonable doubt, each of the following two elements:

1. That on or about (date), in the county of (county), the defendant, (defendant's name), possessed a vehicle, or part of a vehicle to which by law or regulation must be attached a vehicle identification number with a vehicle identification number label, sticker, or plate which was not affixed by the manufacturer in accordance with law.
2. That the defendant did so knowingly.

If you find the People have proven beyond a reasonable doubt both of those elements, you must find the defendant guilty of this crime.

If you find the People have not proven beyond a reasonable doubt either one or both of those elements, you must find the defendant not guilty of this crime.

⁴ Penal Law § 170.71(2).

⁵See Penal Law § 15.05(2). If necessary, an expanded definition of “knowingly” is available in the section on Instructions of General Applicability under Culpable Mental States.