



Region Legal Service Office, Mid Atlantic Legal Assistance Department

Virginia: Automobile Repair Facilities Act

1. The **Virginia Automobile Repair Facilities Act** (VARFA), VA. CODE ANN. § 59.1-207.1 *et seq.*, provides certain rights to you regarding auto repairs and requires repair shops to provide you with certain estimates, parts and notices.

2. **You have a right to request a written estimate for services:** The request, if made, should occur prior to the commencement of any repair work. The repair shop must provide you a written statement of:

- a) The estimated cost of labor and parts necessary to complete the work;
- b) A description of the problem or work as described or authorized by you; and
- c) The estimated completion time.

Where a written estimate is requested, no repair work on the motor vehicle may be undertaken—other than such diagnostic work as may be necessary for the preparation of an estimate—until the written estimate has been provided to you and you have authorized the work, either in writing or orally.

3. **You may have to pay a reasonable fee for the estimate:** A repair shop may impose a reasonable fee for the preparation of a written estimate and related diagnostic work. Any fee charged must be disclosed at the time of the request by a document or sign conspicuously posted at the entrance of the repair shop.

4. **Charges in excess of written estimate may require your approval:** The repair shop's charges may not exceed the written estimate by more than 10 percent (20 percent for a vehicle more than 25 years old) unless additional work is authorized by you either in writing or orally.

5. **Extension of time may require your approval:** An extension of time must be authorized by you, either orally or in writing, unless the delay is caused by an act of God, an unexpected labor or part shortage, or other causes beyond the control of the repair shop.

6. **Return of parts to you:** The repair shop must offer to return to you any parts removed from the vehicle and replaced during the process of repair. Parts that must be returned to the manufacturer or distributor are excluded from this return requirement.

7. **Written invoice required:** Upon completion of any repair work—including work performed pursuant to any warranty—the repair shop must provide you a written invoice which clearly indicates the work performed and separately lists the charges for parts and labor. The invoice should also indicate if the parts were under warranty and whether the parts were new or rebuilt. This requirement does not apply to work performed which was done on an advertised single price basis.

8. **Required notice to consumer:** Each repair shop must display in a conspicuous place, a sign which lists the consumer's right to a written estimate, right to approve costs in excess of the estimate, conditions for the estimate, return of parts, and that complaints can be made to the Attorney General of Virginia.

This handout is for information purposes only and is not intended to be legal advice. If you need legal advice and assistance you may see legal advice from your Legal Assistance Office. Legal Assistance Offices can be located at <http://legalassistance.law.af.mil/content/locator.php>