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HOW TO GET OR RENEW YOUR TEXAS DRIVER'S LICENSE

In Texas, everyone who drives a motor vehicle is required to have a valid Texas Driver's License. The following information should help you obtain a driver's license.

Where to Get or Renew a Driver's License

You must fill out an application for a driver's license at any local Texas Driver's license office. To find the nearest office from your location, you can look your phone directory under government offices ("The Blue Pages"). You can find a list of driver's license offices under the State section, Department of Public Safety. Information may also be found at www.txdps.state.tx.us. At the time of this publication renewals could be done online with the link on the DPS Home Page and for a list of offices go to General Information and then Driver License Offices.

Requirements for Getting a Driver's License

You must be at least 16 years of age (15 for a driver's permit which allows a minor to drive with someone in the front seat that is 18 years old and holds a valid driver's license).

A vision, driving and written test is required for those who seek a driver's license for the first time. However, if you have a valid out-of-state license you only have to take a vision test assuming you have the requisite documentation listed below. If your license has been expired for more than two years, you must also take a written and driving test.

A person 18 – 75 years of age with a valid out-of-country driver license in his or her possession may drive a private, non-commercial motor vehicle in the state of Texas for up to 1 year from the date of entry to the United States if the individual's home country has reciprocity with the United States.

Documents You Will Need to Take With You

When applying for a Texas driver's license you will need to show:

- Proof of name and date of birth. Acceptable proof includes:
 - Valid or expired (less than 2 years) form of identification
 - Passport with valid immigrant visa/I-94 card
 - Valid Military ID
 - 2 or more pieces of secondary proof
(www.txdps.state.tx.us/ftp/forms/DLhandbook.pdf)
- Proof of Social Security Number
 - Social Security Card
 - Receipt of Social Security Card with number on it
 - Health card (with SSC number on it) issued by a federal agency
 - Military card
 - Income tax documents
 - Medicare/Medicaid card

- Proof of Texas vehicle registration and Proof of Insurance
(This requirement is for those who own a vehicle, see below if you do not)
- If you do not own a vehicle, you will not need to show proof of insurance but will have to complete an affidavit of non-ownership at the Driver's license office, which will require the surrender of your out-of-state license.
- Residence address and mailing address

How You Can Prepare For the Tests

We recommend that you get the Texas Driver's Handbook at your nearby Texas Department of Public Safety office or a bookstore to prepare for the driving and written exams. You may also do your studying online at www.golocalnet.com/st/texas. It is organized, and there are practice exams you may take.

What the Costs Are For a Driver's License

A new Texas Driver's license will cost \$24 and is good for 6 years. If you are required to take a driving test, you will be charged an extra \$10. For renewals, the costs range from \$16 to \$24, depending on the renewal period. Applicants under 18 will be charged \$5 for a license, which will expire on their next birthday.

What You Should Expect

The process time varies by location. Some offices are always busy so it would be best to get to the office as early as possible, while others may have short lines before or after lunchtime. If you need to take a driving test, it is advisable to do so earlier in the day as the number of examination slots may be limited. Lines can be very long, so you should be certain to check your documentation beforehand to prevent embarrassment and unnecessary delays.

Times of Operation

Times of operation are different between driver license offices. Generally, offices are open from 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., Mondays thru Friday. You should check your local office to see if their hours differ from the general time.

When You Should Receive Your Card

It normally takes 3-4 weeks to receive your driver's license card. Upon passing your tests, you will be issued a temporary permit until you receive your card.

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