



# OBTAINING A DRIVER'S LICENSE

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Driver's license requirements can vary among the several states despite broad similarities. As a threshold matter, you must establish legal residency in a state before that state will issue you a license. (See our handout on state residency). And just as you can only have one state of legal residency, you can have only one valid driver's license. As a military member, you are not required to change your residency when you PCS to a new location. You can keep your license, car registration and voter registration in your home state. (See our handout on Tax and Residency Rights under the SCRA and MSSRA). If you choose to change your residency, however, you will have to convert your out-of-state driver's license (and car registration) to a license issued by the new state. Most states have time deadlines to establish residency and convert your out-of-state driver's license. You also will have to relinquish a valid license from another state before a new state will issue you a license. Below is information about how to obtain a driver's license in Massachusetts and surrounding states.

## MASSACHUSETTS

### Converting an Out-of-State License

**Documentation**—If you have a license from another state and wish to convert to a Massachusetts license, must bring all the relevant documentation listed in the section immediately below (First Time License/Documentation) and your out-of-state license. If your out-of-state license does not have a photo you must bring an acceptable photo ID from the list of identification requirements. Note that the out of state license can be used as proof of signature or date of birth but **NOT BOTH**.

**Fees**—You will be required to pay a \$100 conversion fee in order to trade in your out-of-state license for a Massachusetts license.

**Testing**—If your out-of-state license is current or expired for less than a year, you will not need to take any tests in order to obtain your Massachusetts license. If your out-of-state license has between expired for more than one but less than four years, you must take the written test for the applicable class license sought. If your out-of-state license has been expired for more than four years, you will have to take the written, eye and road tests (see below, First-Time License).

### First-Time License

In order to obtain your first driver's license in Massachusetts as your first license ever (see below for converting an out-of-state license) you must first gather all the required documentation and obtain a Class-D driver's permit. After you obtain a permit you will have to take a road test if you are older than 18 and, if you are under 18, complete all Junior Operator License requirements and take a road test.

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**Documentation:** If you are over 18, you must provide the following four pieces of information in order to obtain a driver's permit:

- (1) A document proving date of birth;
- (2) A document proving signature;
- (3) A document proving Massachusetts residency; and
- (4) A Social Security Number (SSN) that the RMV can verify with the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) as having been issued to you **OR** an acceptable Denial Notice from the SSA. If you present a Denial Notice, you must also present proof of acceptable visa status, an I-94 (Record of Arrival and Departure), and a current non-U.S. Passport.

If you are under 18 you must provide the following:

- (1) 1 document proving date of birth
- (2) Parental consent on the Class D, M, or D/M License and ID Card Application
- (3) A Social Security Number (SSN) that the RMV can verify with the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) as having been issued to you **OR** an acceptable Denial Notice from the SSA. If you present a Denial Notice, you must also present proof of acceptable visa status, an I-94 (Record of Arrival and Departure), and a current non-U.S. Passport.

All documents must be originals; photocopies will not be accepted. Your right to operate will be verified through the Commercial Driver License Information System (CDLIS) and the National Driver Register (NDR) to determine if it is suspended, revoked, cancelled, withdrawn, or disqualified in any state or the District of Columbia. Please refer to the list of identification requirements found at <http://www.mass.gov/rmv/license/3id.htm> to ensure that you bring the necessary documentation with you.

**Obtaining Your Permit:** Once you have collected all the required documentation, you must complete the permit application, written test and eye exam. The application can be found at any RMV service office or you may download it from the RMV Forms and Files page found here <http://www.mass.gov/rmv/forms/index.htm>.

After you have completed the application, bring the application, the required ID documents and a **\$30.00 REGISTRATION FEE** to a RMV full-service office to take the written test. The written test consists of 25 questions of which you must correctly answer 18 to pass. The test is administered on an automated testing system on a walk-in basis during posted branch hours. If you fail the written permit exam, you must present the required sources of identification documentation the next time you apply for a permit. At the time of your written test, you must also pass an eye screening for field vision and basic colors.

**Road Test:** After you receive your permit, if you are older than 18 years old, you can schedule a road test. You can schedule your road test at the RMV phone center listed at the following hyperlink: <http://www.mass.gov/rmv/info/phone.htm>. If you are under 18, as a young driver you will have to satisfy all your Junior Operator License requirements before you can schedule a road test. Information about the JOL requirements can be found here <http://www.mass.gov/rmv/jol/index.htm>. All applicants, regardless of age must bring a properly registered and inspected car, Class-D Road Test application, Class-D permit and a sponsor. For more information see <http://www.mass.gov/rmv/license/5classd.htm>.

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**Obtaining your license:** Once you have successfully completed your road test, bring the stamped and signed permit, a completed Class-D application and the appropriate fees to any RMV full service office to get your license. The fee for a Class-D license is \$50.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

### Converting an Out-of-State License

In order to convert an out-of state license into a New Hampshire Driver's License you must apply in the Concord office, take a vision test and bring the following:

- (1) An original or certified copy of a birth certificate, valid US Passport or Military ID and one of the following:
  - a. Social Security Card,
  - b. Passport,
  - c. Marriage Certificate, Civil Union Certificate, or its equivalent,
  - d. Military discharge papers or Military identification card,
  - e. Divorce Decree,
  - f. Valid School ID w/photo;
- (2) Current driver license or driver license which has expired no more than 12 months prior to the date of application; and
- (3) Proof of residency - One of the following:
  - a. NH Valid Registration
  - b. Town/City Clerk Approval of Residency Letter
  - c. Utility Bill with postmarked date (i.e., Water, Electric, Oil/propane) .\$.
- (4) A licensing fee \$50.

The Concord office is located at  
DOS DMV  
23 Hazen Drive  
Concord, NH 03305  
603-271-2371

If you choose to become a New Hampshire resident, you have 60 days to convert your license.

For more information see <http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/dmv/driverlic/faq.html>

## CONNECTICUT

### Converting an Out-of-State License

In order to convert an out-of state license into a Connecticut Driver's License you must possess an out-of-state license that is valid or has been expired for no more than two years. You will have to take a vision test, but the administering agent may waive the written and road tests. You also will have to bring the following:

- (1) Your out-of-state license—if your license is expired you will have to present an additional form of identification from the list of acceptable forms of identification,  
<http://www.ct.gov/dmv/cwp/view.asp?a=805&q=244772>
- (2) Your Certified Birth Certificate or a valid Passport,
- (3) Two forms of Connecticut address verification, see immediately below for permissible forms  
<http://www.ct.gov/dmv/cwp/view.asp?a=805&q=468448>

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- (4) Your social security card or most recent LES/W-2,
- (5) The application fee of \$40, and
- (6) The license fee of \$66 or \$77, depending on how long the license will be valid.

If your out-of-state license has expired for more than two years, you will be required to take an 8 hour safe driving practices course at a Connecticut licensed driving school and take the vision, knowledge and skills test at a DMV office. If you have lost your license, or if it does not contain your photograph, you will need to obtain a replacement from your previous state. **If you do not present the out-of-state license you will be considered an unlicensed operator and will be required to complete all testing and training.** The previous licensing state will be notified of the issuance of the Connecticut license, and your previous state license will be cancelled.

If you choose to become a Connecticut resident, you have 30 days to convert your license.

For more information see

<http://www.ct.gov/dmv/cwp/view.asp?a=805&Q=244776&dmvPNavCtr=|28069|#28073>

## **RHODE ISLAND**

### **Converting an Out-of-State License**

In order to convert an out-of state license into a Rhode Island Driver's License you must possess an out-of-state license that is valid or has been expired for no more than one year. If your out-of-state license has been expired for more than one year, you will be required to take a computerized knowledge exam and a road test that is otherwise not required to convert an out-of-state license. You also will have to bring the following:

- (1) An application for License form (LR-1),
- (2) Your out-of-state license,
- (3) Your Social Security Card or US Passport,
- (4) A \$31.50 licensing fee, and
- (5) If you do not have your out-of- state license,
  - a. Alternative proof of identity, and
  - b. Driving record or verification from another state.

For more information see <http://www.dmv.ri.gov/licenses/oosTransfer/>

## **VERMONT**

### **Converting an Out-of-State License**

In order to convert an out-of state license into a Vermont Driver's License you must possess an out-of-state license that is valid or has been expired for no more than one year. If your out-of-state license has been expired for more than one year, you will be required to take a written test and the road test. Examiners may waive the written and road tests if you possess and out-of-state license, but you will have to take a vision test and bring the following:

- (1) Your valid out-of-state license,
- (2) Two proofs of Vermont residency, and two other forms of identification with you to show to the examiner. (See <http://dmv.vermont.gov/licenses/drivers/requirements/residency>)
- (3) Appropriate fees (Fees include the license fee and eye exam charges; there will be additional fees if you have to take the written and road tests)

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1. \$62 for a four-year operator license
2. \$42 for a two-year operator license

If you choose to become a Vermont resident, you have 60 days to convert your license.  
For more information see <http://dmv.vermont.gov/licenses/drivers/newresidents>