

1 Michigan Driver's License Information

You must be licensed to operate a motor vehicle on public streets and highways. This chapter provides information about the requirements and procedures for obtaining and renewing a Michigan driver's license. The licensing procedures and requirements differ depending on an applicant's age. All applicants must meet requirements listed under General Licensing Requirements.

Michigan Residents

To be considered a resident, you must reside in Michigan and have established that you are legally present in the state.

New Michigan Residents

Under state law, the Department of State is prohibited from issuing an original standard driver's license or state identification card to anyone who is not a legal resident of the state.

If you have recently moved to Michigan and have a valid driver's license or state identification card from another state, these can be used in the interim until your state residency is established. Once residency is established, please visit a Secretary of State office to apply for a Michigan driver's license or state ID card.

You must also pass a vision test and pay a fee. No other test is required if you are surrendering a valid out-of-state or Canadian operator's license. An application for a Michigan driver's license other than an operator's license, such as a chauffeur's license or Commercial Driver License, may require additional testing and a background check.

The Department of State will contact your previous home state to obtain your driving record, which then becomes part of your Michigan driving record. If your previous driver's license is suspended or revoked, you must contact your previous state to clear any outstanding issues before your application for a

Michigan license will be accepted. Once your application for a Michigan license is accepted, your current out-of-state driver's license will be invalidated and returned to you because Michigan law permits drivers to hold only one valid driver's license at a time.

General Licensing Requirements

You must meet certain requirements before a Michigan driver's license can be issued. If you are age 18 or older and have never been licensed, you are not required to take driver education to obtain a license, although it is strongly recommended.

Teenagers under age 18 are required to successfully meet the requirements of Michigan's Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) program before they can be licensed. This requirement is waived if you have had a license from another state for more than a year. For more information, please turn to the section about GDL.

The requirements for obtaining a license will vary depending on the type of license, group designator, or endorsement.

You will not be issued a license if you have never been licensed in Michigan, any other state or country, and you have two or more convictions for moving violations on your driving record within the three years before the date you apply. To be eligible to reapply, you must wait until you have no more than one conviction on your driving record within the three years before the date you reapply.

If you are age 18 or older, before you can get a Michigan driver's license you must present proof of:

- A Social Security Number: A Social Security card or other Social Security Administration (SSA) document containing your name and Social Security number or a letter of ineligibility from the SSA.
- U.S. Citizenship or Legal Presence: A certified copy of your birth certificate, a valid, unexpired U.S. passport or Certificate of Citizenship; or legal presence if not a U.S. citizen, such as a Permanent Resident Card or an Employment Authorization Card.

*A certified copy of your birth certificate must have a raised seal and have been issued by a government unit in the U.S. or U.S. territory.

- **Identity:** A U.S. marriage license, U.S. school records, or photo ID issued by a federal or Michigan government agency.
- **Michigan Residency:** A utility bill, bank statement, paycheck stub with your employer's address, tax assessment, or professional license. At least two documents will be required.

In addition, you must:

- Pass a vision test and meet health standards set by the Secretary of State's office.
- Pass a knowledge test.
- Pay the appropriate license fee.
- Complete a minimum 30 days of practice driving on a Temporary Instruction Permit (TIP).
- Pass a driving skills test. The driving skills test will be administered by an independent testing organization approved by the Department of State.

If you have a valid driver's license from another state, the written knowledge and driving skills tests as well as the 30-day practice requirements may be waived. The Department of State will contact your previous home state to obtain your driving record, which then becomes part of your Michigan driving record.

If you meet the requirements listed on this page, you will be issued a temporary operator's permit after paying the appropriate fees. Your driver's license will be mailed to you.

In some instances, because of medical conditions or other reasons, restrictions may be placed on your driver's license. If any special licensing conditions are required, these conditions or restrictions will be printed on the driver's license.

Drivers licensed for the first time will be placed on probation for a minimum of three years. Please refer to information about Michigan's Probationary License Program in this booklet.

The Driver's License Process

Providing Your Social Security Number

State and federal laws require the Department of State to collect Social Security numbers to verify U.S. citizenship or legal presence and to assist in child support collection. A letter of ineligibility from the Social Security Administration must be presented if you do not have a Social Security number and wish to obtain a standard license or ID card. The letter can be no more than 30 days old.

All Social Security information will be verified.

For questions about Social Security or to replace a lost Social Security card, contact the Social Security Administration at (800) 772-1213 (voice), (800) 325-0778 (TTY), or visit its website at www.ssa.gov.

Providing Proof of Legal Presence

A standard driver's license or state ID card will not be issued unless valid proof of U.S. citizenship or legal presence in the U.S. is provided. Some of the documents that may be provided as proof of U.S. citizenship or legal presence include a certified copy of your birth certificate with a raised seal that was issued by a government unit in the U.S. or U.S. territory, a valid, unexpired U.S. passport or a certificate of citizenship or naturalization, a Permanent Resident Card, or an Employment Authorization Card.

The first and last names and date of birth on the legal presence and identity documents should match. If your current legal name is different from the name on your birth certificate or legal presence document, you must show legal proof of the name change, such as an original marriage license, divorce decree, or court order.

Providing Proof of Identity

You must also provide proof of identity when applying for a driver's license or state ID card. Only original documents will be accepted. Photocopies or facsimiles cannot be used. More than one document may be required.

Providing Proof of Residency

Before your driver's license or state ID card application can be processed, you must present proof that you are a Michigan resident. At least two documents must be presented. Acceptable documents include a utility bill, credit card bill or account statement issued within the last 90 days, pay stub, earnings statement, mortgage, rental or lease agreement, or an insurance policy.

Residency documents in a family member's name may be used if the family relationship can be established by other forms of documented proof.

Physical Standards

The Secretary of State office staff will ask you a few general health questions as part of the screening procedure. Your application may be denied pending additional medical information should there be any question about your physical condition and your ability to operate a motor vehicle safely.

Vision Test

You will be given a vision test to determine if your vision meets minimum standards. If corrective lenses, such as glasses or contact lenses, are needed to pass the test, your driver's license will show you must wear them while driving. If you fail the vision test, your eye-care specialist must complete a vision statement documenting that you meet the vision standards.

A favorable vision statement means a driver's license may be issued. If the vision statement documents that you do not meet the vision standards, your driver's license application will be denied.

Sometimes special driving limitations, such as "daylight driving only," will be required based on the vision statement and other information acquired by the Department of State.

Knowledge Test

If you have never been licensed, you will be given a knowledge test to determine how well you know Michigan traffic laws and safe driving practices. Applicants age 18 or older will be given this test at the Secretary of State office when applying for a Temporary Instruction Permit. Teens in the Graduated

Driver Licensing program must pass a knowledge test as a part of the Segment 1 driver education class.

If you are required to take a knowledge test for your original operator's or chauffeur's license, arrive at the Secretary of State office at least one hour before closing to allow sufficient time to complete the test.

If you have difficulty speaking or reading English, branch office staff will provide a list of available foreign language interpreters. Knowledge tests are also available in many languages. Please contact the Department of State Information Center at (888) SOS-MICH (767-6424) in advance to obtain a list of interpreters. Hearing-impaired customers can request a sign language interpreter in advance of a branch office visit or may use an interpreter they know.

Temporary Instruction Permit (TIP)

A Temporary Instruction Permit (TIP) allows you to practice driving with a licensed adult for up to 180 days. A TIP is issued if you are age 18 or older and:

- You have never been licensed.
- Your license expired more than four years ago.
- You hold an expired out-of-country driver's license from a country other than Germany or Canada.

If your driver's license is expired for less than four years, a TIP may not be required.

Before obtaining a TIP, you must present proof of a valid Social Security number or a letter of ineligibility, U.S. citizenship or legal presence in the U.S., identity, and Michigan residency. You must also pass vision, written knowledge, and road sign tests. You must practice driving with a licensed adult for at least 30 days before you are eligible to apply for a Michigan driver's license. The 30-day practice period is waived if you have previously had a driver's license. You must pass a driving skills test before a driver's license will be issued.

Driving Skills Test

You will need to take a driving skills test if:

- You are applying for a Level 2 License under Graduated Driver Licensing.

- You are age 18 or older, have never been licensed and are applying for an original driver's license.
- Your last driver's license has been expired for more than four years.
- You hold a driver's license from a country other than Germany or Canada.

The driving skills test may be waived if you are converting a driver's license issued by another state, Canada, or Germany.

Eligibility requirements for taking a driving skills test differ depending on your age.

If you are under age 18, you must have:

- Completed Segment 2 of Graduated Driver Licensing.
- Logged at least 50 hours of supervised driving, including 10 hours at night.
- Held a Level 1 License for at least six months.
- Not had any convictions, civil infractions, license suspensions or at-fault crashes during the 90-day period immediately preceding your driving skills test and application for your Level 2 License.

If you are age 18 or older, you must:

- First obtain a Temporary Instruction Permit before taking a driving skills test. You may be required to complete a 30-day practice period.

Driving skills tests are administered by independent third-party testing organizations approved by the Department of State. A list of approved third-party testing organizations is available at all Secretary of State offices and from the Department of State website. Be sure to ask the third-party testing organization you choose about its pricing policies before scheduling your test. The Department of State does not set driving skills test fees or pricing policies.

Applicants who are hearing impaired or not fluent in English may use an interpreter during the driving skills test. (Interpreters are not allowed during the skills testing for a commercial

driver's license.) The interpreter will be required to present photo identification to the examiner and may only interpret the instructions as the examiner gives them. Lists of approved sign language and foreign language interpreters are available through the department. Applicants may also bring their own interpreters. For more information, please call (888) SOS-MICH (767-6424).

The first part of the driving skills test requires you to pass a series of off-street, closed-course maneuvers, followed by an on-road driving skills test. After passing the first part, you must then pass an on-road driving test to receive your driving skills certificate. The driving skills test includes urban, expressway, rural highway, and residential driving.

Complete study information is provided in the Department of State publication *Driving Skills Test Study Guide* available at any Secretary of State office, or on the Department of State website. You should review this study guide thoroughly before taking the driving skills test.

Restricted License Due to Disability or Illness

When applying for an original or renewal driver's license, you may be requested to provide a Physician's Statement of Examination. A vision statement may be requested in some cases. A physician licensed in Michigan or another state must complete the physician's statement. A physician's statement is required if the Department of State has reason to believe you have had a fainting spell, blackout, seizure, or other loss of consciousness in the preceding six months. For a chauffeur or commercial driver's license, you must not have had any blackouts, fainting spells, or seizures within the last 12 months.

A physician's statement is also needed for any physical or mental infirmity, impairment, disability, or disease that may affect your ability to drive safely. A physician must accurately describe your condition, including any disability or illness, and any medications you have been taking. The form must be returned within 45 days to the Michigan Department of State, Lansing, Michigan 48918-1601. Department of State Traffic Safety Division will review the physician's statement to determine if you meet Michigan's physical and mental standards.

- If a physician's statement does not indicate a physical or mental impairment is present, and if all other standards are met, an unrestricted driver's license may be issued.
- If a physician's statement indicates a serious physical or mental condition at the time you renew your driver's license, you will be required to attend a driver re-examination. The re-examination will evaluate your ability to operate a motor vehicle safely. Every effort will be made to help you keep your driver's license and continue to drive safely. If you have such a condition and are renewing your license, please begin the renewal process several weeks before your license expires to allow adequate time for processing.
- If a restricted driver's license is issued because of a disability or illness, a periodic driver re-examination may be required.

Changing Information on Your License

Make sure your driver's license shows your correct name and residential address. If you need to change your name on your driver's license, you must first change your name with the Social Security Administration (SSA). Present your proof of name change along with your valid driver's license to the SSA. Allow at least three business days for the Social Security Administration website to update, before visiting a Secretary of State office. At the Secretary of State's office, present your license and proof of the name change, such as a marriage certificate, divorce decree, or legal name change document. The name change will be processed and a new driver's license will be issued for a fee.

Michigan law requires that your driver's license address correspond to your residence and match the address on your voter identification card. You may submit a change of address either at a Secretary of State office or by mail. If you are submitting a change of address at a branch office, bring your driver's license. Your driver's license will be updated with your new address. There is no charge for this service.

You may also submit a change of address by mail. Change-of-address forms are available on the Department of State website. Complete the form and mail it to the address provided.

When you submit a change of address, the procedures for updating your voter registration address will also be explained. Your driver's license may be suspended or revoked if you fail to change your address with the Department of State.

The Decision to Give Up Driving

Choosing to give up your privilege to drive can be a difficult decision. When you finally decide to "leave the driving to someone else," return your driver's license to a Secretary of State office, where you may obtain a state identification (ID) card.

A state ID card is used in place of the driver's license for identification purposes. For complete information about obtaining a state ID card, visit our website.

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL)

Under Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL), teen drivers under age 18 must complete two segments of driver education instruction and meet the requirements for each of the three GDL licensing levels. Driving privileges are increased at each new licensing level as the teen driver gains greater skill and confidence. Graduated Driver Licensing requirements, driving privileges, and driver education requirements are outlined on pages 17-21. Parents or legal guardians of teen drivers will find additional information in the booklet *Michigan's Graduated Driver Licensing: A Guide for Parents*. This publication is available on the Department of State website, at Secretary of State offices by request, and is distributed by driver education providers.

Driver Education Certification

Teens may enroll in driver education at age 14 years, 8 months. To participate, students must meet Michigan's physical and mental health standards for operating a vehicle safely. The driver education component of Graduated Driver Licensing consists of two segments of instruction. These segments provide information about traffic safety, basic vehicle operation, and laws and regulations, as well as on-the-road driving experience. For additional information about GDL, please visit the Department of State website.

Parental Consent and Support

The Department of State is working with parents to help ensure teen drivers become safe and courteous drivers. As a parent or legal guardian, you are often the best judge of your teen driver's progress, skill, and maturity behind the wheel. Involvement from you is crucial to the coaching, learning, and driving experience of your teen driver so he or she becomes a safe driver. Although Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) requires teens to complete 50 hours of supervised driving, you are encouraged to provide supervision beyond this minimum.

The Department of State will notify you by letter if your teen driver is convicted of violating the terms of his or her GDL license or failing to display a valid GDL license.

You also have the legal right to request that your teen be held at a certain GDL level, dropped back a level, or have all driving privileges canceled if you believe your teen is not ready to handle certain driving responsibilities. Forms for changing the status of your teen's GDL driving privileges are available at any Secretary of State office. GDL ends for all teens at age 18.

Graduated Driver Licensing Summary

Driver Education—Segment 1

Graduated Driver Licensing requires drivers under age 18 to complete two segments of driver education. Segment 1 must include:

- 24 hours of in-class instruction.
- Six hours of behind-the-wheel instruction.
- Four hours of observation time.

A teen must be 14 years, 8 months old to enroll in a Segment 1 driver education course.

Once a teen successfully completes Segment 1, a green Michigan Department of State Segment 1 Certificate of Completion is issued by the driver education provider. The certificate of completion is not a permit to drive and may not be used as a driver's license. The certificate of completion, along with identification and proof of the teen's Social Security number, must be presented when applying for the Level 1 License at a Secretary of State office.

Level 1 License

After the driver education instructor issues the **green** Segment 1 certificate, the teen and parent or legal guardian should go to a Secretary of State office to apply for a Level 1 License without delay. The green Segment 1 certificate is **not** a license to drive. Any delay in obtaining the Level 1 License may adversely affect a teen's advancement through the GDL program.

A teen must be at least 14 years, 9 months old to apply for the Level 1 License. A parent or legal guardian must accompany the teen to sign the application. The parent or legal guardian must sign the application or the teen driver will not be issued a Level 1 License. Signing indicates parental/legal guardian approval for licensing of a minor.

The Level 1 License is a paper license. No photograph will be taken until the Level 2 License is issued.

To obtain a Level 1 License, the teen and a parent or legal guardian must go to a Secretary of State office and present proof of:

- A Social Security Number: Such as the teen's Social Security card, W-2 form or a pay stub, OR a letter of ineligibility from the Social Security Administration.
- U.S. Citizenship or Legal Presence: Such as the teen's certified birth certificate or valid U.S. passport, a Permanent Resident Card, or an Employment Authorization Card.
- Identity: Such as the teen's driver education certificate, school record or yearbook.
- Michigan Residency: Such as the teen's high school report card or bank statement. At least two documents will be required.
- A green Michigan Department of State Segment 1 Certificate of Completion.

The teen must meet the Department of State vision and health standards. A parent or legal guardian must be present to sign the Level 1 License application, granting approval.

With a Level 1 License, the teen driver may only drive while accompanied by a licensed parent, legal guardian, or designated adult age 21 or older.

Driver Education—Segment 2

Segment 2 of driver education consists of six hours of classroom instruction. Driver education instructors may also provide some on-the-road driving instruction, although it is not required.

To enroll in a Segment 2 driver education course, the teen must have:

- Held a valid Level 1 License for at least three consecutive months.
- Completed at least 30 of the mandatory 50 hours of parent-teen driving, which includes two of the 10 hours of nighttime driving.

When the teen successfully completes Segment 2, a white Michigan Department of State Segment 2 Certificate of Completion will be issued by the driver education instructor. This certificate will be required to apply for the Level 2 License.

Level 2 License

A teen will advance from a Level 1 License to a Level 2 License if he or she meets all of the requirements, including a driving skills test. Teens must complete both Segment 1 and Segment 2 of the driver education course to qualify for a Level 2 License and must have held a Level 1 License for at least six months.

Teens cannot have a moving violation resulting in a conviction or civil infraction determination, or been involved in an at-fault crash during the 90-day period immediately preceding application. The Level 2 License requires the teen to be photographed.

To obtain a Level 2 License, teens and their parent or legal guardian must go to a Secretary of State office and present proof of:

- Age – the teen must be at least 16 years old. (The Level 1 License is acceptable proof.)

- Social Security Number: Such as the teen’s Social Security card or a letter of ineligibility from the Social Security Administration.
- U.S. citizenship or Legal Presence: Such as the teen’s certified birth certificate or valid U.S. passport, a Permanent Resident Card, or an Employment Authorization Card.
- Identity: Such as the teen’s driver education certificate, school record or yearbook.
- Michigan Residency: Such as the teen’s high school report card or bank statement. At least two documents will be required.
- The skills test certificate, verifying the teen has passed a driving skills test given by a third-party testing organization approved by the Department of State.
- Proof that the teen has had a Level 1 License for at least six months. (If the Level 1 License has been lost, please refer to the “Duplicate License” section in this chapter for information about replacing a lost license.)
- The white Michigan Department of State Segment 2 Certificate of Completion.
- A log or other record documenting the teen’s 50 hours of supervised driving with a licensed parent, legal guardian, or designated adult age 21 or older. Graduated Driver Licensing requires 10 of the 50 hours of supervised driving to be completed at night.

A teen with a Level 2 License:

1.) Shall not operate a motor vehicle between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. except when:

- Driving to or from or in the course of employment;
- Driving to or from an authorized activity (see below); or
- Accompanied by a parent or legal guardian or a licensed driver age 21 or older designated by the parent or legal guardian.

2.) Shall not operate a motor vehicle at any time with more than one passenger in the vehicle who is less than 21 years old except:

- When the additional passengers are immediate family members;
- When driving to or from or in the course of employment;
- While going to or from an authorized activity (see below); or
- When accompanied by a parent or legal guardian or a licensed driver age 21 years or older designated by the parent or legal guardian.

Authorized activity means any of the following:

- A school or a school-sanctioned event or activity. School means a public or private school, including a home school.
- A sporting event or activity, or extracurricular event or activity, that is not school-sanctioned but is part of an official sports league or association or an official extracurricular club, or is paid for as a service offered by a business specializing in those events or activities or training for those events or activities.
- A class or program of vocational instruction offered by a college, community college, nonprofit association, or unit of government, or by a business specializing in vocational training.
- An event or activity sponsored by a religious organization that is tax-exempt under federal law.
- Transporting an individual in need of immediate emergency care or personal protection to a health care professional, hospital, police station, domestic violence shelter, or public safety location.

Level 3 License

A teen will automatically advance to a Level 3 License if he or she is age 17, meets all driving requirements, and has parental

authorization. This authorization is granted when the parent or legal guardian signs for the teen's Level 2 License. If the parent does not authorize automatic advancement to a Level 3 License, the teen will remain at Level 2 until the parent accompanies the teen to a Secretary of State office and grants authorization, or until the teen turns age 18.

If the parent has authorized the teen to automatically advance to a Level 3 License and the teen has successfully met all licensing requirements, the Level 3 License will be automatically mailed to the teen.

To obtain a Level 3 License, the teen must:

- Be at least age 17.
- Have driven at Level 2 for at least six months.
- Have completed 12 consecutive months of driving without a moving violation, an at-fault crash that resulted in a moving violation, a license suspension, or a violation of a Graduated Driver License restriction.

A Level 3 License grants full driving privileges. Graduated Driver Licensing ends for all teens at age 18.

Probationary Program

New drivers, including teen drivers under Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL), are placed on probation for a minimum of three years. The probationary period is a way for the Department of State to monitor the driving performance of new drivers. Probation is a separate program from GDL, but works like GDL to encourage new drivers to reduce their crash risk and drive safely.

Traffic Violations While on Probation

Each traffic violation posted on your driving record during probation will result in a contact by the Department of State. If your driving record shows unsafe driving behavior, including speeding, stop sign violations, and crashes, you may be required to undergo a driver assessment re-examination. At a driver assessment re-examination, a restriction, suspension, or combination of both may be imposed on your license.

Probationary licensing controls will also extend the time a young driver holds a Graduated Driver Licensing Level 1 or 2 License. Teen drivers on probation may face a re-examination, which could result in license restrictions or suspension, if cell phone use was found to be a contributing factor in a crash or traffic violation. The purpose of probationary licensing controls is to reduce the risk of a traffic crash and encourage safe driving.

Ending Probation

To complete probation, you must drive the last 10 months of your probationary period without receiving any tickets or driver's license suspensions, or causing any crashes. Failure to do so will automatically extend your probation until you can demonstrate you are a safe driver by remaining violation and crash free for a 10-month period.

The first two years after probation are called post probation. You are subject to a driver re-examination during this time if you have nine or more points and an alcohol-related ticket or crash, or other at-fault crash.

Points placed on your driving record during probation or post probation are not automatically erased when probation and post probation end. Points remain on your driving record for two years from the conviction date. If you have 12 or more points on your driving record, you will be required to attend a driver assessment re-examination, regardless of whether those points were issued during probation or post probation.

For additional information about probation, visit the Department of State website.

Other Licenses and Endorsements

Most Michigan drivers will only need an operator's license. However, professions such as taxi driver, school bus driver, or commercial truck driver require special licensing and endorsements.

Chauffeur's License

You must be at least age 16, have completed driver education, and passed a chauffeur's license knowledge test before a chauffeur's license can be issued. A chauffeur's license is required if you:

- Are employed for the principal purpose of operating a motor vehicle or combination of vehicles with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 10,000 pounds or more.
- Operate a motor vehicle as a carrier of passengers or as a common or contract carrier of property.
- Operate a bus, school bus, taxi, or limousine.

Drivers operating single vehicles or vehicles in combination with a GVWR or Gross Combined Weight Rating (GCWR) of 10,000 pounds or more must also meet Michigan's Commercial Driver License (CDL) requirements. Drivers must be at least age 18 to drive in Michigan and at least age 21 to drive across state lines or to transport hazardous materials in amounts that require the vehicle to be placarded. Drivers must also have the appropriate medical card or medical waiver. If a CDL group designator or endorsement is required, it will be added to the chauffeur's license.

Certain operations are exempt from requiring a chauffeur's license, including operating a motor vehicle for a volunteer program when you only receive reimbursement for the vehicle's operating costs; operating a motor home for personal use; or, if you are a parent, shuttling students to and from school and school-related events. For more information, please refer to the brochure *Your Michigan Chauffeur License* available at Secretary of State offices or from the Department of State website.

Commercial Driver License

Before you can operate commercial motor vehicles of the types listed below, you must be at least age 18, have been suspension free for 36 months before the date of application, and have the appropriate Michigan Commercial Driver License (CDL) group designation on your driver's license. Drivers between ages 18 and 21 can operate a commercial vehicle only in Michigan. You must be at least age 21 to drive a vehicle across state lines or to transport hazardous materials in amounts that require the vehicle to be placarded. A commercial vehicle endorsement will be required in addition to a group designation when operating double trailers, tank vehicles, vehicles carrying hazardous materials, commercial buses, and school buses.

Drivers applying for or renewing a standard CDL with a hazardous materials endorsement must provide proof of U.S. citizenship or legal presence and undergo federal background and fingerprint checks. For more information about the hazardous materials endorsement requirements, visit the department's website or refer to the *Michigan Commercial Driver License Manual*.

You must provide proof of your Social Security number and possess the appropriate medical card or medical waiver. Knowledge, vision, and skills tests are also required. You will need a CDL with the proper group designation to operate the following vehicles:

Group A:

- Combination vehicles that tow trailers or other vehicles with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 10,001 pounds or more when the gross combination weight rating is 26,001 pounds or more.

Unless certain restrictions or additional endorsements apply, the Group A designation allows the operation of Group B and Group C vehicles.

Group B:

- A vehicle with a GVWR of 26,001 pounds or more.
- May tow trailers or other vehicles with a GVWR of 10,000 pounds or less.

Unless certain restrictions or additional endorsements apply, the Group B designation allows the operation of Group C vehicles.

Group C:

- Vehicles designed to transport 16 or more persons (including the driver) or that carry or tow hazardous materials in amounts requiring placards (and the HazMat endorsement) that fall under the following GVWR:
 - Less than 26,001 pounds.
 - Less than 26,001 pounds towing trailers or other vehicles.

CDL Temporary Instruction Permit

A CDL Temporary Instruction Permit (TIP) allows you to practice driving only under the supervision of a CDL driver licensed with the appropriate group designation for the type of commercial vehicle you are operating. A CDL TIP may be obtained if you have been suspension free for the 36 months before making an application and after passing all the required knowledge tests. A CDL TIP is valid for 180 days from the date of issue. There is no minimum time you must have a CDL TIP before taking the skills tests.

All CDL applicants must show a valid Michigan operator or chauffeur photo driver's license, along with the appropriate CDL TIP before taking their CDL skills test. If the applicant is converting to a chauffeur-based driver's license, a "clipped" Michigan operator photo driver's license with the temporary chauffeur's permit is acceptable.

All out-of-state CDL applicants must wait until they receive their Michigan operator or chauffeur photo driver's license to take the CDL skills test. Skills tests are administered by third-party testing organizations—public or private entities authorized by the Department of State. A list of approved third-party testing organizations is available at any Secretary of State office or from the Department of State website.

Additional CDL Information

Contact a Secretary of State office for information about specific CDL exceptions for active duty military (including the National Guard), firefighters, police officers, and farmers. Applicants may request a copy of the *Michigan Commercial Driver License Manual* from any Secretary of State office or download a copy from the Department of State website. The CDL manual contains all the information needed to study for your CDL written and skills tests.

For information about other commercial driver qualifications, including the physical/medical requirements contact:

Interstate Operation

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
315 W. Allegan St., Room 205
Lansing, MI 48933
(517) 377-1866
www.fmcsa.dot.gov

Intrastate Operation

Michigan Center for Truck Safety
Suite 2
1131 Centennial Way
Lansing, MI 48917
(800) 682-4682 (Lansing office)
(800) 469-7364 (Upper Peninsula office)
www.truckingsafety.org

Trucks and Commercial Buses

Michigan Trucking Association
1131 Centennial Way
Lansing, MI 48917
(517) 321-1951
www.mitrucking.org

School Buses

Michigan Department of Education
Grants Coordination and School Support
P.O. Box 30008
Lansing, MI 48909
(517) 373-1806
www.michigan.gov/mde

Moped License

If you have a valid operator's or chauffeur's license, you are allowed to operate a moped on public roadways. If you do not have a valid operator's or chauffeur's license and are at least age 15, you may apply for a moped license at a Secretary of State office. You are not eligible for a moped license if your operator's or chauffeur's license is suspended, revoked, or denied. For more information, obtain a copy of the brochure *Riding A Moped Safely* at a Secretary of State office or from the Department of State website.

Motorcycle Endorsement

To operate a motorcycle on public roads, you must have a valid Michigan driver's license with a motorcycle endorsement.

The fee for the motorcycle endorsement is added to your driver's license fee.

To obtain a motorcycle endorsement you must:

- Pass a motorcycle knowledge test at a Secretary of State office.
- Complete a motorcycle safety course approved by the Michigan Department of State OR pass a motorcycle skills test administered by a third-party testing organization approved by the Department of State.
- If you fail the skills test twice, you must present proof of passing an approved motorcycle safety course.
- If you are age 16 or 17, you are required to complete a motorcycle safety course.

A motorcycle Temporary Instruction Permit (TIP) is issued if you are at least age 16 and hold a valid Michigan Graduated Driver License Level 2 or Level 3. You must also pass a written test and pay a fee to obtain a motorcycle TIP. Applicants ages 16 and 17 must present proof of enrollment in, or completion of, a motorcycle safety course. This requirement may be waived if you have a valid license or endorsement to operate a motorcycle from another state.

A motorcycle TIP is valid for 180 days. When using a motorcycle TIP, you must be under the constant visual supervision of a licensed motorcycle operator at least age 18. While using a motorcycle TIP, you may not carry passengers or operate your motorcycle at night.

For more information about motorcycle safety classes, motorcycle endorsements, or third-party testing organizations, obtain a copy of the *Michigan Motorcycle Operator Manual* from a Secretary of State office or visit the Department of State website.

Recreational Double R Endorsement

A “recreational double” is a pickup truck pulling a fifth-wheel trailer designed for recreational living purposes, with a second trailer attached to the rear of the fifth-wheel trailer. The pickup

truck must have a towing rate equal to, or greater than, the total weight being towed. The total length of the combination cannot exceed 65 feet.

To operate a recreational double, you must have an “R” endorsement on your driver’s license. Anyone age 18 or older with a valid driver’s license may apply for this endorsement at a Secretary of State office. A knowledge test is required. There is no skills test.

Drivers holding a Group “A” CDL with a “T” double trailers endorsement can operate a recreational double without the “R” endorsement. (Triple trailers are not permitted in Michigan.) For more information, obtain a copy of the brochure *A Recreational Double Endorsement* at a Secretary of State office or visit the Department of State website.

Renewing Your Michigan Driver’s License

The Renewal Process

A driver’s license is usually valid for four years and expires on your birthday in the year shown on the license’s upper right corner. If you are under age 21, your driver’s license expires on your 21st birthday.

To remind you to renew your driver’s license, the Department of State sends a renewal notice about 45 days before expiration. The renewal notice is sent to the address listed on department records. Do not let your driver’s license expire unless you will no longer be driving. Driving without a valid license is illegal.

If you renew your operator’s license after its expiration date, you will pay a late fee in addition to the regular renewal fee.

A driver’s license will not be renewed if your driving record shows six or more unpaid parking tickets, or if your driver’s license has been suspended or revoked. A renewal application may also be denied if you have failed to provide a valid Social Security number or letter of ineligibility from the Social Security Administration and proof of U.S. citizenship or legal presence.

When renewing your driver’s license at a Secretary of State office, a vision screening will be given. A new photograph will also be taken.

Cash, checks, and money orders are accepted at all Secretary of State offices. PLUS offices and SUPER!Centers also accept Discover and MasterCard at the counter – a nominal service fee

is charged. Find the Secretary of State office nearest you by using the department’s Branch Office Locator on its website.

Convenient Renewal by Mail

You are eligible to renew your driver’s license by mail if your last renewal was completed at a Secretary of State office, the Department of State has your verified Social Security number, you do not hold a Commercial Driver License, and you are not listed on the sex offender registry. If your renewal notice states “You cannot renew your license by mail,” you must renew at a Secretary of State office.

Renewal by mail is easy. Payment must be made by check, money order, or Discover, Visa, or MasterCard. To register to vote, or update a voter registration, complete and return the form enclosed with your renewal application.

After renewing by mail, your next driver’s license renewal must be completed at a Secretary of State office.

If your physical or mental condition has changed and affects your ability to drive since you last renewed, you must renew your license in person at a Secretary of State office. Your physician may have to complete a Physician’s Statement of Examination form attesting to the impact your condition has on your driving ability. This form is available on the Department of State website. Plan to renew at least two weeks before your current license expires. If your operator’s license is expired at the time you renew, you will be assessed a late fee in addition to the regular renewal fee.

If you have a Commercial Driver License (CDL), you cannot renew by mail. You must go to a Secretary of State office for a vision test and to have your eligibility checked through state and national driver records. A hazardous materials endorsement may not be renewed or transferred from another state until you successfully complete federal background record and fingerprint checks. Please visit the Department of State website for more information, including a list of agencies providing the fingerprint check.

Motorists with a CDL whose driving privilege has been suspended, revoked, canceled, or denied in Michigan or any other state will not be able to renew their CDL until the matter is resolved.

Special Renewals

Duplicate License: If your driver's license has been lost, destroyed, mutilated, or is illegible, apply for a duplicate at a Secretary of State office. Identification documents are required to issue a replacement license, such as certified birth certificates, U.S. or Canadian passports, marriage licenses, and photo identification cards issued by a Michigan governmental agency. Only original or certified documents will be accepted. Photocopies and facsimiles are not adequate proof. If your license will expire within a year, your application for a duplicate license will be processed as a renewal.

Early Renewals: A driver's license may be renewed up to 12 months early at a Secretary of State office if you are unable to renew it on time for any reason.

Out-of-State Renewal by Mail: If you are a Michigan resident temporarily residing out of state and cannot return to Michigan to renew your driver's license, you may renew it by mail or choose to get a special driving permit, depending on the circumstances of your particular situation.

The permit is valid for up to 180 days after your license expires or for two weeks upon your return to Michigan, whichever comes first. However, you are advised to immediately renew your driver's license at a Secretary of State office after returning home.

To request a special driving permit application form, please provide the following information in writing: your first, middle, and last names; date of birth; driver's license number; home and out of-state addresses; and length of time expected to be out of Michigan. Mail your request to the Department of State at:

**Michigan Department of State
Out-of-State Resident Services
7064 Crowner Drive
Lansing, Michigan 48918-1502
Telephone: (517) 322-1473**

License Lost While Out of State: If you are out of state and lose your driver's license, you may request a temporary extension permit good for 180 days that allows you to drive back to Michigan. As soon as you return, you should immediately

apply for a new driver's license at a Secretary of State office.

To request the special driving permit, please follow the instructions for obtaining a permit under Out-of-State Renewal by Mail.

Military Personnel and Dependents: If your Michigan driver's license expires while you are on active duty in the U.S. military, it remains valid until 30 days from the date of your next leave, or until 30 days after your discharge, whichever comes first. Military personnel driving on an expired license should carry their active duty identification card, leave, or discharge papers.

If you are on duty out of state, you may renew your driver's license using out-of-state renewal by mail procedures.

Michigan residents in the military who are stationed in Michigan must renew their driver's license using the same procedures in-state drivers follow. The driver's license of a military dependent is not granted the extension allowed for military personnel. However, a dependent's license may be renewed by mail if it was not renewed by mail the last time.

A late fee is not collected when military personnel stationed out of state on active duty renew their Michigan operator's license. The expired operator's licenses of civilians and military dependents are subject to a late fee upon renewal.

A late fee is not collected when military personnel stationed out of state on active duty renew their Michigan operator's license. The expired operator's licenses of civilians and military dependents are subject to a late fee upon renewal.

Driving in a Foreign Country

For most travelers planning a vacation or business trip abroad, a Michigan driver's license or a Michigan driver's license with an International Driving Permit is sufficient to drive in a foreign country. AAA and the National Automobile Club (NAC), an affiliate of the American Automobile Touring Alliance, are the two organizations authorized by the U.S. Department of State to issue International Driving Permits.

To obtain an International Driving Permit, you must be at least 18 years old and have a valid driver's license. International Driving Permits are valid for one year and accepted in more than 150 countries. They are not a substitute driver's license, but a

supplemental document providing a translation of your driver's license information. International Driving Permits are not valid in the country that issued them. Contact your local AAA branch office or visit the NAC website at www.nationalautoclub.com and click on Sitemap for more information.

Obtaining a German Driver's License

If you plan to live in Germany for one year or more, you may take advantage of the driver's license reciprocity agreement Michigan has with Germany. The reciprocity agreement allows Michigan residents to waive many or all of the requirements for obtaining a German driver's license.

To obtain a German driver's license, submit the following to the American Embassy in Germany:

- Official identification such as an identity card, passport, or local residency certificate.
- A recent photograph.
- Your Michigan driver's license translated into German.
- A statement written and signed by you stating your Michigan driver's license is valid.

If you wish to obtain a driver's license issued in a country that does not have a reciprocity agreement with Michigan, you must fulfill all of that country's requirements before the license will be issued.