Is a REAL ID-compliant driver’s license or ID card right for you?

It’s time to renew your driver’s license or state ID card, and you may have a choice to make. Michigan residents boarding a plane for domestic travel in the United States or entering certain federal facilities, military bases and nuclear power plants must present a REAL ID-compliant document beginning Oct. 1, 2020.

Your renewal notice will state whether or not your license or ID is REAL ID compliant. Standard and enhanced cards are printed with the REAL ID star to show they are REAL ID compliant. (Enhanced cards have always been REAL ID compliant. If your enhanced card does not have a star, you will get one when you renew or replace it. Enhanced cards allow you to enter the U.S. by car or boat from Canada, Mexico, Bermuda or the Caribbean.)

A REAL ID-compliant license or state ID is the right choice if:

♦ You need a driver’s license or state ID that is acceptable for:
  ✓ Boarding a plane for domestic travel.
  ✓ Have an acceptable alternative such as a valid U.S. passport or passport card. The Transportation Security Administration provides a complete list of all acceptable documents.

You may not need a REAL ID-compliant license or state ID if you:

✓ Do not fly and do not plan to enter certain federal facilities, military bases and nuclear power plants beginning Oct. 1, 2020.
✓ Have an acceptable alternative such as a valid U.S. passport or passport card. The Transportation Security Administration provides a complete list of all acceptable documents.

To obtain a REAL ID-compliant license or state ID card, visit a Secretary of State office and bring a certified U.S. birth certificate with a stamp or raised seal, or a valid, unexpired U.S. passport or passport card, or other approved citizenship or legal presence document. If your name is different from what’s on your birth certificate, you’ll need to bring in a certified name-change document, such as your marriage license or court order. Multiple documents may be needed if your name has changed more than once. Name-change documents must show both the changed name and the previous name. Divorce decrees may be used if they are certified (copies are not accepted) and if they show the changed name and the previous name.

A new photograph will be taken and any applicable renewal fees will be charged. There is no additional cost for a REAL ID card. Your REAL ID-compliant license or ID card will have a printed on it. If you decide not to obtain a REAL ID-compliant license or ID card when renewing, you may apply for it at anytime by visiting a Secretary of State office (the normal correction fee will apply). Make sure to bring the proper documentation. For more information about REAL ID, visit the Secretary of State website at Michigan.gov/SOS.

Renewing your license or state ID card

Online
Check your renewal to see if you are eligible to renew online. Make sure you’re at an official Secretary of State website when renewing, look for Michigan.gov/SOS or state.mi.us in the Web address.

• Go to ExpressSOS.com.
• Select “Renew Driver’s License” or “Renew State ID card” and follow the screen Instructions. You can also submit a change of address online.
• Pay with an e-Check or a Discover, MasterCard or Visa debit or credit card. A processing fee will be charged for debit and credit card use.
• Print your Temporary Operator’s Permit (TOP) if renewing your driver’s license. You may drive using the TOP until your new license arrives in the mail.
• Print your Temporary ID card if renewing your state ID card. You may use your temporary ID card until your new ID card arrives in the mail.
• Online renewal is not available for enhanced driver’s licenses or enhanced state ID cards.

By Mail
Check your renewal notice to see if you are eligible to renew by mail.

• Fill out and sign the renewal notice.
• Update your address in the space provided.
• Pay by personal check or money order.
• Mail at least three weeks before your driver’s license or state ID card expires.

In Person - Driver’s License
You must renew at a Secretary of State’s office if:

• You have any health changes that may affect your ability to drive safely.
• You renewed by mail or online last time.
• It has been more than four years since you renewed in person.
• The Secretary of State could not verify your Social Security number.
• You have a Commercial Driver License. You must certify to a type of Commercial Motor Vehicle operation and may also need to provide a medical certificate.

Proof of legal presence is required.

• You have a limited term (LT) driver’s license. Proof of extended legal presence* is required.

Do you want to join the Michigan Organ Donor Registry? Visit Michigan.gov/SOS today!
When renewing your driver’s license:

- Bring your driver’s license and any glasses or contacts needed for driving.
- You will be asked to take a vision test.
- Pay by personal check, money order, cash, or a Discover, MasterCard or Visa debit or credit card. A processing fee will be charged for debit and credit card use.

State ID Card

You must renew at a Secretary of State’s office if:

- The Secretary of State could not verify your Social Security number.
- You have a limited term (LT) state ID card. Proof of extended legal presence* is required.
- Pay by personal check, money order, cash or a Discover, MasterCard or Visa debit or credit card. A nominal processing fee will be charged for debit and credit card use.

*Proof of legal presence can be a government-issued certified birth certificate, a permanent resident card (I-551), a valid U.S. Passport, an unexpired Employment Authorization Card (I-766), or other legal presence documents listed under “Documents Required for a License or ID” on the Secretary of State website at Michigan.gov/SOS.

Why did Congress enact REAL ID?

The federal REAL ID standards for driver’s licenses and ID cards were created in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks based on recommendations from the 9/11 Commission.

REAL ID sets document and security protocols for the production of driver’s licenses and ID cards, including the use of features to prevent illegal copying or altering. It also helps protect against fraud and misuse by requiring people to verify their Social Security number, identity, residency, and citizenship or legal presence when applying for a license or ID card.

Proof of U.S. citizenship or legal presence

Michigan birth certificates are available for a fee from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. The Secretary of State’s Office will not accept photocopies or faxes. If your name is different from what’s on your birth certificate, you’ll need to bring in a certified name-change document, such as your marriage license or court order. Multiple documents may be needed if your name has changed more than once. If you are not a U.S. citizen, the documents verifying your legal presence are different than those required for a U.S. citizen. Please visit the Secretary of State website at Michigan.gov/SOS for a list of approved legal presence documents; search for the “SOS-428” form.

Veteran designation on licenses and ID cards

The designation gives veterans an easy way to show their veteran status to receive discounts from businesses. Plus, it helps veterans’ organizations connect veterans with the resources and services that are available to them.

Military veterans who served in any branch of the U.S. armed forces and have an honorable or under honorable conditions (general) discharge may have a veteran designation printed on their Michigan driver’s license or state identification card. Proof of veteran status, such as a DD214 form, is required.

Apply at any Secretary of State office or, if applying through the mail, send in the veteran designation application form found online at Michigan.gov/SOS.

Joining the Michigan Organ Donor Registry

You have an opportunity to make a profound impact on the well-being of others by joining the Michigan Organ Donor Registry. You can join the donor registry online at Michigan.gov/SOS, when renewing your license or ID card online at ExpressSOS.com or at any Secretary of State office. After joining the donor registry, you will receive either a heart sticker for your driver’s license or ID card, or a new card with the heart emblem printed on it.

Disability license plates and parking placards

Services provided for people with qualifying disabilities include: Disability license plates, temporary and permanent disability parking placards and free-parking stickers. A physician’s statement is required. Disability parking placards and free-parking stickers are provided at no cost. There is a $10 fee to replace a lost placard.

Are You Ready?
New ID Rules May Affect You

Here’s your roadmap for renewing your license or ID

— Important information —
Please read before you renew!

There’s a new option when renewing. You may want to bring your birth certificate. Look inside to find out why!

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