

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · ATLANTA

How to Get a Driver's License in Atlanta: DDS, the Turkish-Language Exam, SSN and DDS-351, 2026 Guide

For Atlanta newcomers and drivers arriving with a Turkish license: deadline, documents, exams, fees, and the fact that the Whitehall Street center gives no road tests.

SHORT ANSWER

Licenses in Atlanta come from the state Department of Driver Services (DDS). The Atlanta center is at 400 Whitehall Street SW, but it does **not** give road tests; the closest sites that do are Decatur and Forest Park. The knowledge exam is walk-in and offered in Turkish, and the road test is by appointment and in English. An SSN or form DDS-351 is required, every document must be in English and translations are not accepted. An eight-year license costs \$32.

What to know before you go

- **The 30-day deadline.** You count as a resident once you have been in the state 30 days or more, or once you hold a job and enroll your children in school within 10 days. From then you have 30 days to get a Georgia license. Until then you may drive on your foreign license as a tourist or business visitor. Georgia law does not allow a license for anyone without lawful status.
- **Every visit starts online.** Whatever you come in for, DDS asks you to complete the Online License/ID/Permit form before you walk in (DRIVES e-Services, free). **Appointments are for road tests only;** everything else is walk-in. Call center: (678) 413-8400.
- **No road tests at Whitehall Street.** The Atlanta center gives the knowledge exam but not the road test, so the job splits into two visits: the knowledge exam at Whitehall Street, the road test at Decatur or Forest Park.
- **An SSN or form DDS-351.** You must provide either a Social Security number or the DDS-351, which you pick up at the center if you are not eligible for an SSN. Anyone with DHS work authorization must apply for an SSN, so the DDS-351 route is closed if you hold a work permit.
- **Documents in English only, no translations.** DDS also checks the **originals of your immigration papers at every visit.** A photocopy will not do.

Step by step

- 1 **Complete the online form.** dds.drives.ga.gov (DRIVES e-Services).

- 2 Prepare your documents in English:** one identity document, your SSN (or the DDS-351), two proofs of address from separate sources and one document showing lawful status. The table below has the detail.
- 3 In week one, walk into Whitehall Street for the knowledge exam.** No appointment, but you must start at least 30 minutes before closing. It has two parts, road rules and road signs, 20 questions each, with 15 correct needed to pass.
- 4 Book the road test the same day.** Use DRIVES e-Services for Decatur, Forest Park, Lithonia, Marietta, Kennesaw, Norcross or Lawrenceville. Bring your own car: four wheels, valid plates, registration and liability insurance, and it gets a safety check on the spot. The pass mark is 75 out of 100. After a first failure you can retake the next day, after a second in 7 days, and after a failure caused by an accident or violation in 30 days.
- 5 Pay and collect the interim paper.** The permanent card comes by mail within 30 days. TSA does not accept the paper interim, so carry your passport on domestic flights until the card arrives.

Which documents are required?

ITEM	FOR SOMEONE COMING FROM TÜRKIYE
Identity (1 document)	Valid foreign passport, green card (I-551) or work permit (I-766)
Social Security	Your SSN, or the DDS-351 if you are not eligible for one
Address (2 documents, 2 separate sources)	A lease, an electric or water bill, a bank statement. P.O. boxes are not accepted
Lawful status (1 document)	Passport plus visa plus I-94; for F or J, the I-20 or DS-2019 plus I-94; an EAD; a green card

Is the knowledge exam really in Turkish?

Yes. The DDS language list says the road rules and road signs parts of the non-commercial knowledge exam are offered in **26 languages, Turkish among them**. The road test is in English. There is a conflict: the 2023-2024 driver manual still on the DDS site says the road signs section is in English only, while the newer language list and exam page say both sections are translated. Call **(678) 413-8400** before you go to Whitehall Street and ask whether you can take the signs section in Turkish. One person, an interpreter included, may accompany you.

The LIMITED-TERM card

- A card issued to a non-citizen is printed **LIMITED-TERM**. It expires with your approved period of stay and runs at most five years; a citizen's card lasts eight.
- If your immigration paperwork is pending an extension, you can get one 120-day extension by showing the original I-797C.
- Every Georgia license and ID issued since 2012 is a REAL ID at no extra cost.

Fees

ITEM	FEE
License (Class C, 8 years; printed LIMITED-TERM for non-citizens, max 5 years)	\$32
Instructional permit	\$10, payable before each attempt
State ID card (8 years)	\$32
Replacement card	\$10
Online transaction discount	\$5 less

Your Turkish license

- **It is not exchanged.** The only reciprocal jurisdictions on the DDS list are South Korea (with a consulate letter) and Taiwan. Türkiye is not on it, so you take the vision test, the knowledge exam and the road test.
- **You do not surrender it.** It is shown during the transaction and handed back.
- **An International Driving Permit** is not a license on its own and cannot be used for a DDS transaction.
- For adults getting a first license, DDS can ask those who go straight for a Class C license to sign an affidavit of 40 hours of supervised driving, six at night. The DDS pages do not say whether a Turkish license holder is excused, so call (678) 413-8400 and ask.

The Atlanta DDS center and the road-test sites

Centers open **Tuesday to Friday 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and Saturday 7:30 a.m. to noon**, closed Sunday and Monday. Holiday closures are posted on the DDS home page, and a Saturday can be closed, so check first.

CENTER	ADDRESS	ROAD TEST
Atlanta (Fulton)	400 Whitehall Street SW, Atlanta GA 30303	No
Decatur (DeKalb)	2801 Candler Rd, Ste 82, Decatur GA 30034	Yes
Forest Park (Clayton)	5036 State Route 85, Forest Park GA 30297	Yes
Lithonia (DeKalb)	8040 Rockbridge Rd, Lithonia GA 30058	Yes
Marietta (Cobb)	1605 County Services Pkwy, Marietta GA 30008	Yes
Kennesaw (Cobb)	3690 Old 41 Hwy NW, Kennesaw GA 30144	Yes, motorcycle too
Norcross (Gwinnett)	2211 Beaver Ruin Rd, Norcross GA 30071	Yes
Lawrenceville (Gwinnett)	310 Hurricane Shoals Rd NE, Lawrenceville GA 30046	Yes
Alpharetta (Fulton)	11575 Maxwell Rd, Alpharetta GA 30009	No

NOTE FOR IMMIGRANTS

- Keep your passport, visa, I-94 and any I-797C or EAD in one folder and take it to **both** visits. DDS wants to see the originals every time.
- The LIMITED-TERM date on your card follows your immigration document. Go back to DDS the day you extend your status.
- If anyone at the center offers to register you to vote and you are not a U.S. citizen, decline and tick the Opt-Out box on the form.
- DDS does not text or call you to ask for fees. A message like that is a scam.

Common mistakes

- Going to the Whitehall Street center for a road test. It does not give them.
- Bringing translations. DDS does not accept them; it wants the English originals.
- Bringing photocopies of your immigration papers and leaving the originals at home.
- Walking in without having completed the online form.
- Holding a work permit but going with a DDS-351 instead of applying for an SSN first.
- Not confirming that the road signs section can be taken in Turkish.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN ATLANTA

Have a question about your immigration status?

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