

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · AUSTIN

How to Get a Driver's License in Austin: 2026 Guide

For Austin newcomers, green card and visa holders, and drivers arriving with a foreign license: documents, tests, fees and DPS offices.

SHORT ANSWER

Texas driver's licenses are issued by DPS offices, by appointment only. For a first license you need proof of lawful presence (green card, EAD, or passport + visa + I-94), your SSN (or a DL-13 affidavit at the office), two documents showing a Texas address with at least 30 days of residence, and Texas insurance for any car you own. Austin-area first-time appointments run 14 to 25 days out. The fee is \$33.

Before you start

- **You cannot apply in your first month.** One address document must show at least 30 days of Texas residence.
- **No walk-ins.** In the Austin area, first-time appointments run 14 to 25 days out and road tests 40 to 69 days out (DPS, September 16, 2026).
- **The knowledge test is English or Spanish only.** Interpreters are not allowed during the test.
- **Most foreign licenses cannot be exchanged.** Only France, Germany, South Korea, the UAE, Taiwan and other U.S. states are exempt from testing.
- **Your previous license is valid for 90 days** after you become a Texas resident.
- **Own a car? Register it first.** The Travis County Tax Office says to register your vehicle before you apply for a Texas license.

Step by step

- 1 **Book an appointment** at txdpsscheduler.com, choosing the "Original" service. Slots open up to 6 months ahead. Every Austin-area office has a limited number of same-day slots at its kiosk, first come, first served.
- 2 **Gather original documents.** No photocopies. DPS's document check tool builds a checklist: dps.texas.gov/apps/DriverLicense/RealID.
- 3 **Complete ITAD.** If you are 25 or older, finish the one-hour Impact Texas Adult Drivers video (impacttexasdrivers.dps.texas.gov); the certificate is valid for 90 days. Ages 18 to 24 also need a 6-hour adult driver education course.
- 4 **Apply at the office** with Form DL-14A. Fingerprints, photo and a vision test.

- 5 Take the knowledge test** on traffic laws and signs, in English or Spanish.
- 6 Take the road test** in an insured, registered vehicle. This is the longest wait in Austin, so book it as soon as your knowledge test is scheduled.
- 7 Pay the fee.** You leave with a temporary license; the card arrives by mail in 2 to 3 weeks.

Document checklist

DOCUMENT	NOTES
☐ Proof of lawful presence	Green card (I-551), EAD (I-766), or a valid passport + visa + I-94. DPS verifies it with DHS.
☐ Identity	A green card, an EAD and "passport + visa + I-94" count as primary ID. A foreign passport alone is only a supporting document.
☐ SSN	Provide your number. If you are not eligible for an SSN, you sign a DL-13 affidavit at the office (no CDL on this basis).
☐ Address document #1	Lease or deed, or an electric, water, internet or cell phone bill from the last 180 days. A City of Austin Utilities bill works.
☐ Address document #2	Bank statement, pay stub, insurance policy, government mail or a USCIS notice. One must show 30 days in Texas.
☐ Vehicle documents	Texas insurance for each vehicle you own; Texas registration if surrendering an out-of-state license. If you own none, you say so.
☐ ITAD certificate	Age 25 and older, before the road test. Valid 90 days.
☐ Driver education certificate	Only for first-time applicants aged 18 to 24.

Fees (2026)

ITEM	FEE	VALID FOR
Driver's license, ages 18 to 84	\$33	8 years
Limited Term license	\$33	Your authorized stay
Texas ID card, age 59 and under	\$16	6 years
Replacement card	\$11	-

Texas does not let you hold a license and an ID card at the same time. Since May 7, 2025, domestic flights accept only REAL ID cards (marked with a star) or a passport.

If you are not a U.S. citizen

NOTE FOR IMMIGRANTS

- Green card holders get a standard 8-year license. Other statuses get a "Limited Term" card that expires with the authorized stay on your I-94.
- For duration-of-status (D/S) holders such as F-1 and J-1 students, the license is valid for one year.
- After an extension or change of status you renew in person with the new documents. DPS recommends coming at least 30 days before expiration.
- If DHS verification is not instant, track it at txapps.texas.gov.
- From January 1, 2027, vehicle registration renewals will also check ID. An expired Limited Term license could block a renewal.
- **If you are not a citizen, answer "no" to "Are you a U.S. citizen?" on the form.** USCIS treats a "yes" as a false claim of citizenship, with serious consequences.

Austin-area DPS offices

Estimated wait for an appointment (DPS report, September 16, 2026). Waits change weekly. There is no DPS driver license office in Round Rock or Cedar Park; residents there use Pflugerville, Austin Northwest, Georgetown or Taylor.

OFFICE	FIRST-TIME LICENSE	ROAD TEST
Pflugerville Mega Center	about 14 days	about 42 days
Taylor	about 15 days	about 45 days
Austin North	about 17 days	about 57 days
Austin South	about 17 days	about 69 days
Georgetown	about 17 days	about 57 days
San Marcos	about 20 days	about 42 days
Bastrop	about 21 days	about 40 days
Austin Northwest	about 25 days	about 44 days

Addresses and hours: [DPS office locator](#).

Driving on a foreign license

- **Visitors:** your home license with an International Driving Permit (or English translation), for up to one year from entry (ages 18 to 75, private vehicles).
- **New residents:** get a Texas license within 90 days. There is no test exemption for most foreign licenses.
- **Renting a car:** rental companies may also ask for the International Driving Permit.

Common mistakes

- Trying to apply in your first week (no 30-day address document yet).
- Bringing photocopies.
- Showing up for the road test without the ITAD certificate.
- Waiting too long to book the road test.
- Applying for the license before registering your car in Travis County.
- Letting a Limited Term license expire.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN AUSTIN

Have a question about your immigration status?

Attorney Asim Clinch serves clients in Austin and the surrounding area, in Turkish and English. Free evaluation: clinchlaw.com/free-evaluation · +1 866-491-7669

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