

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · CONNECTICUT

How to Get a Driver's License in Connecticut: Turkish-Language Exam and 2026 Guide

A Turkish knowledge test exists, but only as a paper test requested in advance. The drive-only license, the three REAL ID tiers, documents and fees.

SHORT ANSWER

Connecticut is the opposite of the other three states in this round: **there is a separate credential for a person who cannot prove lawful status**, and its official name is the **drive-only license**. There is a different route for people who do have status. The clock is short: once you establish residency you have **90 days** to move both the license and the vehicle registration here, and **one appointment can carry both**. On the testing side there is genuinely good news: **a Turkish knowledge test exists, but only as a paper test requested in advance**.

For people who cannot prove lawful status: the drive-only license

- **What it is:** the Department of Motor Vehicles describes it, in its own words, as a license designed for people aged 16 and over who **cannot prove their lawful presence** in the United States.
- **Who cannot have it:** U.S. citizens and people holding documented immigrant or nonimmigrant status, **including B-1 and B-2 visitors**, are not eligible. A Turkish national with a visa or a status should not apply for this route.
- **Documents:** two identity documents, at least one from the primary list. The primary list includes a **foreign passport** (not expired more than three years) and a valid consular identification card from your country of nationality; the secondary list includes a foreign national identity card, an original raised-seal birth certificate and a marriage certificate. Only originals or certified copies are accepted; photocopies, notarized photocopies and worn documents are not.
- **Residency and affidavit:** at least 90 days of residency, proved with two pieces of mail from two different sources. The applicant also signs a statement affirming that they have applied to legalize their immigration status, or will as soon as they are eligible.
- **Bars:** a felony conviction in this state or identity fraud at the DMV blocks the credential. The DMV searches the Judicial Branch electronic record system, and if the check fails **the fee is not refunded**.
- **Term and fees:** valid **3 years**, license fee \$36, test \$40, learner permit \$19. **There is no transfer from another state:** someone holding a similar credential in New York or California starts over. A lost or stolen card requires an in-person visit to a DMV office, and that transaction is not handled at express offices.

What it does and does not do. The DMV's own warning is that a drive-only license is **not valid for federal identification purposes and cannot be used to vote**. Because it is not federal identification, it is **not**

accepted for a domestic flight. Its standing in other states is uncertain too: the DMV says it may be honored elsewhere but that you should ask that state before you drive there. **We could not confirm exactly what wording is printed on the card;** the page says only that it is not valid for federal identification purposes. Ask about the card's appearance when you apply: DMV 860-263-5700 or 1-800-842-8222.

The ordinary route for a new resident who has status

- 1 Transferring from another U.S. state.** If your current license is valid, or expired by no more than two years, the knowledge test and the road test are waived; only a vision test is done, at a full-service office. Bring the current license, acceptable identity documents, a completed **R-229** form and the fees. The cost is **\$84 for the license plus \$40 for the application;** if you pay by check, that is two separate checks, both payable to DMV.
- 2 If your license expired more than two years ago,** you take a Connecticut learner permit and must complete an **8-hour safe driving course** at a state-licensed driving school before the skills test. If the license is lost, a certified driving record dated within the last 60 days is required.
- 3 If you have never held a license** (a Turkish license does not count here): learner permit, knowledge and vision tests, driver training, road test, license. An **adult learner permit** is mandatory for applicants over 18 and is valid two years.
- 4 Since January 1, 2026 there is a new requirement:** every learner permit applicant must complete the free online **Connecticut Work Zone Safety Course**, which takes under an hour, and hand the completion certificate to the DMV before the knowledge test. No guide written in 2025 mentions it.
- 5 The card is not handed over at the counter.** The state uses central issuance: the license arrives by mail **within 20 business days** and can be tracked at dmvcardtrack.ct.gov.
- 6 Who does not need a Connecticut license:** full-time students who keep residency abroad or in another state, active duty service members and their dependents, and people here on a visitor visa. If you are not a U.S. citizen, the DMV requires proof of lawful status in the country.

What languages is the knowledge test in?

TEST FORMAT	LANGUAGES
Standard test (on screen, in office)	Albanian, Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, English, French, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese. Turkish is not on this list.
Paper test requested in advance	Amharic, Armenian, Bosnian, Simplified Chinese, Croatian, Dari, German, Greek, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Nepali, Pashto, Persian, Brazilian Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Somali, Thai, Turkish , Ukrainian, Urdu

So a Turkish knowledge test does exist, and it has to be requested in advance as a paper test. The DMV page does not say **how far in advance** or **at which offices** it can be requested, and we could not confirm either; when you book the appointment, call the DMV and have the request for a Turkish paper test put on the record (860-263-5700 or 1-800-842-8222). For languages not on the lists, an unmarked printed dictionary may be brought in, and the DMV can provide headphones for an audio version. **The driver's**

manual is published only in English and Spanish, with no Turkish edition; the Turkish option in the state portal's language menu is a machine translation tool, not a Turkish customer service from the DMV.

- The knowledge test is **25 questions and 20 correct answers pass**, drawn from the state driver's manual.
- The vision standard for Class D is **20/40**, with or without glasses, and **140 degrees** of binocular peripheral vision. The vision test is done first, at the same appointment.
- **The test fee is \$40**. If you fail the knowledge test you must wait **7 days** and pay \$40 again. If you fail the vision test you can rebook immediately.
- What to bring: acceptable identity documents, a completed and signed R-229 form, \$40, your state identity card if you have one (it is surrendered when the learner permit is issued), glasses or contact lenses, and the Work Zone Safety Course certificate. **Photocopies and faxes are not accepted**.

REAL ID: three tiers

TIER	WHO	RESULT
Full-term REAL ID	In the DMV's own words, only U.S. citizens, permanent residents and people with asylee or refugee status	Gold star. Valid for domestic flights and federal buildings
Limited-term REAL ID	The DMV's frequently asked questions section: currently only residents with DACA status. The DMV adds that it is working to include other residents	Gold star plus the words LIMITED-TERM beside it. Its expiry matches your status document; if the document has no expiry date, one year
Drive-only license	People who cannot prove lawful presence	Cannot get a REAL ID. The DMV's wording: under current law a drive-only license is not eligible for a verified license or REAL ID

THE DMV CONTRADICTS ITS OWN PAGE, PLUS FOUR MORE DETAILS

- The general text on the license page says other visa categories **may be eligible** for a limited-term REAL ID; the frequently asked questions section on the same page says **only DACA. We do not resolve that contradiction, we pass it on as it stands:** if you are here on H-1B, L-1, F-1 or J-1, call the DMV before you apply and ask which answer applies to your status (860-263-5700).
- **The six-month rule:** your status document must have at least 6 months left. With less than 6 months, the DMV says the person may instead be eligible for a full-term ordinary (non-REAL ID) credential.
- **A one-way door:** once you have taken a limited-term REAL ID you cannot go back to a full-term ordinary credential.
- **SAVE verification:** status is verified through the federal SAVE system and that can take **10 business days or more**. Add that delay to your calendar. A limited-term Class D learner permit is not currently issued.
- **Non-citizens must go to a DMV office.** Identity verification is also done at participating AAA and Nutmeg State Financial Credit Union branches, but the DMV's own sentence is explicit, so the express offices run by the motor club and the credit union are closed to a Turkish reader. Verification is free and one-time; asking for a REAL ID outside your renewal period costs a \$30 duplicate fee. A license without a star is perfectly valid for driving, it simply does not meet the federal standard, and a valid passport does the job at the airport instead.

Arriving with a Turkish license

- **No exchange.** Connecticut gives the easy, out-of-state-style treatment to exactly **three foreign countries:** Canada, Germany and France. Türkiye is not on the list.
- **One year, and one condition.** The DMV's own sentence is that you may drive here for one year on a valid foreign license together with an **International Driving Permit (IDP) issued by your country of origin**. A foreign license alone is not treated as sufficient.
- **Get the IDP before you leave Türkiye.** This is the most expensive wrong assumption a Turkish reader can make: an IDP cannot be bought here, because the issuing body is your own country.
- **Source warning:** the DMV subpage on requirements for holders of licenses from U.S. territories, Canada, Germany, France and Puerto Rico would not open, so we write the conclusion that there is no other route as **probable rather than settled**; confirm on 860-263-5700.
- **Translation:** if your Turkish license is to serve as a supporting document and is not in English, it must be translated by a **DMV-approved translator**. The DMV publishes a list of approved translators; ask for it before your appointment, because an arbitrary sworn translation may not be accepted.

Fees

TRANSACTION	FEE
Transfer of an out-of-state license	\$84 license plus \$40 application (two separate checks if paying by check)
Knowledge and vision test	\$40 (another \$40 if you fail)

TRANSACTION	FEE
License renewal, 6 years / 8 years	\$72 / \$96
License renewal, age 65 and over	\$24 (two years, optional)
DMV identity card, 6 years / 8 years	\$24 / \$32
REAL ID outside a renewal (duplicate)	\$30
Limited-term REAL ID, new Class D license	\$84 (plus \$40 on an out-of-state transfer)
Limited-term REAL ID, non-driver identity card	\$28
Drive-only: test / learner permit / license	\$40 / \$19 / \$36 (three years)
Work Zone Safety Course	Free

Limited-term REAL ID renewals are prorated by year, because the credential cannot outlive your status document. **We do not print registration, plate, title or emissions test fees in this guide:** the DMV fee schedule page would not open by any route during the research, and we preferred a gap to a guess. Confirm the figure with the DMV before you transact.

Appointments and offices

Almost nothing here is done by walking in. The notice the DMV currently carries on every page reads: **no walk-in service at the Cheshire, Putnam and Stamford offices; no office offers walk-in service on Saturdays; walk-ins should expect long waits.** The same notice contains one useful line: the appointment system updates in real time and new appointments are added regularly, so someone who finds nothing available should look again rather than give up. There are three kinds of office: **hub** and **branch** offices are full service, while **express** offices sit inside AAA and Nutmeg State Financial Credit Union branches and are limited; non-citizens cannot use them. Mailing address: Department of Motor Vehicles, 60 State Street, Wethersfield CT 06161. Title work goes to ATTN: Title Section, Room 305 at the same address; insurance matters to the Insurance Compliance Unit, CT 06161-4020. Telephone 860-263-5700 or 1-800-842-8222, insurance compliance 860-263-5725.

THREE THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

- **If you have status, do not apply for a drive-only license.** That credential is not for you, the application will be refused and the fee is not refunded.
- **A limited-term REAL ID is a one-way door.** Once you take it you cannot return to the full-term ordinary credential, so if your status document is short, keep the DMV's own alternative on the table.
- **You cannot board a domestic flight on a license without a star.** Carry your passport and plan travel accordingly. Allow for SAVE verification taking 10 business days or more.
- The DMV's own warning, passed on as it stands: **the DMV does not contact residents about traffic violations.** A text or email claiming to come from the DMV is a scam.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN CONNECTICUT

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