

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · DES PLAINES

How to Get a Driver's License in Des Plaines: the 1533 Lee Street Facility, No-SSN Applications and Turkish License Rules, 2026 Guide

The city's own driver services facility, the appointment rule, the four document groups, the tests, the fees and the 90 days you have on a Turkish license.

SHORT ANSWER

The Illinois Secretary of State (SOS) issues licenses, and Des Plaines has its own facility at 1533 Lee Street. The office moved here from 1470 Lee Street in April 2026. It is open weekdays 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed weekends, and both driver and vehicle transactions require an appointment. A four-year license costs \$30 for ages 21 to 68. The Temporary Visitor Driver's License (TVDL) was abolished on July 1, 2024: an applicant with no SSN now gets a standard four-year license marked "Federal Limits Apply." A Turkish license is not exchanged, and the written test is in English.

What to know before you start

- **Book an appointment; do not just show up.** The warning on the facility's own page is blunt: "Drivers and Vehicle Appointment Required." The April 2026 opening announcement describes it as an appointment facility and says it set up a One-Stop-Shop counter where several transactions are handled together. Book at apps.ilsos.gov/dlexamcheck or call 800-252-8980; the Chicago-area line is 312-793-1010.
- **Book early.** The facility handled about 100,000 driver transactions in 2025 and the SOS calls it the sixth busiest of the 24 offices in the Chicago suburbs. The first open slot can be weeks out.
- **The facility's own page still shows the repealed rule.** Its service list still carries TVDL lines. That line belongs to a rule that no longer exists: the TVDL ended on July 1, 2024 under Public Act 103-0210. Do not plan around that page.
- **Türkiye is not on the consular ID list.** The consular IDs the SOS accepts are only those of Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala and Mexico. A Turkish applicant's document is a passport.
- **A Turkish license is not exchanged.** Türkiye is not on the SOS no-test exchange list. You surrender your license and take the vision screening and the written test.
- **The International Driving Permit is not recognized.** New residents may drive on a valid Turkish license for 90 days only, and an IDP does not extend that. The good news: every transaction including the road test is done at this facility, so you do not have to go into Chicago.
- **The written test is in English.** The rule (92 Ill. Adm. Code 1030.80) allows other languages, but we found no Turkish test and no Turkish Rules of the Road book. A facility manager may provide an interpreter "if readily available"; otherwise you bring your own. Interpreters are not allowed on commercial license tests.

Step by step

- 1 Book the appointment.** Do not wait for the 90 days to run out; check the calendar in your first week in town.
- 2 Bring one document from each of four groups.** Signature (A), date of birth and legal status (B), SSN (C) and Illinois residency (D). REAL ID needs two documents from group D. Bring originals; copies are not accepted.
- 3 Surrender your old license.** The SOS requires you to hand in every license and ID issued by another state or another country.
- 4 Take the tests.** Vision screening, the written test for a Class D license (80 percent to pass) and a road test if required. The Des Plaines facility does the written test, the road test and motorcycle tests. Road tests generally stop 60 minutes before closing and are not given after dark; bring the insurance card for the car you drive.
- 5 Plan how you will pay.** Cash, check and credit or debit cards are accepted (cards carry a transaction fee). Payments made out to the Illinois Department of Revenue must be by check or money order.
- 6 Wait for the card.** You leave with a paper license valid 90 days; the real card arrives by mail within 15 business days. A license is valid 4 years, a state ID 5 years. Report any address change to the SOS within 10 days.

The four document groups

GROUP	WHAT IT PROVES	COMMON DOCUMENTS FOR FOREIGN NATIONALS
A	Signature	Passport, credit card, signed debit card
B	Date of birth and legal status	Green card (I-551), employment authorization card (I-766), I-797A, Form I-94 with a valid passport, U.S. visa. A foreign passport alone is not enough; a second group B document is required with it.
C	Social Security number	SSN card, W-2, SSA-1099, pay stub showing the full SSN
D	Illinois residency	A lease, a ComEd or Nicor bill, the city water bill, a bank statement or a letter from a government agency dated within the last 90 days. Two originals for REAL ID. Full list in the SOS acceptable documents brochure dated June 17, 2025 .

If you cannot get an SSN

- What changed:** instead of the TVDL, applicants who cannot get an SSN now apply for the standard four-year license. The card is marked "Federal Limits Apply"; it is not a REAL ID and is not enough identification for a domestic flight or a federal building.
- If you have a USCIS or DHS document:** you can present the document showing you are permitted to be in the United States in place of an SSN.
- If you have no such document:** the SOS requires proof of **twelve months of Illinois residency** for a first license.

- **Fee:** \$30. The same documents also get you a \$20 state ID card with no test.
- **It is not voting eligibility:** the card is identification and a driving permit. If voter registration is offered at the counter and you are not a U.S. citizen, do not fill in the form.

The Des Plaines facility and nearby alternatives

FACILITY	ADDRESS · HOURS · NOTE
Des Plaines	1533 Lee Street, Des Plaines, IL 60018 · weekdays 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed weekends · driver and vehicle transactions by appointment · first license, renewal, REAL ID, written and road tests, title and plates, plate sticker renewal, disability placard, driving record · moved here from 1470 Lee Street in April 2026
Elk Grove Village	650 Roppolo Dr., Elk Grove Village, IL · confirm hours · nearby suburban alternative, same appointment system
Chicago North	5401 N. Elston Ave., Chicago, IL 60630 · confirm hours · the closest Chicago facility if you are going into the city

The Des Plaines facility is closed on Monday, October 12, 2026 for the holiday. We could not verify the hours of the Elk Grove Village and Chicago North facilities, so check the [SOS facility finder](#) when you book. Do not mix up the street numbers on Lee Street: the old DMV was at 1470, the new facility is at 1533, and there is a health center at 1515.

Fees (2026)

TRANSACTION	FEE
License (ages 21 to 68, 4 years)	\$30
License (ages 18 to 20 and 69 to 80)	\$5
Class D instruction permit (first / renewal)	\$20 / \$10
State ID card (ages 18 to 64, 5 years)	\$20
Duplicate license	\$5

Do I need a REAL ID?

Domestic flights and some federal buildings require a REAL ID or another accepted document such as a passport; a REAL ID card has a gold star in the top right corner. The Des Plaines facility does REAL ID, so you do not have to go into Chicago for it. According to the [SOS REAL ID page](#), TSA accepts only the printed card, not the temporary paper document you leave the counter with. If you live next to O'Hare, that detail is about you.

IF YOU ARE NOT A CITIZEN

- Your license is issued to match the period you are permitted to stay. Bring the originals of your passport, visa, I-94 record and any I-797 receipts to the appointment; a wrong I-94 can sink the application. Check your record at i94.cbp.dhs.gov beforehand, and if it is wrong the CBP Deferred Inspection office in O'Hare Terminal 5 is the place that fixes it.
- An application that meets REAL ID requirements also counts as a voter registration application. If you do not want to be registered, check the decline box on the form. Registering or voting without citizenship is a federal crime.
- If you are subject to the address-reporting requirement, you must also report your new address to USCIS within 10 days of moving (Form AR-11); holders of A and G visas and Visa Waiver visitors are exempt. Telling the SOS does not satisfy that.

Common mistakes

- Trusting the TVDL lines on the facility's own page. The program ended on July 1, 2024.
- Turning up at 1533 Lee Street without an appointment. Both driver and vehicle transactions are by appointment.
- Going to the old address at 1470 Lee Street.
- Assuming a Turkish license converts without a test, that an IDP is enough, or that the test is offered in Turkish.
- Bringing photocopies. Originals are required.
- Waiting for the 90 days to expire. Appointments and documents take time, and without an SSN there is also the twelve-month residency rule.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN DES PLAINES

Have a question about your immigration status?

Attorney Asim Clinch serves clients in Des Plaines and the surrounding area, in Turkish and English.

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