

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · FLORIDA STATE

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

For newcomers to Florida, green card and visa holders, and drivers arriving with a Turkish license: deadlines, documents, tests and fees.

SHORT ANSWER

Once you establish Florida residency, you have 30 days to get a Florida driver license. Residency starts the moment you take a job, enroll a child in a Florida public school, register to vote, file for the homestead exemption, or live in Florida for more than 6 consecutive months. Since February 6, 2026, both the knowledge test and the road test are given in English only, with no interpreters. Florida waives its tests for licenses from only a few countries, and Türkiye is not one of them, so you'll need to pass both tests. An initial Class E license costs \$48.

Before you start

- **The 30-day clock starts when you become a resident.** Taking a job in Florida, enrolling your child in a Florida public school, registering to vote, filing for the homestead exemption, or living in Florida more than 6 consecutive months all count as establishing residency; the 30 days run from whichever happens first. Only U.S. citizens may register to vote, so if you are not a citizen, never register on any form.
- **Exams are now English only.** Since February 6, 2026, both the knowledge test and the road test, including oral exams, are given exclusively in English. There's no interpreter or translated exam in any language.
- **No reciprocity with Türkiye.** Florida waives its tests only for licenses from other U.S. states and a few countries, and Türkiye is not among them. If you arrive with a Turkish license, you must pass both the knowledge test and the road test.
- **Applications are in person.** License and ID applications are made in person at any local office that offers driver license services (in most counties, the Tax Collector's branches), where you'll also take a vision test.
- **Non-citizens need extra documents.** You'll need proof of lawful presence (Form I-551 for green card holders; for visa holders, a valid passport with an I-94, plus an I-20 for F-1 or a DS-2019 for J-1; or an EAD), proof of your SSN, and two different documents showing your Florida address. Your name must match Social Security Administration records.

Step by step

- 1 **Gather your documents.** Proof of lawful presence (a green card, or a valid passport with an I-94), proof of your SSN, and two documents showing your Florida address. Check the current list on FLHSMV's "What to Bring" pages.

- 2 Go in person to a local office that offers driver license services.** There's no online application for a first license.
- 3 Take the vision test.**
- 4 Take the knowledge test** (English only). The Class E Knowledge Exam covers road signs and traffic laws.
- 5 Take the road test** (English only).
- 6 Pay the fee and get your license.** Most offices also charge a county service fee on top of the state fee.

Fees (2026)

ITEM	FEE
Class E license (first time, includes learner permit)	\$48
Commercial license (Class A)	\$75
Endorsements	\$7 each
ID Card	\$25
County service fee (most offices, per license transaction)	\$6.25

Fees can vary slightly by county; check [flhsmv.gov](https://www.flhsmv.gov) for the current amounts before you go.

If you are not a U.S. citizen

NOTE FOR IMMIGRANTS

- You'll need proof of lawful presence: green card holders present Form I-551; visa holders apply with a valid passport and I-94 (or an EAD).
- Visa holders applying for a first license get a 60-day temporary paper permit without a photo; the license is mailed once status is verified and is valid for the period on your USCIS document, up to one year.
- If you provide an SSN, your name and number must match Social Security Administration records.
- Since exams are English only, it helps to study traffic terms and road signs in English beforehand if your English is limited.

Driving on a Turkish license

- Renting a car:** rental companies may ask for an International Driving Permit along with your Turkish license; check before you book.
- Once you become a Florida resident,** there's no reciprocity with Türkiye, so you must pass both the knowledge test and the road test.

Common mistakes

- Treating the 30-day deadline as if it starts on your literal move-in date, and missing the actual trigger date, such as starting a job or enrolling a child in school.
- Showing up without preparing for an English-only exam; there's no interpreter available anymore in any language.
- Trying to apply without proof of lawful presence.
- Assuming a Turkish license is exempt from testing and skipping exam prep.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN FLORIDA

Have a question about your immigration status?

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