

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · GEORGIA

How to Get a Driver's License in Georgia: SSN, DDS-351 and Turkish License 2026 Guide

For newcomers to Georgia, visa and green card holders, and drivers arriving with a Turkish license: deadlines, documents, tests and fees. Georgia is stricter here than most states.

SHORT ANSWER

Once you become a Georgia resident you have 30 days to hold a Georgia license, issued by the Department of Driver Services (DDS). Know three things before you go: an SSN, or form DDS-351 if you are not eligible for one, is required; every document must be in English; and DDS does not accept translations. It also checks the originals of your immigration papers at every visit. The knowledge exam is offered in Turkish, the road test is in English. An eight-year license costs \$32.

Before you start

- **The 30-day clock.** DDS treats a non-citizen as a resident if you have been in the state **30 days or more**, or if you have a job and enroll your children in school **within 10 days**. From then you have 30 days. Until then you may drive on your foreign license as a tourist or business visitor.
- **An SSN or form DDS-351.** An applicant must provide either a Social Security number or the DDS-351, the Certification of Social Security Denial Status, which you pick up at a customer service center. Anyone with DHS work authorization must apply for an SSN, so the DDS-351 route is closed if you hold a work permit.
- **Every document in English; no translations.** A Turkish civil registry extract, a Turkish address certificate or a sworn translator's version will not be taken. Use U.S. bills and leases as your proofs of address.
- **Original immigration papers at every visit.** Keep your passport, visa, I-94 and any I-797C or EAD in one folder and take it each time. The name on the card must match your immigration document exactly.
- **No license without lawful status.** Georgia law does not allow a license to be issued to someone without lawful status.
- **Every DDS visit starts with the online form.** Whatever you come for, DDS wants the Online License/ID/Permit form completed before you walk in (DRIVES e-Services, free). **Appointments exist only for road tests**; everything else is walk-in. Call center: (678) 413-8400.

Step by step

- 1 **Fill in the online form.** dds.drives.ga.gov (DRIVES e-Services).
- 2 **Gather documents in English:** one identity document, your SSN (or the DDS-351), two proofs of residency from separate sources and one document showing lawful status.

- 3 Take the vision test and the knowledge exam.** Two parts, road rules and road signs, 20 questions each, 15 correct to pass. No appointment; you must start at least 30 minutes before closing. No phones or pens in the room.
- 4 Book the road test in DRIVES e-Services** and bring your own car: four wheels, registered, plated and insured; the examiner safety-checks it. The pass mark is 75 out of 100. After a first failure you can retake it the next day, after a second failure in seven days; if you failed because of a crash or a violation you wait 30 days.
- 5 Pay and collect your interim document.** The permanent card arrives by mail within 30 days. TSA does not accept the paper interim, so carry your passport on flights until it comes.

Which documents are required?

ITEM	WHAT WORKS FOR SOMEONE ARRIVING FROM TÜRKIYE
Identity (1 document)	A valid foreign passport, a green card (I-551) or an employment authorization document (I-766)
Social Security	Your SSN (DDS verifies it online; proof is requested if verification fails), or DDS-351 if you are not eligible
Residency (2 documents, 2 separate sources)	Lease, electricity or water bill, bank statement and similar. A P.O. box is not accepted
Lawful status (1 document)	Passport plus visa plus I-94; for F or J status an I-20 or DS-2019 plus I-94; an EAD; an I-797C less than five years old for a pending I-485; or a green card

Is the written exam offered in Turkish?

Yes. According to the DDS language list, the non-commercial knowledge exam is available in **26 languages, and Turkish is one of them**. The road test is in English. There is a conflict between sources: the 2023-2024 driver manual text still on the DDS site says the road signs test is in English only, while the newer language list and the testing page say both sections are translated. Call **(678) 413-8400** and confirm you can take the signs section in Turkish before you go. One accompanying person, including an interpreter, is allowed.

LIMITED-TERM card and REAL ID

- **LIMITED-TERM:** a card issued to a non-citizen is printed with these words. It expires with your approved period of stay and lasts **no more than five years**, not the eight years citizens get. It carries the same driving privileges, but it is not proof of lawful status, and an expired LIMITED-TERM card does not mean the holder is in the country illegally.
- **120-day extension:** if your status is being extended you can get a one-time 120-day extension. You must already be a DDS customer, your card must be expired or expiring within 30 days, and you must show an original I-797C with your extension request.
- **REAL ID:** every Georgia license and ID issued since 2012 is REAL ID compliant, with a star in the top right corner, at no extra charge. Only one physical card can carry the star.

Fees

TRANSACTION	FEE
License (Class C, 8 years; LIMITED-TERM and up to 5 years for non-citizens)	\$32
Instructional permit	\$10, paid before each attempt
ID card (8 years)	\$32
Replacement card	\$10
Online transaction discount	\$5 off
Driving record (3-year MVR)	\$6

A first-time adult applicant who goes straight to a Class C license must sign an affidavit of 40 hours of supervised driving, six of them at night; the alternative is a two-year instructional permit first. Whether a holder of a Turkish license is excused from the 40-hour affidavit is not stated on any DDS page we could read, so call (678) 413-8400 and ask before you go.

Your Turkish license

- **It cannot be 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 keep it.** The Turkish license is shown during the transaction and handed back; a card is surrendered only for a commercial license (CDL) or if you hold a license or ID from another U.S. state or Washington, D.C.
- **An international driving permit** is not a license on its own and cannot be used for a DDS license transaction.

DDS centers around Atlanta

Centers are generally 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.

CENTER	ADDRESS	NOTE
Atlanta	400 Whitehall St SW, 30303	No road tests
Decatur	2801 Candler Rd, Ste 82	Nearest road-test center for Atlanta residents
Forest Park	5036 State Route 85	Nearest road-test center for Atlanta residents
Lithonia	8040 Rockbridge Rd	
Marietta	1605 County Services Pkwy	
Kennesaw	3690 Old 41 Hwy NW	

CENTER	ADDRESS	NOTE
Norcross	2211 Beaver Ruin Rd	
Lawrenceville	310 Hurricane Shoals Rd NE	
Alpharetta	11575 Maxwell Rd	No road tests

NOTE FOR IMMIGRANTS

- Keep your passport, visa, I-94 and any I-797C or EAD in one folder; DDS asks for the originals at every visit.
- If your name is spelled differently across documents (Turkish characters on the passport, something else on the I-94), try to fix that before your visit.
- The LIMITED-TERM date tracks your immigration document, so the day you extend your status is also a day for a DDS visit. If your extension is pending, do not miss the 120-day extension.
- If you are offered voter registration during a DDS transaction and you are not a citizen, decline.

Common mistakes

- Bringing translations: DDS does not accept them, it needs the English originals.
- Arriving with photocopies of immigration papers and not the originals.
- Walking in without the online form.
- Going to the Atlanta (Whitehall St) center for a road test: there are none there.
- Holding a work permit but heading to DDS with a DDS-351 instead of applying for an SSN first.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN GEORGIA

Have a question about your immigration status?

Attorney Asim Clinch serves clients across Georgia, in Turkish and English. Free evaluation:
clinchlaw.com/free-evaluation · +1 866-491-7669
 Office: 321 N Central Expy, Ste 206, McKinney, TX 75070

Attorney responsible for this guide: Asim Clinch, Esq., Clinch Law Firm P.C. Attorney Asim Clinch is a member of the Missouri Bar (No. 76084) and practices U.S. federal immigration law.

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