

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · LONG ISLAND

How to Get a Driver's License on Long Island: 2026 Guide (Nassau and Suffolk DMV)

For Long Island newcomers, applicants of any immigration status, and drivers arriving with a foreign license: documents, tests, fees and the DMV offices in Nassau and Suffolk.

SHORT ANSWER

New York's Green Light Law lets anyone age 16 or older apply for a standard driver's license regardless of immigration status; if you have no SSN, you sign an affidavit instead. A first license needs documents proving your name, date of birth and New York residency, a knowledge test (offered in 20 languages, including Turkish), a 5-hour pre-licensing course and a road test. Long Island has no city DMV; 3 state DMV offices serve Nassau and 4 serve Suffolk. Nassau and Suffolk are in the MCTD zone, so a first license costs \$73.25 to \$77.50.

Green Light Law: open to everyone in New York

- **Immigration status is not asked.** Since December 16, 2019, anyone 16 or older living in New York can apply for a standard license or learner permit. If you have no SSN, you sign an affidavit at the DMV instead; the law does not affect voting eligibility and creates no path to citizenship.
- **There are three card types.** A Standard license is marked "NOT FOR FEDERAL PURPOSES" and cannot be used for domestic flights or entry to some federal buildings. A REAL ID costs the same as Standard and is required for domestic flights since May 7, 2025. An Enhanced license (EDL) costs \$30 more and can be used instead of a passport for land or sea entry from Canada, Mexico and some Caribbean countries.
- **Most foreign licenses, including Turkish ones, cannot simply be exchanged.** New York's only confirmed reciprocity is with Canadian provinces; no official DMV page lists Türkiye as reciprocal. Once you become a New York resident, a Turkish license must go through the full process (knowledge test, course, road test), and it is surrendered once you pass the road test.
- **No fixed day limit is printed for visitors.** DMV's own page says you can drive on a valid foreign license until you become a New York resident, without stating a specific day count. Once you are a resident, you have 30 days to get a license; 90 days of residence is treated as presumptive evidence that you are a resident.
- **The knowledge test is offered in 20 languages, including Turkish,** on a touch screen or on paper.

Step by step

- 1 Gather documents proving your name, date of birth and New York residency (see DMV's document guide). If your foreign license is not in English, bring an International Driving Permit or a certified translation for the road test.
- 2 Take the knowledge test: answer at least 14 of 20 questions correctly (70%), including at least 2 road-sign questions. Offered in 20 languages, including Turkish.
- 3 Complete the 5-hour pre-licensing course. Applicants 18 and older with a valid permit can take it online; cost runs roughly \$39 to \$80 depending on the provider.
- 4 Book a reservation at the DMV office nearest you (list below). The road test may be scheduled separately, so book it early.
- 5 Apply at the office with your documents and course certificate.
- 6 Take the road test. Your fee covers two attempts; if both fail, \$10 covers two more.
- 7 Choose Standard, REAL ID or Enhanced and pay the fee; your foreign license is surrendered once you pass.

Nassau and Suffolk DMV offices

Long Island has no city-run DMV; the New York State DMV runs 7 offices across the two counties. All are open Monday to Friday 7:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and closed on weekends. Each office page has a "Make A Reservation" button; DMV says that when waits are long, only people with a reservation may enter, so do not go without one.

OFFICE	ADDRESS	COUNTY
Garden City	400 Oak St, Garden City, NY 11530	Nassau
Bethpage	4031 Hempstead Tpke, Bethpage, NY 11714	Nassau
Massapequa	927 Carmans Rd, Massapequa, NY 11758	Nassau
Hauppauge	250 Veterans Memorial Hwy, Hauppauge, NY 11788	Suffolk
Huntington	1815 E Jericho Tpke, Huntington, NY 11743	Suffolk
Medford	2799 Route 112, Medford, NY 11763	Suffolk
Riverhead	200 Old Country Rd, Riverhead, NY 11901	Suffolk

- The Port Jefferson office closed on August 25, 2023. By geography the nearest office for East Patchogue and for Terryville/Port Jefferson Station is Medford; for West Babylon it is Massapequa or Hauppauge. We did not measure drive times, so check the office page and a map.
- The AAA branches in East Meadow, Farmingdale, Garden City and Smithtown do DMV transactions for AAA members only; they are not public offices.
- All offices are closed Monday, October 12, 2026 (Columbus Day). Check the office page for hours around other holidays.

Fees (2026)

ITEM	FEE
First Standard or REAL ID license (without the MCTD surcharge)	\$64.25-\$67.50
First license in the MCTD zone, including Nassau and Suffolk (with MCTD)	\$73.25-\$77.50
Enhanced license (EDL) add-on	+\$30
5-hour pre-licensing course	about \$39-\$80
Two more road tests after failing two	\$10

The MCTD (Metropolitan Commuter Transportation District) surcharge applies in New York City's five boroughs and in Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam and Rockland counties; it does not apply in Albany, Buffalo or most of the rest of the state.

If you are not a U.S. citizen

NOTE FOR IMMIGRANTS

- The Green Light Law means your immigration status does not block a standard license application, but a standard license does not substitute for a REAL ID or Enhanced license for domestic flights or entry to some federal buildings.
- DMV's own page confirms reciprocity only with Canadian provinces; Türkiye is not on that list, so a Turkish license cannot be exchanged without testing.
- **If you are subject to the address-reporting requirement**, report your new address to USCIS within 10 days of moving (AR-11); A and G visa holders and Visa Waiver visitors are exempt.
- **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.

Common mistakes

- Assuming a foreign license can be exchanged without testing; only Canadian provinces have that arrangement.
- Showing up for the road test without the 5-hour course certificate.
- Trying to fly domestically on a Standard license instead of a REAL ID, Enhanced license or passport.
- Going to a DMV office without a reservation, or heading to an office that has closed (such as Port Jefferson).
- Forgetting to budget for the MCTD surcharge.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN LONG ISLAND

Have a question about your immigration status?

Attorney Asim Clinch serves clients in Long Island and the surrounding area, in Turkish and English.

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