

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · LOUISIANA

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

Turkey is not on this state's reciprocity list, and the consequence lands straight on your calendar: a holder of a Turkish license takes an approved driver education course here. The card also carries a status marking.

SHORT ANSWER

Licenses are issued by the **Louisiana Office of Motor Vehicles**. The most useful item in this guide is **this**: the agency's reciprocity policy lists the countries it has agreements with, and **Turkey is not on it**. The consequence is written in a second agency policy: **all first-time applicants, including first-time applicants presenting a foreign driver's license, must furnish proof of driver education training, and an international driving permit does not waive it**. So a person arriving with a Turkish license enrolls in **an approved driving school here**. **Do not confuse two things**: the widely repeated **30-day transfer window applies only to people arriving from another U.S. state**. The card also carries a **Limited-Term** marking, and that marking appears on **green card holders' cards too**. **Every decision touching your status can affect your immigration case; talk to a lawyer before your visit**.

First, separate the two paths

WHERE YOU ARRIVED FROM	THE AGENCY'S PATH
Another U.S. state	Transfer. The agency asks you to convert to a Louisiana license within 30 days of establishing residency, and the old state license is surrendered and destroyed
Turkey	No transfer. In the agency's own language you are a first-time applicant : temporary instructional permit, approved course, knowledge test, road skills test and vision test

The sentence circulating online, that you simply transfer your license within 30 days, **is wrong for a person arriving from Turkey**. Still, put the 30 days on your calendar: housing, schools, banks and utility accounts all ask for state identification.

Reciprocity: the agency's own two sentences

First, from the driver education policy: All first time applicants, including first-time applicants presenting a foreign driver's license, must furnish proof of driver education training. First time applicants from a country that has a reciprocal agreement with the Department presenting a foreign driver's license are exempt from this requirement.

Second, from the same document: International driver's licenses are not acceptable to waive appropriate driver's education course. **Read together, the result is single:** a license from a country without an agreement provides no exemption here, and an international permit does not change that.

THERE IS A CONTRADICTION IN THE RECIPROCITY LIST, AND WE DO NOT PICK A SIDE

- The agency's **live policy document** (revised August 1, 2026) lists the countries with agreements as **Germany, Switzerland, Taiwan, South Korea and the Republic of Ireland.**
- The **archived copy of the agency's web page dated March 10, 2026** gives the same list **without the Republic of Ireland.**
- The difference in dates may explain it, but we **could not verify** whether the page has been updated. **We publish both.**
- **For you the result is the same on either list: Turkey is absent.**
- The list also includes countries named only for a specific agricultural worker status, and certain United States territories that are exempt from testing.

What an applicant over 18 actually does

STEP	ACTION	THE AGENCY'S STANDARD
1	Obtain a Temporary Instructional Permit	Required before taking the knowledge test, driving in behind-the-wheel training or taking the road test
2	An approved driving school	6 classroom hours and 8 behind-the-wheel hours for ages 18 and over; 30 classroom hours and 8 behind-the-wheel hours for ages 15 to 17
3	Knowledge test	Passing score 80 percent
4	Road skills evaluation	70 points or higher
5	Vision test	Done at the counter

DO NOT OPEN THE SEALED ENVELOPE

- The school places the knowledge test and the completion certificate in a **sealed envelope.**
- **Only an employee of the motor vehicle agency or of an authorized tag agent may open it;** the customer or parent may not.
- If the envelope looks opened or tampered with, the file goes to the agency's training and certification unit. **That alone is grounds to be turned away at the counter.**
- The completion certificate has a shelf life: it becomes invalid **five years after the completion date.** Finishing the course early and postponing the application for years does not work.
- **Whether any approved school teaches in Turkish could not be found.** The agency keeps a separate list page for schools teaching in other languages; **the page's existence was verified, its contents could not be read.** Ask the school directly.

The status marking on the card

The agency's policy on issuance to immigrants and non-immigrants says this: if, at the time of application, the immigration documents show **less than six years of lawful presence** remaining, the card is issued with a **variable expiration date set to the last day of lawful presence** and the card reads Limited-Term. **The same policy also says it separately for lawful permanent residents:** the card expires six years from the issue date and **will still continue to bear that branding**. The sentence is repeated for refugees, asylees and nationals of certain island nations.

So in this state every non-citizen, green card holders included, carries that marking. It is not a restricted license; the card you receive is a regular passenger license and the marking only reflects status.

Two thresholds, and two groups that get no card

- **On a first application:** your entry record or employment authorization document must have **at least 180 days** remaining. The agency's sentence is blunt: otherwise the applicant shall be denied.
 - **On renewal: at least 30 days** remaining on any document showing lawful presence is enough.
 - If you could not renew on time because your document expired, **no delinquent fee is charged**.
 - A person who filed a timely renewal or change of status with the immigration agency and received an **automatic extension** is given a **180-day** renewal.
 - **No card for visitors or visa waiver travelers.** The agency's table reads No issuance by OMV on those rows. **The only exception is an issued employment authorization document.**
 - **A detail for students:** if your school document names an out-of-state school, the agency also asks for a **current document carrying a Louisiana address**.
-

Documents, fees and two hard rules

ITEM	TERM	FEE
Class E license, through age 69	About six years , on your birthday	\$32.25
Class E license, age 70 and over	Same	\$18.75
Office service fee	Each transaction	Up to \$8.00 at some offices
Delinquent fee, under 70	If more than 10 days past expiration	\$15.00 , or \$10.00 by mail or online
Address change, four-year card	10 days after moving	\$13.00
Address change, six-year card	Same	\$17.00

- **For a foreign national the agency accepts only two primary documents:** the permanent resident card and the **passport of the country of your nationality**.
- **The Social Security number is a mandatory part:** the agency says the number **must be collected on all licenses issued in this state**. If you are not eligible for one, **a letter from the Social Security Administration** is required, so your first step is not the counter.

- Proof of residency and a second identification document are required; if you come from another state, the **photo license from the last state that issued one** or that state's official driving record.
- **Photocopies are not accepted.** The agency writes it in capitals: OMV DOES NOT ACCEPT PHOTOCOPIES OF THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS.
- **The name must match on every document.** If it differs for a reason other than marriage, the application is refused until the documents are corrected.
- **There is no cushion on an expired card:** the agency's sentence is there is no grace period.

Test language and identification cards

- **There is no Turkish-language exam.** The agency offers something else instead: an applicant who does not understand written English well may **bring a translator**, but the right **does not apply to the commercial license exam**. You find the translator yourself; the agency publishes no list of names.
- For a first **identification card** the agency asks for one primary and two secondary documents, or two primary documents, or a valid Louisiana license, plus proof of residency.
- **There is a no-expiration identification card for age 60 and over**, but it is issued only as Not for Federal Identification. A card that meets the federal identification standard must carry a six-year term.

TWO THINGS WE DO NOT PUBLISH

- **No office count and no office list.** Transactions here run on two layers: the agency's own field offices and authorized private agents called Public Tag Agents. No machine-readable list of either **could be found**.
- **No sentence limiting where your data goes could be found.** The agency's documents contain two sentences pointing the other way: immigration documents are **verified for status** before a card is issued, and entry records are **entered into the federal verification system**. **We do not say none exists; we say research could not find one.**

- 1 **Talk to your lawyer first.** Which document gets you which card depends on your status, and every decision touching status can affect your immigration case.
- 2 **Check the time remaining on your document:** at least 180 days for a first application, at least 30 days on renewal.
- 3 **Start the number in week one.** If you are not eligible, get the letter from the Social Security Administration; the number is collected on every license.
- 4 **Get the temporary instructional permit before the course.** Reverse the order and your enrollment is useless.
- 5 **Enroll in week one** and ask about the schedule: when the classroom hours run, how far out the behind-the-wheel hours open, and whether the school supplies the car.
- 6 **Carry the sealed envelope to the counter unopened.**
- 7 **Bring originals;** photocopies are not accepted and the name must match on every document.
- 8 **For local offices and details see** [New Orleans](#), [Baton Rouge](#), [Metairie](#), [Mandeville](#) and [Lake Charles](#).



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN LOUISIANA

Have a question about your immigration status?

Attorney Asim Clinch serves clients across Louisiana, 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.

Attorney advertising. This guide is general information only. It is not legal advice and is not a substitute for the advice of an attorney. Information compiled from official sources as of October 14, 2026; fees and procedures change, so check the official site before you act. Reading this guide does not create an attorney-client relationship. The choice of a lawyer is an important decision and should not be based solely upon advertisements. Latest version: clinchlaw.com/city-guides/louisiana-immigration-attorney