

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · LOUISVILLE

Getting a Driver License in Louisville: 2026 Guide

The license is no longer handled at the courthouse clerk. There are five regional offices, you may book at any office in the state, and a Turkish license leads to exams, not a course.

SHORT ANSWER

Know three things from the start. First, **a Kentucky driver license is no longer handled at the courthouse clerk**: in 2022 the work moved to the state's own **Driver Licensing Regional Offices**, so the "go to the circuit court clerk" instructions still circulating online are wrong today. Second, **there are five of those offices in Louisville**, and the agency's own rule lets you book at **any regional office in the state**. Third, **licenses and vehicles do not end at the same counter**: the license is at a state office, **vehicle registration is at the county clerk**, and the exams are given by the **Kentucky State Police**. If you arrived with a Turkish license, the result here is **not a course but a full set of exams**.

The calendar: 30 days for the license

The transportation agency is clear: a Kentucky license must be obtained **within 30 days** of establishing residency. **For vehicle registration the same page gives two different numbers - 10 days** in the opening text and **15 days** in the insurance section - and we print both. Practical advice: if you brought a car, go to the county clerk **in your first week** and the argument becomes moot.

The five regional offices in Louisville

In the state transportation agency's own office dataset, Louisville shows **five** regional offices, all in the **Eastern time zone** and all open **Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

- **Bowman Field** - 3501 Roger E Schupp St, 40205
- **Dixie Highway** - 6202 Willismore Dr, 40272
- **Hurstbourne** - 9112 Leesgate Rd, 40222
- **L&N Building** - 908 W Broadway, 11th floor, 40203
- **Nia Center** - 2900 W Broadway Ste 100, 40211

Each office has its own email address in the form **KYTC.DDL<OfficeName>@ky.gov**. And the agency's own rule states that since July 5, 2022 an appointment may be booked at **any regional office in the state regardless of your county**, so take the earliest slot you can find.

TIME ZONE: THE STATE IS SPLIT IN TWO

All five Louisville offices are in the **Eastern time zone**, but Kentucky is split across **two time zones** and some offices in the west of the state carry a **Central** label. If you book at another office in the state, **ask which zone the appointment time is given in**. An hour's difference is a missed appointment.

Fees, from the agency's own price list

CARD	STANDARD 4 YEARS	STANDARD 8 YEARS	REAL ID 4 YEARS	REAL ID 8 YEARS
Driver license	\$21.50	\$43.00	\$24.00	\$48.00
Motorcycle license	\$21.50	\$43.00	\$24.00	\$48.00
Driver and motorcycle combined	\$26.50	\$53.00	\$29.00	\$58.00
Identity card	\$11.50	\$23.00	\$14.00	\$28.00
Learner permit	\$15.00 (3 years)	\$15.00 (3 years)	\$18.00 (3 years)	\$18.00 (3 years)

The agency accepts **credit cards, debit cards, cash and checks**. But the choice between 4 and 8 years may not be yours: for a non-citizen the validity is tied not to a choice but to **your immigration document**.

The card issued to a non-citizen

What the agency and the statute in force say (the section carries its own stamp, **Effective: July 1, 2025**):

- **"A license or identification card issued to a non-citizen will expire with the USCIS documents."**
- An applicant who is not a U.S. citizen and not a permanent resident is issued **only a standard license or learner permit**; no REAL ID is produced.
- The application is made **to the Transportation Cabinet in Frankfort or to a field office**; the section does not list the circuit court clerk.
- Information is verified through the **SAVE** program and federal systems and databases.
- If identity and status are verified, a **temporary document valid for 30 days** is issued until the permanent card arrives.
- **If your status changes you must apply within 10 days** to have the card updated.
- Validity: **the term of the DHS document or 8 years, whichever is shorter**. If the document is open ended with no expiration date, **1 year**.
- Applicants in **special statuses** (asylee, refugee, significant public benefit parole, K-1 applicant) receive a **4 year** card.

Does the card print your status on its face? No text of such a legend was **found** on the agency's pages and there is no sample card image; all the statute says is that the card is **"standard."** In 2026 a bill proposed adding a citizenship or status legend to every identity document, and it **did not become law**. **We do not say "nothing will be printed on your card";** we say the research found no text of a legend.

Documents, and two hard rules

- **Photocopies are not accepted.** The agency requires **originals**, subject to approval.
- **A notarized translation is required: "Foreign driver's licenses, birth certificates and marriage certificates must contain a notarized, translated statement."** A Turkish document will not be processed without one.
- **Permanent residents** must show a current card or a photo I-551 **at every transaction**, including renewals.
- For those awaiting an extension, a digital **I-797C** may be accepted, but a **printout** is needed so the office can scan it into the record.
- Moving from another state: proof of lawful presence, a **Social Security card, Kentucky residency proof not older than one year (two documents for REAL ID)**, and the previous state's license.

Where your information goes. The agency's own step list says it plainly: go to a regional office, bring all documents, **complete the SAVE verification process at the office**. The same page notes that the status list may be revised as vetting procedures for issuing documents to non-citizens continue to be strengthened.

There is no "we will not share this information" assurance in this state; on the contrary, verification through a federal system is written down.

Testing languages: no Turkish

The Kentucky State Police list the written exam as available in **Arabic, Burmese, Chinese, Dari, English, French, Kinyarwanda, Japanese, Pashto, Somali, Spanish and Swahili. Twelve languages, and Turkish is not among them.** The driver manual is translated only into Spanish. Two doors remain open: **an audio version of the exam exists at some locations**, and where it does not, the exam can be given **orally**; the transportation agency also lists a form named **TC 94-197, "Interpreter Affidavit of a Foreign Country Driver License."** **Whether an interpreter may be used in the written exam or only in the office transaction could not be verified.**

If you arrived with a Turkish license: exams, not a course

Do not carry over the rule from earlier guides in this series. In a neighboring state, not being on the reciprocity list meant a **mandatory driving course. Kentucky is different.** The agency's reciprocity parenthetical names only two countries - **Taiwan and South Korea** - and **Turkey is not on the list**, but the consequence is not a course; it is **the full testing set: vision, written and road**, and in the agency's words **"the applicant must start with a learner permit."** Mandatory driver education in this state is written only for applicants **under 18**.

YOUR SITUATION	WHAT KENTUCKY REQUIRES
Turkish license + permanent resident, country on the U.S. accepted list	Vision + written
Turkish license + permanent resident, country not on the accepted list	Vision + written + road ; start with a learner permit
Turkish license, no green card, country on the accepted list	Vision + written + road

YOUR SITUATION	WHAT KENTUCKY REQUIRES
Turkish license, no green card, country not on the accepted list	Written + vision + road ; start with a learner permit
A valid license from another U.S. state	No exam

What the table tells you: with the same foreign license, a **permanent resident takes only the vision and written exams**, while someone **without a green card also takes the road test**.

TWO CONTRADICTIONS WE PRINT, BOTH FROM THE AGENCY'S OWN PAGE

- **First:** the agency's tables use the phrase "**U.S. accepted foreign country license**" but **publish neither the list nor its definition**. Which row a Turkish license falls into is therefore **unclear**, and we do not invent it. Practical result: **be ready to take the road test as well**.
- **Second:** the right to drive for a year on a foreign license is tied at the top of the page to **being a party to the Geneva Convention**, and in the FAQ on the same page to **being on the reciprocity list**. **Turkey satisfies the first and not the second**.
- **We take no side.** The safe advice: do not build plans on that uncertainty. Start the Kentucky license process **in your first week** and put the question to the office **in writing**.

Checklist before your appointment

TASK	WHERE OR HOW
☐ Book at whichever office has the earliest slot	The rule allows an appointment at any regional office in the state , regardless of your county
☐ Gather originals	Passport and immigration documents must be originals ; photocopies are not accepted
☐ Get a notarized translation of your Turkish license	The agency ties foreign licenses to that requirement explicitly
☐ Collect residency proof	Kentucky proof not older than one year ; two documents if you want a REAL ID
☐ Ask about the audio or oral exam	The written exam comes in twelve languages and Turkish is not one of them
☐ Put the thirty days in your calendar	30 days from establishing residency in Kentucky
☐ Track status changes	The statute allows 10 days to apply for an update when your status changes
☐ Expect the SAVE check	It happens at the office and is normal ; your documents are verified through a federal system

One closing line: what slows a newcomer down in this state is not a course, it is the **exam calendar**. Get the learner permit in your first week; the city's bus system will carry you in the meantime.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN LOUISVILLE

Have a question about your immigration status?

Attorney Asim Clinch serves clients across Louisville, 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 15, 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/louisville-immigration-attorney