

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · MARYLAND

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

The knowledge test comes in 17 languages and Turkish is not one of them. Interpreters, the 60-day clock, documents, fees and the noncompliant route.

SHORT ANSWER

Here is the plain version first: **the knowledge test is not offered in Turkish.** The Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) gives it in 17 languages and Turkish is not one of them. But the same page carries the line that helps: **spoken language interpreters are permitted for noncommercial license tests**, and you arrange and pay for the interpreter yourself. The clock is short: you have **60 days** from becoming a Maryland resident to get both the license and the vehicle title and registration. An appointment is required; a newcomer cannot walk in. The agency is called the MVA, not the DMV, so search accordingly.

What to know before you start

- **Seventeen languages, and Turkish is not among them.** The MVA gives the knowledge test in English, Spanish, American Sign Language, Amharic, Arabic, Chinese (traditional), Farsi, French, Hindi, Korean, Nepali, Portuguese, Russian, Tagalog, Urdu, Vietnamese and Yoruba. The driver's manual is not published in Turkish either.
- **A spoken interpreter is allowed, but you pay.** Interpreters are permitted for noncommercial license tests, and in the MVA's own words the fee is settled between the applicant and the interpreter. The MVA covers an interpreter only for a deaf applicant, and arranges that appointment itself.
- **The appointment type you want is Out of Country.** The MVA offers one New to Maryland appointment with subtypes: license only, license with title and registration, title and registration only, Out of Country, and returning Maryland residents. A driver arriving from Türkiye books Out of Country, and the license and vehicle work can be done in a single visit.
- **Two Maryland residency documents are required.** Everyone needs proof of age and identity plus two separate residency documents. Photocopies, scans and duplicates are not accepted; originals are required.
- **A Turkish passport is not on the short list.** The age and identity documents named on the MVA's new residents page are a U.S. birth certificate, a U.S. passport, a green card, a certificate of citizenship and a Consular Report of Birth Abroad. The page sends applicants who hold a valid foreign license but no valid USCIS document to its online Document Guide. That tool is a questionnaire, so we could not confirm which Turkish documents it accepts; call **410-768-7000** before you apply and ask about your own documents one by one.

- **If your stay is limited, so is the license.** Maryland issues a limited-term license valid only for as long as you are lawfully permitted to stay, and the fee is prorated accordingly. Status is verified electronically through **DHS SAVE**; to avoid a second trip to the branch, the MVA suggests submitting an online SAVE verification request before your appointment and says it replies by email within five business days.

ONE CLOCK, TWO ERRANDS, AND CASH IF YOU MISS IT

The **60-day clock** that starts the day you become a Maryland resident covers **both the license and the vehicle**. On the vehicle side, missing it costs money rather than a fine: the MVA's own page says that missing the window **removes the credit you would otherwise get for the titling tax you already paid in another state**. The titling tax is 6.5% of the vehicle's fair market value, so on a newer car that is hundreds or even thousands of dollars. Mark the 60-day date on your calendar the day you arrive, and book the appointment in your first week, because finding a slot also takes time.

Step by step

- 1 **Book the right appointment.** For a driver arriving from Türkiye the type is **Out of Country**. The call center is 410-768-7000 and the headquarters address is 6601 Ritchie Highway N.E., Glen Burnie, MD 21062. Applicants presenting foreign documents without a valid USCIS document must book online; there is no walk-in route for that transaction.
- 2 **Gather originals.** Proof of age and identity, two Maryland residency documents, a vision screening and your current out-of-state license. If the card is lost, you need a certified driving record from the issuing authority that is **no more than 30 days old**.
- 3 **Handle the vision screening.** It is done at an MVA branch, or brought in on form **DL-043A** completed by a physician within the past 24 months.
- 4 **Line up the interpreter days ahead.** You find the interpreter yourself; get written confirmation that they will be with you on test day.
- 5 **Take the knowledge test.** The Class C test is **25 questions in 20 minutes with a passing score of 88%**, usually on a computer. The MVA charges no separate test fee; the fee is for issuing the permit or license.
- 6 **Road test and course.** A driver holding a Turkish license who has never held a U.S. license completes the **3-hour Roadway Safety Driving Education Program**. With no foreign license at all, you start with a learner's permit and complete the Maryland Driver Education Program.
- 7 **Bring two forms of payment.** For license transactions the MVA accepts Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express, mobile wallets, cash and a check payable to the MVA; the vehicle titling page asks for a **check or money order**. The two transactions do not accept the same instruments, so carry both a card and a check.

Which document counts where

WHAT IS ASKED FOR	WHAT WORKS FOR SOMEONE ARRIVING FROM TÜRKIYE
Proof of age and identity	The MVA's new residents page names a U.S. birth certificate, U.S. passport, green card, certificate of citizenship and Consular Report of Birth Abroad. A Turkish passport is not on that short list; without a valid USCIS document the MVA sends you to its Document Guide, so call 410-768-7000
Residency, first document	A residential lease showing your name and Maryland address. For a newly arrived renter this is the easiest one to produce
Residency, second document	Electric, gas, water, telephone, internet or satellite correspondence, bank or financial account correspondence, an insurance card or policy, a Maryland vehicle registration card, a credit card statement, a mortgage document, a hospital or doctor bill, a property tax bill, a copy of a federal or Maryland income tax return , a Maryland professional license, or university correspondence
Driving history	Your current out-of-state or foreign license; if the card is lost, a certified driving record from the issuing authority no more than 30 days old, accompanied by an apostille or an embassy letter verifying the record
Translation	A Turkish license not in English needs an international driving permit or an English translation by a translator on the MVA's Approved Interpreter/Translator Providers listing
Vision	A screening at the branch, or form DL-043A completed within the past 24 months

If you fail: after a first failure you can retest the next business day if a slot is open; after **two or more failures you wait at least 7 calendar days**. Passing scores are valid for **6 months**. The commercial (CDL) knowledge test is offered only in English and Spanish, and the oral CDL test only in English, so the interpreter allowance does not reach commercial licenses.

Fees (as of September 1, 2025)

TRANSACTION	FEE
New license, age 21 and over	\$88 (or prorated at \$11 per year)
License renewal (8 years)	\$64
Learner's permit, Type I (no prior license)	\$65
Learner's permit, Type II (currently or previously licensed)	\$45
Photo ID card, new or renewal	\$40 (prorated)
Lost or corrected license or ID	\$30
Motorcycle license, age 21 and over	\$88 (or \$11 per year)

A noncommercial license runs up to 8 years. An ID card is free for people over 65 and for people with a disability that substantially limits life activities, and free Maryland IDs are also issued to people experiencing homelessness. Check the current numbers on the [MVA fee page](#) before you transact.

Can a Turkish license be exchanged?

- **Not without testing.** The MVA's reciprocity countries are South Korea, France, Germany, Taiwan and Japan; **Türkiye is not on the list.** A driver with a Turkish license takes the knowledge test and the road test, passes a vision screening and completes the 3-hour course.
- **An expired card still helps.** A foreign license may be presented either valid or expired; expiry does not block the application.
- **If the card stayed in Türkiye the job grows.** You then need a driving record from the issuing authority, accompanied by an apostille or a letter from the Turkish Embassy in Washington verifying the record. An apostille is obtained in Türkiye, and arranging it from a distance takes weeks.
- **Do not be misled by the word exchange.** A valid foreign license does appear on the MVA's exchange list, but that line is conditioned on holding a valid USCIS document, and even then the international movers page still requires the knowledge and road tests where the country is not reciprocal.
- **The other rules:** a valid U.S. state license, or one expired for no more than 12 months, can be exchanged; a U.S. license expired for more than 12 months cannot. A suspended out-of-state license, an expired out-of-state ID card and an out-of-state learner's permit can never be exchanged. Someone licensed for less than 18 months in total receives a provisional license rather than a full one.

WITHOUT LAWFUL STATUS: TWO YEARS OF TAX RETURNS COME FIRST

- The MVA calls this document a **noncompliant** license or ID card and states on its own page that immigrants without a valid USCIS document are eligible to apply.
- **The first step is tax.** Before applying you must have filed **two years of Maryland income tax returns** and then obtain a **tax certification letter** from the Maryland Comptroller. If you arrived this year you cannot meet that condition this year: start filing now, and do not try to book an appointment until the letter is in hand.
- **Renewal without an SSN stays open.** If you already hold a Maryland license or ID and have no verified U.S. Social Security number, the MVA says you may renew as long as the document has not been expired for more than a year. The renewed document is not federally compliant.
- If your status is later resolved, you become eligible to move to a compliant license or ID.

REAL ID and the noncompliant distinction

Maryland does not sell REAL ID as a separate paid upgrade: the standard document is already federally compliant, and the alternative is the noncompliant document issued to people without status. The file needs one proof of age and identity, one proof of Social Security number, two Maryland residency documents, and for non-citizens proof of lawful presence. The statement that everyone over 18 needs a compliant document for domestic flights and federal buildings comes from MVA news pages; because the MVA site was not reachable live, we treat that date as **unconfirmed and in need of verification**. The practical outcome: you can drive on a noncompliant license, but you cannot use it as ID at the airport, where you will need your passport.

Common mistakes

- Searching for the DMV and never finding the booking page; in Maryland the agency is the MVA.
- Leaving the license card in Türkiye, which turns the task into an apostille errand that takes weeks.
- Leaving the interpreter to test day; the MVA does not find one for you.
- Arriving with photocopies; the MVA wants originals.
- Bringing only a card to the license counter and only a check to the vehicle counter; the two transactions accept different instruments.
- Counting the 60 days for the license but postponing the vehicle; the clock covers both, and the titling tax credit is what you lose.

MVA call center 410-768-7000. For current requirements see the [MVA new residents page](#) and the [noncompliant documents page](#). Information as of October 6, 2026.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN MARYLAND

Have a question about your immigration status?

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