

STEP BY STEP · MEMPHIS

How to Get a Driver License in Memphis: 2026 Guide

Testing happens only at the three full-service centers and never at the fourth location. And two of the seven kiosks sit in a police station open around the clock.

SHORT ANSWER

The license is **a state matter** and this city has no rule of its own; what is specific here is **density and the choice of door**. The county holds **three full-service driver service centers**, one **branch where no testing is done**, and **seven kiosks**. **Here is the easiest mistake**: a reader applying for a first license, or newly arrived from abroad, goes to the branch where no testing is done. **Testing happens only at the three full-service centers**. On the other hand, a convenience that appears nowhere else in this series is here: **two of the seven kiosks sit inside a police station open twenty-four hours, seven days a week**. On the state side, four items touch your case directly, and the first is this: **research found no status-independent driving card**; the card issued to someone with temporary lawful presence is **time-limited** and **says so on its face**. **This is not a procedural tip, it is a reason to talk to an attorney**.

The right door first: read this before you book

We read the state safety department's own location list on **October 12, 2026**. The locations fall into two groups, and **the distinction is not on the sign but in the agency's own note**. The counts below are **county counts**, not city counts: one of the three centers and two of the kiosks sit in other municipalities.

LOCATION	ADDRESS	DAYS AND HOURS
Full service, testing done	East Shelby Driver Service Center, 3200 E Shelby Drive, Memphis, TN 38118	Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Full service, testing done	Summer Avenue Driver Service Center, 5266 Summer Avenue Suite 75, Memphis, TN 38134	Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Full service, testing done	Millington Driver Service Center, 5019 W Union Road, Millington, TN 38053	Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
No testing	Bartlett Express Driver Service Center, 6340 Summer Avenue, Bartlett, TN 38134	Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The agency's own note on the fourth location says it plainly: no testing is done there. The agency asks new and returning residents to use **any full-service center**. **Even with a complete file, going to the wrong door means no test**, and that is a separate problem from which document will be asked for.

Seven kiosks, and two of them never close

KIOSK	DAYS AND HOURS
Memphis Police Tillman Station, 426 Tillman, Memphis 38112	Monday to Sunday, 24 hours
Memphis Police Appling Farms Station, 6850 Appling Farms Pkwy, Memphis 38133	Monday to Sunday, 24 hours
Memphis Police Mt Moriah Station, 2602 Mt Moriah Rd, Memphis 38115	Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Benjamin L. Hooks Central Library, 3030 Poplar Ave, Memphis 38111	Monday to Thursday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
University of Memphis, 506 University St Room 100, Memphis 38152	Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Shelby County Clerk, 1075 Mullins Station Rd, Memphis 38134	Monday to Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m.
Bartlett City Hall, 3730 Appling Rd, Bartlett 38133	Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

KNOW THE LIMIT OF A KIOSK

- **We compared the five places we cover, and this is the only one with a kiosk open around the clock.** For a reader who works shifts, or who cannot take time off during the day, that is a real gain.
- **But a kiosk is a machine, not a clerk.** It handles **routine transactions** such as renewals and duplicates.
- **It will not serve someone whose documents must be reviewed, who is applying for the first time, or who has to take a test.**
- **There is a fourth door:** the county clerk's downtown office (Shelby County Clerk, 150 Washington Avenue Suite 103, Memphis 38103; Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.) handles some license transactions. **It costs more:** each transaction at a county clerk branch adds **\$4** on top of the state fee.

And we state one measurement openly: in some states the agency publishes, as data, which office handles **foreign national transactions**. **Such a field was looked for in this state and was not found;** the agency's location data carries name, address, hours, phone and county, but no service list. **That does not prove there is no office-level restriction.** Call before you go, and name your transaction when you ask.

Appointment and pre-approval: two things to do before you go

- 1 Fill in the application online.** The agency recommends that new and returning residents complete the application through its own online service channel before coming in; documents can be sent for **pre-approval**, which takes **five business days**. **You still have to bring the originals to the center.**
- 2 Book an appointment, but know it is not offered everywhere.** Transactions that can be booked include first issuance, renewal, duplicate, name and address change, and the knowledge test.

- 3 Arrive fifteen minutes early.** If you are late the appointment is canceled and you join the walk-in line, and centers are **closed on state holidays**.

Four statewide items, and all four touch your case

- **Research found no status-independent driving card.** The agency's document lists recognize only three categories: citizenship, lawful permanent residence and **temporary lawful presence**. No fourth card was found. **We do not say there is none, we say it was not found.**
- **The card issued to someone with temporary lawful presence is time-limited.** Under the administrative rule's own definition it is valid **for the duration of the authorized stay; if the stay has no definite end, the term is one year**. And **the face of the card reveals the status:** the agency's own sample image shows TEMPORARY DRIVER LICENSE in capital letters above the name.
- **There is no test in Turkish.** The computerized test is offered in three foreign languages and Turkish is not among them. **Interpreters are not allowed**, a printed dictionary is, an electronic one is not. The subtle consequence: because Turkish is not offered at all, a Turkish reader takes the test in English and therefore **does not fall into the short-term, non-renewable card regime applied to those who test in another language. That is not a convenience, it is the absence of one.**
- **A Turkish license cannot be exchanged.** Türkiye does not appear on the agency's reciprocity list; new residents from other countries are asked for **the vision screening, the knowledge test and the road test, all three**. An **English translation** of a Turkish passport may be required.

BOOKING IN WINTER: THE AGENCY'S TWO WRITTEN LIMITS

- **Road tests are not given in extreme weather**, and the agency names **icy roads** in its list.
- **During winter months road tests are not given in the dark.** So when you book for January, **pick an early slot**.
- **Allow for the appointment being canceled because of weather** and plan a backup day. The state transportation department's statement of **January 25, 2026** described icing as **statewide** and asked drivers not to travel.

Proof of address and the order of your first week

What usually holds up a license file is not a document but **proof of address**. In this city, order it like this: open **power, gas and water** in your own name first, because here all three come from one utility and **produce a single bill**; that bill, in your name, works as proof of residence at many doors. **And write the address the same way everywhere:** the address on your license, your vehicle registration, your lease and your school enrollment should match.

One more door depends on this: some free admission days in this city ask at the gate for **a state-issued photo identification**. **If you do not yet hold a state driver license or state identification card you cannot pass those gates**, and the city's own residency card does not satisfy that requirement.

- 1 Talk to your attorney first.** We found no status-independent card in this state and the agency requires proof of lawful presence.

- 2 **Pick the right center:** testing happens only at the three full-service centers; the fourth location does no testing.
- 3 **Know what a kiosk is:** the two locations open around the clock handle routine work, not document review.
- 4 **Complete the application online and send your documents for pre-approval;** it takes five business days and you still bring the originals.
- 5 **Book an appointment and arrive fifteen minutes early.** In winter, pick an early slot.
- 6 **Do not expect a waiver.** Türkiye is not on the reciprocity list; prepare for the vision screening, the knowledge test and the road test.
- 7 **Keep an English translation of your passport with you,** because it may be required.
- 8 **Connect the vehicle side to this:** a valid state driver license or state photo identification, including the temporary versions, counts on its own at vehicle registration.



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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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