

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · DALLAS

How to Get a Texas Driver's License: 2026 Guide

For Dallas newcomers, green card and visa holders, and drivers arriving with a foreign license: documents, tests, fees and DPS offices.

SHORT ANSWER

Texas driver's licenses are issued by DPS offices, by appointment only. For a first license you need proof of lawful presence (green card, EAD, or passport + visa + I-94), your SSN (or a DL-13 affidavit at the office), two documents showing a Texas address with at least 30 days of residence, and Texas insurance for any car you own. After the knowledge test, the ITAD video and the road test, the fee is \$33.

Before you start

- **You cannot apply in your first month.** One address document must show at least 30 days of Texas residence.
- **No walk-ins.** First-time appointments in the Dallas area run 3 to 10 weeks out (DPS, September 16, 2026).
- **The knowledge test is English or Spanish only.** Interpreters are not allowed during the test.
- **Most foreign licenses cannot be exchanged.** Only France, Germany, South Korea, the UAE, Taiwan and other U.S. states are exempt from testing.
- **Your previous license is valid for 90 days** after you become a Texas resident.

Step by step

- 1 **Book an appointment** at txdpsscheduler.com, choosing the "Original" service. Slots open up to 6 months ahead; office kiosks offer limited same-day slots (not at Carrollton).
- 2 **Gather original documents.** No photocopies. DPS's document check tool builds a checklist: dps.texas.gov/apps/DriverLicense/RealID.
- 3 **Complete ITAD.** If you are 25 or older, finish the one-hour Impact Texas Adult Drivers video (impacttexasdrivers.dps.texas.gov); the certificate is valid for 90 days. Ages 18 to 24 also need a 6-hour adult driver education course.
- 4 **Apply at the office** with Form DL-14A. Fingerprints, photo and a vision test.
- 5 **Take the knowledge test** on traffic laws and signs, in English or Spanish.
- 6 **Take the road test** in an insured, registered vehicle. It may be scheduled separately.

7 Pay the fee. You leave with a temporary license; the card arrives by mail in 2 to 3 weeks.

Document checklist

DOCUMENT	NOTES
☐ Proof of lawful presence	Green card (I-551), EAD (I-766), or a valid passport + visa + I-94. DPS verifies it with DHS.
☐ Identity	A green card, an EAD and "passport + visa + I-94" count as primary ID. A foreign passport alone is only a supporting document.
☐ SSN	Provide your number. If you are not eligible for an SSN, you sign a DL-13 affidavit at the office (no CDL on this basis).
☐ Address document #1	Lease or deed, or an electric, water, internet or cell phone bill from the last 180 days.
☐ Address document #2	Bank statement, pay stub, insurance policy, government mail or a USCIS notice. One must show 30 days in Texas.
☐ Vehicle documents	Texas insurance for each vehicle you own; Texas registration if surrendering an out-of-state license. If you own none, you say so.
☐ ITAD certificate	Age 25 and older, before the road test. Valid 90 days.
☐ Driver education certificate	Only for first-time applicants aged 18 to 24.

Fees (2026)

ITEM	FEE	VALID FOR
Driver's license, ages 18 to 84	\$33	8 years
Limited Term license	\$33	Your authorized stay
Texas ID card, age 59 and under	\$16	6 years
Replacement card	\$11	-

Texas does not let you hold a license and an ID card at the same time. Since May 7, 2025, domestic flights accept only REAL ID cards (marked with a star) or a passport.

If you are not a U.S. citizen

NOTE FOR IMMIGRANTS

- Green card holders get a standard 8-year license. Other statuses get a "Limited Term" card that expires with the authorized stay on your I-94.
- For duration-of-status (D/S) holders such as F-1 and J-1 students, the license is valid for one year.
- After an extension or change of status you renew in person with the new documents. DPS recommends coming at least 30 days before expiration.
- If DHS verification is not instant, track it at txapps.texas.gov.
- **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.

Dallas-area DPS offices

Estimated wait for a first-time license appointment (DPS report, September 16, 2026). Waits change weekly.

OFFICE	FIRST-TIME APPOINTMENT
Dallas South Mega Center	about 21 days
North Garland Mega Center	about 23 days
Carrollton Mega Center	about 28 days, no same-day slots
Garland	about 30 days
Grand Prairie	about 36 days
Plano	about 45 days
McKinney	about 70 days

Addresses and hours: [DPS office locator](#).

Driving on a foreign license

- **Visitors:** your home license with an International Driving Permit (or English translation), for up to one year from entry (ages 18 to 75, private vehicles).
- **New residents:** get a Texas license within 90 days. There is no test exemption for most foreign licenses.
- **Renting a car:** rental companies may also ask for the International Driving Permit.

Common mistakes

- Trying to apply in your first week (no 30-day address document yet).
- Bringing photocopies.
- Showing up for the road test without the ITAD certificate.

- Surrendering an out-of-state license before registering your car in Texas.
- Letting a Limited Term license expire.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN DALLAS

Have a question about your immigration status?

Attorney Asim Clinch serves clients across Dallas-Fort Worth from our McKinney office, in Turkish and English. Free evaluation: clinchlaw.com/free-evaluation · +1 866-491-7669

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