



REGISTRY OF MOTOR VEHICLES

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS – DRIVER’S LICENSE AND ID

Back to school is an exciting time, and for international students it also means making sure you have lots of documents in order, including the proper information necessary to obtain a Massachusetts driver’s license or ID card.

This flyer is intended to help ensure you have a successful visit to the RMV and you can get the credentials you need.

What do I need?

In Massachusetts, there are new requirements for getting and renewing learner’s permits, driver’s licenses, and ID cards: you need documentation showing United States citizenship or lawful presence, a Social Security number (or an acceptable SSA Denial Notice), and Massachusetts residency. You will also need a document proving your date of birth.

How do I prove lawful presence?

As an international student coming to school in the United States, you must provide valid immigration documents showing you have been authorized to be in the U.S. for at least 12 months. (Your passport and I-20 are the most commonly acceptable forms.) The RMV will verify these documents electronically.

For authorized stays that have less than 12 months remaining, the RMV will issue a credential for the remaining duration of the authorized stay.

In addition, in Massachusetts you’ll also need to decide between a Standard driver’s license or ID card and a REAL ID driver’s license or ID. REAL ID is a federal ID that you can use, beginning October 2020, to fly within the United States or enter federal buildings. To get one, you’ll need to provide additional documentation and come into an RMV service center.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

✓ **Go online first**

The best way to begin is to start online at mass.gov/ID.

Here you can find out more about Massachusetts identification requirements, decide between a Standard driver's license/ID and a REAL ID driver's license/ID, and start your license/ID application.

✓ **Have proper documents**

You can review the required documents on our website: mass.gov/ID. Here you can find out more about proving lawful presence and date of birth, Massachusetts residency, and Social Security requirements, including an SSA Denial Notice.

A checklist of acceptable identification documents is also on the RMV [website](#).

✓ **No Laminated Documents**

The RMV cannot accept any laminated documents. Make sure your documents are not laminated.

✓ **Standard vs. REAL ID**

Decide which license credential you want before you visit a Service Center. Our decision tool at mass.gov/ID can help you decide and find out what documents you need.

No one needs REAL ID until October of 2020 when it could be used to fly domestically or enter Federal Buildings. If you are willing to carry a passport, you will never need a REAL ID.

✓ **Social Security**

You'll need your Social Security number, or provide an SSN Denial Notice issued by the Social Security Administration.