

REAL ID

A REAL Choice for Virginians

Deciding whether to renew your standard driver's license or identification card or apply for a REAL ID compliant driver's license or ID card? The following information can help you make the right choice for you.

What is REAL ID?

The REAL ID Act is a federal law that affects how states issue driver's licenses and ID cards if they are going to be accepted for federal purposes, such as boarding domestic flights or entering secure military installations or federal facilities that require ID.

REAL ID is optional for Virginians.

You can get either a REAL ID license or ID or a standard driver's license or ID. If you do not get a REAL ID, you must have an alternate form of federally accepted identification (valid U. S. passport, military ID, Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC), etc.) to board domestic flights beginning May 7, 2025.

Credential comparison at-a-glance



	Standard license	REAL ID license
Driving	✓	✓
Voting or registering to vote	✓	✓
Verifying identity at banks, utility companies and retail stores	✓	✓
Applying for or receiving federal benefits	✓	✓
Accessing health or life preserving services	✓	✓
Entering federal facilities that require ID*	✗	✓
Accessing military bases*	✗	✓
Boarding domestic flights beginning May 7, 2025	✗	✓

*Secure federal facilities and military bases have the authority to set their own identification requirements. Please verify requirements prior to your visit. **Effective immediately**, some military bases may no longer accept non-REAL ID compliant credentials which display "Federal Limits Apply."

Here's what you need to get a REAL ID:

All applicants for a REAL ID compliant credential, including current Virginia credential holders, must apply in-person and provide DMV with physical documentation of the applicant's:

- Identity (e.g. unexpired U.S. passport or U.S. birth certificate)
- Legal presence (e.g. unexpired U.S. passport or U.S. birth certificate)
- Full Social Security Number (e.g. Social Security card or W-2 form displaying full number) Note: You will not be required to present proof of your Social Security number if you know the number and DMV is able to electronically verify it.
- Residency (two proofs are required; e.g. valid Virginia driver's license, recent utility bills, mortgage or rental lease agreements displaying current residential street address, not a P.O. Box) Note: You may redact (blackout/whiteout) sensitive financial information.
- Proof of any name changes (e.g. marriage certificate filed with a government agency or divorce decree)

Note: If your name appears differently on your proof documents, you will be asked to present additional documentation to connect the names, such as a marriage certificate, divorce decree or court order. Marriage licenses, civil union documents, and marriage certificates signed only by the wedding officiant (such as a member of the clergy) will not be accepted.

All documents must be originals and will be subject to verification; however, printouts of acceptable online residency documents can be used as proof of residency. Temporary documents and photocopies of documents will not be accepted.

For a complete list of accepted documents, visit dmvNOW.com/REALID.

About your REAL ID credential:

REAL ID credentials are available for a one-time \$10 fee, in addition to standard driver's license or identification card fees.

In the upper right corner, REAL ID compliant credentials display a **star**, while non-REAL ID compliant credentials instead display "**Federal Limits Apply**," in order to comply with federal law.