




REAL ID

The REAL ID Act of 2005 was enacted by Congress from the 9/11 Commission’s recommendation. “The Act established minimum security standards for state-issued drivers licenses and identification cards and prohibits certain federal agencies from accepting for official purposes licenses and identification cards that do not meet these standards.” The purposes for using a REAL ID include:

- Accessing certain federal facilities;
- Boarding federally regulated commercial aircraft;
- Entering nuclear power plants.

The enforcement date for the REAL ID is nearing. It is going into effect throughout the US on **May 7, 2025**. All states are issuing the REAL ID compliant cards. Tennessee began issuing the REAL ID in the spring of 2019.

What a REAL ID license looks like in Tennessee

The REAL ID cards and/or drivers licenses have one of the following symbols on the upper right side of  the driver’s license depending on the state that issued it.

Here is a sample REAL ID Driver’s license and a regular driver’s license from Tennessee:



Obtaining a REAL ID in Tennessee

Visit TN Department of Security and Homeland Security by going to the following website: <https://www.tn.gov/tnrealid/get-real-id.html>

If you already have a Tennessee driver license or ID visit:

- One of TN’s full-service Driver Services Centers
- One of TN’s two Express Services Center (either in Nashville or Memphis)
- Participating County Clerk partners.



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If you **have not** been previously issued a Tennessee driver license or ID, visit:

- One of TN's full-service [Driver Services Center](#)

After your first REAL ID compliant credential, you may renew [online](#), use a [Self-Service Kiosk](#) or visit a [County Clerk Office](#) for renewal.

Make a REAL ID appointment

Customers can now make an appointment for REAL ID at any Driver Services Center and you can get a specific date and time assigned to you.

Paperwork you will need

- ❖ Proof of U.S. citizenship or legal presence that show the applicant's legal name and full date of birth. Applicant must present **one** of the following: (U.S. Birth Certificate from State Office of Vital Statistics or equivalent with a raised seal and/or color seal; Valid, unexpired U.S. passport or passport card; U.S. certificate or consular report of birth abroad [FS-240, DS 1350 or FS-545]; Valid, unexpired Permanent Resident Card issued by DHS or INS {I-551}; Unexpired Employment Authorization Document issued by DHS (I-766 or I-688B); Unexpired foreign passport with valid U.S. visa and approved I-94 form; Certificate of Naturalization issued by DHS (N-550, N-570, or N-578); Certificate of Citizenship issued by DHS (N-560 or N-561)
- ❖ Proof of your full Social Security Number to include **one** of the following: W-2, 1099, Social Security Card or Payroll check stub.
- ❖ **Two** proofs of Tennessee residency and that can be:
 - Current Utility Bill – This includes landline telephone, electric, water, gas, and cable bills.
 - Current Bank Statement - Internet bank statements are acceptable only if taken to the local bank, stamped and dated by teller as an active account.
 - Current Tennessee vehicle registration or certificate of title (may use one but not two)
 - Current Tennessee Voter Registration Card.
 - IRS Tax Return
 - Payroll check stub



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- Current rental/mortgage contract or receipt, including deed of sale for property; handwritten rental contracts or agreements must be notarized.
- Current homeowner or renter insurance policy
- Current automobile, life or health insurance policy
- Receipt for personal property or real estate taxes paid within the previous year
- Installment loans, such as automobile, student loan, bank loans
- Current employer verification of resident address or letter from employer as long as it is on letterhead with original signature; if employer does not have letterhead, then signature of employer must be notarized
- Current Driver License or ID or Handgun Carry Permit issued by the Tennessee Department of Safety to a parent, legal guardian or spouse of the applicant
- Applicant's Driver License, ID or Handgun Carry Permit issued by the Tennessee Department of Safety.

Cost

The Real ID will cost the same as an ordinary Tennessee license. As of November 2024, it is \$28.

Reviewed March 10, 2025