



REAL ID FAQs

1. What is the Real ID Act?

The United States Congress passed the REAL ID Act of 2005 as a result of the 9/11 Commission. The Commission recommended the Federal Government set standards for driver's licenses and other types of government-issued identification cards across the country.

2. Am I required to purchase a REAL ID driver's license or ID card?

No. South Carolina offers a standard, non-compliant card and a REAL ID option.

On and after October 1, 2020, you must have a REAL ID driver's license or identification card, or another federally approved identification, such as a valid US Passport or military ID, to board a domestic, commercial flight, enter a secure federal building, or visit a military installation.

If you will not be doing the above activities, you need to take no action with your SC license or ID. You should simply renew it as normal when it's due for renewal.

Why do I need a REAL ID?

On and after October 1, 2020, you must have a REAL ID driver's license or identification card, or another federally approved identification, such as a valid US Passport or military ID, to board a domestic, commercial flight, enter a secure federal building, or visit a military installation.

If you have an unexpired US Passport, US Passport Card, or another federally approved identification, you may use this as your form of identification instead of changing your SC license or ID to a REAL ID, but you **must** have this identification source with you to access federally secured facilities on and after **October 1, 2020**.

If you have a standard card that says "Not For Federal Identification," you can still do **all** of the following:

- Drive
- Vote
- Receive federal benefits for which you're entitled (Veterans Affairs, Social Security Administration)
- Visit a non-secure federal building (i.e. a post office)
- Participate in law enforcement proceedings (serve on a federal jury, testify in federal court)

- Receive life-saving services/access a hospital

3. When can I get a REAL ID card?

REAL IDs will be available to the public **in 2018**. The SCDMV will release additional information when an exact date is known. Once they're available, you may get a REAL ID South Carolina driver's license or identification card at any time, as long as you have the correct documentation and assuming you're otherwise eligible to receive a license or ID.

4. Which documents are needed to apply for a REAL ID?

The SCDMV **must have all** of the following on file for US Citizens:

- Proof of Identity (Government-issued birth certificate or valid US Passport)
- Proof of Social Security Number
- Two Proofs of Current, Physical SC Address
- Proof of All Legal Name Changes

You will find a **complete list** of the documents the SCDMV will accept on the United States Citizens' Checklist (SCDMV Form MV-93). You will find this form at www.scdmvonline.com.

If you received your **first** SC beginner's permit, license, or ID during or after **November 2010**, the SCDMV **should** have your documents on file. If you think you may fall into this category, call 803-896-5000 to check the status of your documents or complete the "REAL ID Document Check" on our website.

The requirements for international customers are different. For a **complete list** of documents for international customers, see the International Customers' Checklist (SCDMV Form MV-94). You can find this form at www.scdmvonline.com.

5. Does my child need a REAL ID?

While you're welcome to purchase a REAL ID identification card for your child, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) **does not** require children to have a REAL ID when flying with an adult who has a REAL ID.

If you're considering purchasing a REAL ID for your child, the SCDMV must have **all** of the required documents on file for him or her. You must submit your child's government-issued birth certificate, proof of social security number, and two proofs of his or her current, physical SC address.

If your child is between the ages of 5 and 16, the ID is \$5. If your child is 17 or older, the ID is free.

6. What if I do not have all of the documents when I visit a branch?

You will be unable to get a REAL ID if you do not have all required documents.

If you're interested in receiving a REAL ID beginner's permit, driver's license, or identification card, the SCDMV **must** have **all** of the required documents on file. If you prepare early, you should have a smooth visit to an SCDMV branch. Please come with all required documents.

For a **complete list** of accepted documents, see the United States Citizens' Checklist (SCDMV Form MV-93). If you're an international customer, see the International Customers' Checklist (SCDMV Form MV-94). These forms are available at www.scdmvonline.com.

7. Can I have a standard license and a REAL ID?

No. If you choose to change your South Carolina beginner's permit, driver's license, or identification card to a REAL ID, you will destroy or turn in your old beginner's permit, license, or ID, once you receive the new card.

You may **only** have one card. You will either have a REAL ID SC beginner's permit, driver's license, or identification card or a standard SC beginner's permit, driver's license, or identification card. You **cannot** have both.

8. If my driver's license expires before REAL IDs are available, do I have to pay to renew my driver's license and pay to get a REAL ID? So, am I paying twice?

Yes. **Do not** drive with an expired driver's license. If your license expires before REAL IDs are available and you know you want to change to a REAL ID license, you will pay for the new license when you switch your current card to a REAL ID card. It is optional and voluntary to change your current license to a REAL ID.

9. What does the REAL ID look like? Will it be different than a non-compliant driver's license or ID?

A REAL ID beginner's permit, driver's license, or identification card will include a gold star. A standard beginner's permit, license, or ID will include the words "Not For Federal Identification" and it will not have a gold star.

Once REAL IDs are available, you may notice a completely new design for the state's licenses and IDs. This is done periodically to update security features within the state's cards. Even if the state was not offering REAL ID cards, the design of the licenses and IDs would have been updated.

10. What happens if I do not switch to REAL ID?

If you do not switch to a REAL ID **and** do not have another federally accepted form of identification, such as a valid US Passport or military ID, you will not be

able to board a domestic, commercial flight, enter a secure federal building, or visit a military installation after September 30, 2020.

If you do not switch to a REAL ID **but have** another federally accepted form of identification, such as a valid US Passport or military ID, you may use this as your identification to board a domestic, commercial flight, enter a secure federal building, or visit a military installation after September 30, 2020.

If you have a standard SC **license**, you will still be able to drive, vote, receive federal benefits you're entitled to (Veterans Affairs, Social Security Administration, etc.), and access hospitals, among other things. If you have a standard SC **identification card**, you **do not** have driving privileges.

11. Am I still able to drive with my standard driver's license?

Yes.

12. Can I use my existing driver's license or identification card to fly on an airplane or do I have to wait until I get a REAL ID?

Yes. When the state is certified as "fully compliant," you may use your current, unexpired South Carolina license or ID to board an airplane through September 30, 2020.

On and after October 1, 2020, you must have a REAL ID driver's license or identification card, or another federally approved identification, such as a valid US Passport or military ID, to board a domestic, commercial flight, enter a secure federal building, or visit a military installation.

13. How can I get my REAL ID—Online, through the mail, or only in person?

In the future, you may be able to get a REAL ID driver's license online if the SCDMV has all of the needed documents on file for you. These new cards will also be offered through the SCDMV's mail-in renewal process and in person. Assuming you're otherwise eligible to have a license, the SCDMV **must** have all required documents on file for you to switch to a REAL ID.

14. Can the SCDMV use my documents already on file?

Yes. The SCDMV likely already has your documents if:

- You received your first South Carolina beginner's permit, driver's license, or identification card after November 2010
- You purchased a new South Carolina beginner's permit, driver's license, or identification card after November 2010 upon moving back to South Carolina.

If you believe you fall into these categories, you may call 803-896-5000 or complete the "REAL ID Document Check" at www.scdmvonline.com.

15. How long do I have to get my new REAL ID?

Once the cards are available, you may change your license at any time if the correct documentation is on file.

On and after October 1, 2020, you must have a REAL ID driver's license or identification card, or another federally approved identification, such as a valid US Passport or military ID, to board a domestic, commercial flight, enter a secure federal building, or visit a military installation.

16. Do I need to switch to REAL ID if I don't fly, but travel by train, bus, or cruise?

You should check with the specific travel method you're interested in using.

17. Will I be turned away from traveling if I show up without a REAL ID? Is there an exception process?

All indications are yes, you will be turned away from boarding a domestic, commercial flight if you do not have a REAL ID driver's license or identification, or another federally approved identification, such as a valid US Passport or military ID, **on and after October 1, 2020**.

18. Can I still vote if I do not have a REAL ID?

Yes.

19. Is a US Passport the only other acceptable identification if I don't have a REAL ID?

No. For a complete list of federally approved identification, check www.dhs.gov/real-id.

How will dependents of the Department of Defense (DOD), military, and veterans access federal facilities?

On and after October 1, 2020, you must have a REAL ID driver's license or identification card, or another federally approved identification, such as a valid US Passport or military ID, to board a domestic, commercial flight, enter a secure federal building, or visit a military installation.

20. I do not have an original or certified copy of my birth certificate, what should I do?

If you were born in South Carolina, you should check with the [South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control](#) for its requirements to obtain a certified copy of your birth certificate. Original birth records are permanently kept at SCDHEC, and they can produce birth certifications.

If you were not born in SC, visit VitalChek.com. If your birth state is not on VitalChek, you should contact the vital records office in your state of birth.

Additionally, the United States Citizens' Checklist (SCDMV Form MV-93) includes a **complete list** of accepted documents. If you have a different document that proves your identity/date of birth/US citizenship (as outlined on the form), you may use that instead of your birth certificate.

The requirements are different for international customers. If you're an international customer, you should check the document requirements on the International Customers' Checklist (SCDMV Form MV-94).

21. How will the REAL ID affect international customers?

If you're an international customer, you should check the International Customers' Checklist (SCDMV Form MV-94) for a **complete list** of the documents the SCDMV will accept to issue you a REAL ID beginner's permit, driver's license, or identification card.

You must switch to a REAL ID in person at a branch that serves international customers.

22. Will anything change for customers seeking a beginner's permit?

No. Customers interested in a beginner's permit can choose whether or not they would like a REAL ID beginner's permit or a standard beginner's permit that says "Not for Federal Identification." If interested in receiving a REAL ID beginner's permit, the SCDMV must have all of the correct documentation on file.

23. When will a REAL ID expire? Will it be the same date as the one I have now?

No. **All regular (Class D, E, F, G, M) driver's licenses** expire eight years after they're issued, regardless of your age. Whether you choose to get a REAL ID license or a standard license, your license will expire eight years after it's issued. If you have an identification card, whether it is REAL ID or not, it will expire five years after it's issued.

If you have a commercial driver's license, it will expire five years after it's issued. If you're an international customer, your beginner's permit, driver's license, or ID will be valid for **no more than** five years.

24. I do not want a REAL ID, can I keep the one I have now?

Yes. If you are not interested in changing your current South Carolina beginner's permit, driver's license, or identification card to a REAL ID, you may keep the card you have now. If you choose to keep your current card, its expiration date

will be the date currently shown on the card, and you must renew it as normal when it expires.

On and after **October 1, 2020** you will **not** be able to use this card as your form of identification to board a commercial flight or visit a secure federal facility.

25. Since I already have a driver's license, can I avoid paying the \$25 fee to get a REAL ID license by buying a \$10 replacement card?

No. You **cannot** receive your first REAL ID through the SCDMV's duplicate/replacement driver's license transaction. If you complete a \$10 duplicate/replacement before switching to a REAL ID, you will receive a standard card that says "Not for Federal Identification."