

**GUIDELINES
for
NEW RESIDENTS**

Process to obtain a Delaware Driver License

Process to Title & Register a Vehicle

**State of Delaware
Department of Transportation
DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES
P.O. BOX 698
Dover, Delaware 19903
www.dmv.de.gov**



PROCESS TO OBTAIN A DELAWARE DRIVER LICENSE

IF YOU HOLD A VALID LICENSE FROM ANOTHER STATE:

To continue to drive in Delaware you must apply for and receive a Delaware driver license within 60 days after becoming a Delaware resident.

Although most traffic laws in all states are somewhat uniform, there are some that may be unique to Delaware. Because of this, we suggest that you pick up a driver manual at one of our offices to acquaint yourself with Delaware's traffic laws. When you obtain your driver license, you may also register to vote and/or become an organ donor through our offices.

You must apply in person at one of the offices of the Division of Motor Vehicles in Wilmington, Delaware City, Dover or Georgetown. The addresses of these offices are listed on the last page of this document.

You will be required to pass an eye test. The knowledge test and the road test may be waived if you hold a valid driver license from another state. New residents should be prepared to provide one proof of identity, one proof of legal presence, two proofs of Delaware residence, proof of Social Security Number, and if applicable, proof of legal name change(s). For a complete list of acceptable documents, please visit our website at www.dmv.de.gov under "general requirements". You may also utilize the "Document Selector Guide" on our website to ensure you have the appropriate documents prior to visiting the DMV. Upon receiving a Delaware driver license, you must give up all valid licenses from other states. If your out-of-state license has expired, you must present to the division at time of application, a current driving record from your previous state of residence and be prepared for the knowledge test. Unlicensed drivers must present a certified birth certificate with a raised seal to show their correct name and date of birth.

If you are under 18 years of age, you must have completed a course in driver education, which must be approved by the Delaware Department of Education. Also, one parent (with whom the child resides) is required to sign your application.

Those drivers under 18 years of age who transfer from another state will be issued a graduated driver license unless their out-of-state license was issued for over one year, and the driver has reached at least 17 years of age.

Members in the military service and their dependents are not required to obtain Delaware driver licenses and vehicle registrations until 60 days after separation from the service.

The fee for a driver license is \$40.00. It is valid for 8 years (with the exception of immigration length of stay) and will expire on applicant's birth date.

PROCESS TO TITLE AND REGISTER A VEHICLE

New residents must title and register their vehicles within 60 days after becoming a Delaware resident. State law requires changes of address to be reported to the Division of Motor Vehicles within 30 days.

LIABILITY INSURANCE, FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND PENALTY

Step 1

The first step in obtaining a Delaware vehicle title/registration is to establish your (the owner(s)) financial responsibility. This is done by purchasing a liability insurance policy from a company licensed by the Insurance Commissioner to operate in Delaware. The minimum coverage is:

- \$15,000 for bodily injury or death of one person in any one accident.
- \$30,000 for bodily injury or death of two or more persons in any one accident.
- \$10,000 for injury to or destruction of property of others in any one accident.

The Division requires verification that the vehicle being registered is properly insured. One of the following documents is acceptable:

- Insurance Identification Card -- All insurance companies are required to issue such cards. The card must be carried in the vehicle at all times and include the period of coverage and the NAIC code. The division does not accept photocopies or computer printouts of insurance cards, but will accept electronic insurance cards from a phone, tablet or laptop. Faxed copies are only accepted if faxed from the insurance company directly to the division.
- A valid insurance policy.
- A written binder within 30 days of issue from an insurance company or agent on the insurance company's letterhead.

The penalty for operating an uninsured vehicle is a fine of not less than \$1,500 and/or 30 days in jail and suspension of your driver license for 6 months.

THE INSURANCE ID CARD PRESENTED MUST BE VALID, OR IT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. INSURANCE COMPANIES ARE REQUIRED TO ISSUE A NEW ID CARD AT LEAST EVERY YEAR. OWNERS CANCELING INSURANCE FOR ANY REASON MUST SURRENDER THEIR VALID LICENSE PLATE TO THE DIVISION. FAILURE TO SURRENDER YOUR LICENSE PLATES PRIOR TO INSURANCE CANCELLATION WILL RESULT IN FINES.

The Division of Motor Vehicles randomly audits for proof of insurance on active registrations. The penalty for being uninsured is \$100 for 1-30 days and an additional \$5 per day until insurance is obtained, tags are surrendered or the registration expires. In addition, suspensions are imposed on the registration and on the driver license of all owners who fail to respond to the request.

VEHICLE INSPECTION

Step 2

The second step in obtaining a Delaware vehicle title and registration is to have your motor vehicle inspected at one of the offices of the Division of Motor Vehicles.

A check of the following items is recommended before your vehicle is presented for inspection; it may save you a return trip for re-inspection:

Certificate of title or registration must be presented.

- All lights must be clean, in working order, and properly aimed.
- This includes stop lights, turn signals, license plate light, parking lights, and head lights.
- Brakes must stop the vehicle within required distances.
- Glass in windows must have no holes, breaks, or cracks.
- Mirrors must be clean and unbroken.
- Windshield wipers must be fully operative (the rubber blades must be in good condition).
- Hood and trunk latches must hold hood and trunk fully closed.
- Tires must have no bulges, no fabric showing, no bald areas and no cuts. Tread depth must be at least 2/32 inch measured in two adjacent treads.
- Doorknobs or equivalent must be present and in working condition.
- There must be no damaged or dislocated parts projecting from the vehicle that could present a safety hazard.
- Horn must be in operating condition.
- Muffler must effectively reduce sound of engine exhaust. No leaks in exhaust system. Catalytic converter must be installed if originally equipped from manufacturer.
- There must be no gasoline leaks.
- Seat belts must be worn.
- Bumper height on passenger cars cannot be less than 22 inches from the ground to the bottom of the bumper.
- No tinting or sun screening device can be applied to the front windshield or to the front side windows.
- No air scoops shall be mounted on a vehicle hood that exceeds 3 inches in height.
- Motor vehicles will be tested for exhaust emissions and some vehicles are subject to fuel systems checks for leaks.
- Windshield must have no cracks which interfere with vision; any cracks over 5 inches on any window are mandatory failure items; minimum height of visibility in windshield is 10 inches.

POOR CONDITION OF ANY OF EQUIPMENT ITEMS MAY BE CAUSE FOR REJECTION.

Vehicles in unsafe condition, lacking required equipment or not in proper repair or adjustment will be failed. The inspection technician will provide an inspection report showing the failed items. These items must be corrected, and the vehicle re-inspected and passed prior to the issuance of a title, registration card and license plate. Vehicle owners whose registration is about to expire may be eligible for a temporary tag if the failure item is not safety related.

TITLE

Step 3

The third step in obtaining a vehicle registration is to apply for a Delaware title and registration.

If the vehicle is coming from a state which issues certificates of title, a certificate of title must be surrendered to the Division of Motor Vehicles at the time the application is filed. If there is a lien or encumbrance against the vehicle, the division will provide a form (MV-35) to send to the lien holder to obtain the certificate of title.

Applications for Certificate of Title (MV-212) and registration are issued by an inspection technician after your vehicle passes the emission test and safety inspection. The application must be signed by all owners of the vehicle or by someone with power of attorney to sign for such owner(s), or by an officer of the company owning the vehicle. Power-of-attorney must be original and notarized. Whenever a motor vehicle is brought into Delaware from another state and a title and a registration is sought, the owner must pay a vehicle

document fee of 4.25 percent of the value of the vehicle but not less than \$8.00, unless the owner presents proof that he/she has paid to such other state, a sales tax, transfer tax or some similar levy on the purchase of the vehicle and must be titled and registered within ninety (90) days prior to registering in Delaware. Mobile homes are 3.75 percent. The value of the vehicle shall be the current NADA average trade-in book value or purchase price, whichever is greater.

If there is a change of ownership at the time of application, a motor vehicle document fee amounting to 4.25 percent of the purchase price or current NADA average trade-in book value, whichever is greater (but not less than \$8.00), must be paid. If the vehicle was purchased from a dealer, a dealer's invoice must be presented.

Proof of liability insurance must be submitted at the time of titling or registering a vehicle (see paragraph regarding liability insurance).

The title fee is \$35.00 if there is no lien or \$55.00 if there is a lien against the vehicle.

The registration fee is \$40.00 per year for passenger vehicles. Most passenger vehicles qualify to be registered for one or two years. The division recommends the two year registration. New passenger vehicles being titled for the first time can be registered for five years at a cost of \$200.00. Paid registration fees are non-refundable. You have the option to register for up to five years depending on the model year of the vehicle; however, the vehicle must be inspected prior to your registration expiration. The division recommends that you renew your registration for the maximum years allowed.

Registration fee for six (6) months is \$21.00. Registration fee for commercial vehicles is \$40.00 for first 5,000 lbs. with increments of \$18.00 per 1,000 lbs. above 5,000 lbs. Trailer fee is \$15.00 per year for 1,000 lbs., \$20.00 per year for 1,001 lbs. to 2,000 lbs., and \$40.00 per year for 2,001 lbs. to 5,000 lbs. with increment of \$18.00 per 1,000 lbs. above 5,000 lbs. Recreational vehicle and recreational trailer fee is \$40.00 per year for first 5,000 lbs. with increments of \$6.40 per 1,000 lbs. above 5,000 lbs.

Upon submission of all necessary documents, their acceptance, and payment of the vehicle document fee, title fee and registration fee, a certificate of title, registration card and license plate will be issued by the Division of Motor Vehicles. If there is a lien against the vehicle, the title is mailed to the lien holder.

REQUIREMENT FOR APPLICANTS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE

If you are less than 18 years of age, your application for a certificate of title must be signed by a parent or legal guardian granting consent to the application.

RENEWING REGISTRATION

Prior to registration renewal you must present proof that the vehicle is covered by adequate liability insurance (see paragraph regarding liability insurance) and has passed the State's vehicle safety inspection and emissions test. You may have your vehicle inspected at any time 90 days prior to the expiration date of the registration, e.g., if your registration expires on June 30th, you may have your vehicle inspected anytime after April 1st. No time is lost by renewing early. You may also renew your registration at that time or you may renew any time up to the expiration date. It is suggested that you avoid the waiting lines normally experienced on the last few days of each month by presenting your vehicle for inspection early in the month. A LATE FEE OF \$20.00 IS CHARGED FOR LATE RENEWALS. Trailers weighing 4,000 pounds or less do not require re-inspection prior to renewal of the registration.

RESPONSIBILITY OF OWNER

The registration certificate and proof of liability insurance must accompany the motor vehicle whenever it is operated. The license plate must be affixed to the rear of the vehicle in the designated position and must bear the sticker showing year and month of expiration on the lower right corner of the license plate. Your registration expires at midnight on the day of the month indicated on the sticker. There is no grace period.

DMV LOCATIONS

GREATER WILMINGTON

2230 Hessler Boulevard
New Castle, DE 19720
Telephone: (302) 434-3200

DELAWARE CITY

2101 Mid County Drive
New Castle, DE 19720
Telephone: (302) 326-5000

DOVER

303 Transportation Circle
P.O. Box 698
Dover, DE 19903
Telephone: (302) 744-2500

GEORGETOWN

23737 DuPont Boulevard
Georgetown, DE 19947
Telephone: (302) 853-1000

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday
12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m.

FOR OBTAINING A DRIVER LICENSE, TITLE OR VEHICLE REGISTRATION, THE DMV SUGGESTS APPEARING AT LEAST ONE HOUR BEFORE CLOSING TO ALLOW ADEQUATE TIME FOR PROCESSING.