You must choose whether you want to get a REAL ID or not. A REAL ID will have a gold star on it and can be used to board airplanes or enter secure federal facilities. Without a REAL ID, you must have another federally approved identification, such as a valid US Passport or military ID, and show it to pass security at airports nationwide or enter secure federal facilities. You do not need a REAL ID beginning’s permit, driver’s license, or identification card to do any of the following: drive; vote; access hospital care; enter non-secured federal facilities such as a post office; receive federal benefits, if entitled (Social Security Administration, Veterans Affairs); or participate in law enforcement investigations or proceedings. Regardless of what choice you make the cost of a South Carolina REAL ID is the same as a beginning’s permit, license, or ID that is not a REAL ID.

A. Driver’s License: If you are applying for a license you must complete these steps.

1. Surrender any driver’s license, beginning’s permit, or identification card issued by another state in the US. If a non-commercial license or ID was lost or stolen, you must provide a certified copy of your driving record from the state that issued the license; beginning’s permit or identification card. However, a CDL holder must get a replacement license from his state of record and surrender it to SC. If you have a driver’s license or beginning’s permit issued by another country, it may need to be shown (not surrendered) as proof of prior driving experience.

2. Provide original (not photocopied) documents for each of the categories listed on this document unless otherwise stated. This list is subject to change at the SCDMV’s discretion.

3. Pass a vision test if applying for a first-time card.

4. Pass a knowledge test unless you have a valid driving credential issued by a country that has established reciprocity with South Carolina. This is a requirement when a driver’s license is issued for the first-time and when renewing a license that has been expired over nine months. The SCDMV will not issue a license to an international customer for less than one year or more than five years. You will be granted a one year extension of your driver’s license if you change status while in the US, are pending a change of status, or request a visa extension in status. You must provide all original entry documents, (even if expired) in addition to documentation from US immigration authorities authorizing current presence in the US for the specific visa status.

B. Beginning’s Permit: If you are applying for a beginning’s permit, you must complete steps 1, 2 and 3 above and pass a knowledge test. Steps 2 and 3 must be repeated when you are ready to take the skills test to upgrade from a beginning’s permit to a driver’s license.

C. Identification Card: If you are applying for an ID, you must complete steps 1 and 2 above.

You must provide the following original documents unless otherwise stated. All documents are subject to verification. Documents not in English must be translated by a qualified translator on the Translator Identification Document (SCDMV form 4030). The translator must provide a letter of verification from his employer on letterhead qualifying him as a translator.

1. Proof of SC address must show your name and current SC address of residence (not PO Box). Proof of address is not required when renewing a driver’s license, beginning’s permit, or identification card that has not been expired over nine months. Below are two options you have based on the number of proof of address documents you provide.

- Two proofs of address are required if you are interested in getting a REAL ID beginning’s permit, driver’s license, or identification card. You must provide two items from the categories listed below and each item should be from a different organization. Both proofs of address must show the same address.
- Only one proof of address is required if you prefer to have a permit, license or ID that has “NOT FOR FEDERAL IDENTIFICATION” printed across the front of it. This is not a REAL ID.

2. Unexpired SC Concealed Weapons Permit (CWP); Fishing/hunting licenses or boating/ jet ski registrations (Department of Natural Resources products).

3. Voter registration card. Current tax bill or property tax receipt for your vehicle or home (current or preceding calendar year). Must be mailed to your SC address.

4. State or Federal tax records Income tax returns for current or prior year are acceptable. You must also show your name and SC physical address as the account holder.

5. Social security check or annual statement.

If presenting one of the following items, it cannot be more than 90 DAYS OLD

6. Utility bill, payment receipt, or approved application for services at your current SC residence (mailed to your SC address not an out-of-state address): may be a water, sewer, gas and electricity, cable/satellite TV, internet, cell phone or telephone bill.

7. Financial statements: credit card or bank statement or signed letter on bank letterhead: must also show your name and SC physical address as the account holder.

8. Home mortgage monthly statement or deed.

9. Insurance documentation from a company licensed to do business in SC: a) Auto or life (if filed prior to 6/2/13, policies are not accepted). b) Health insurance statement, payment receipt, explanation of benefits (cards or policies are not accepted).

10. Current letter of employment or payroll stub statement from an SC or out-of-state employer.

11. US Postal Service letter or item delivered by the US Post Office: Change of address confirmation letter or postmarked US mail with forwarding address label must contain your first and last name, state and zip code. Any postmarked letter showing your name is delivered by the US Post Office to your current address such as: personal letters, or magazines (not advertisements).

12. Letter from director of SC social welfare institution (such as a homeless shelter, battered women’s shelter, halfway house, group home, or orphanage): must state you are a resident of the facility.

13. Other documents issued by federal/state/municipal government.

2. Proof of Social Security Number (SSN): You must present a social security card or non-work authorized status from the Social Security Administration. Replace a lost or stolen social security card online https://www.ssa.gov/online/}

3. Proof of Identity, Date and Place of Birth, and Authorized Length of Stay in the United States — You must provide the applicable documents listed here if you are applying for a first-time driver’s license, beginning’s permit, or ID; renewal; or a name change.

CITIZEN from a Freely Associated State (FAS): Micronesia, Marshall Island, or Palau

a) Employment Authorization Document (EAD); or
b) Unexpired FAS passport and an I-94 document. No visa is required.

IMMIGRANT—You must renew or replace your driver’s license, beginning’s permit, or ID in person at a designated SCDMV branch.

- Permanent Resident Alien (foreign national):
  a) Unexpired Form I-551 or valid passport stamped “I-551 approved” or “processed for I-551.”
  You must also provide proof of place of birth, if not displayed on permanent resident card.
  b) I-551 must display fingerprint for anyone who is 14 years of age or older.
  - Social security card.

NON-IMMIGRANT

- Refugee—Must present a social security card and one of the following documents:
  a) I-94 stamped “refugee”;

- Asylee:
  a) I-94 stamped “Asylee”;
  b) Unexpired I-94 document.

- Other non-immigrant granted temporary entry into the US must provide the following documents:
  a) Passport with unexpired visa.
  b) I-94.
  c) Social security card or letter from the Social Security Administration stating you are not allowed to work in the US. This letter cannot be used as proof of address.
  OR - Social security card.

4. Legal Documents Supporting Name Change(s)

If your name has changed since birth, you must present the legal documentation (such as adoption records, copy of marriage certificate or license issued by state/country records office, certificate of naturalization, and court ordered name change) supporting all name change(s) from the name which appears on your immigration document to the present. Your new name must appear on your current valid US issued immigration document (EAD, I-797 Notice of Action, permanent resident card) as it will appear on your SC driver’s license, beginning’s permit, or ID. You have one opportunity at the time of marriage to change your middle and/or last name. You may not change your name again to a different variation of the married name without a court order.

5. Automobile Liability Insurance Information from a company licensed to do business in SC if you are applying for a driver’s license.

South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles
International Customers’ Checklist

MV-94 (Rev. 12/19)