You must choose whether you want to get a REAL ID or not. A REAL ID card 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 form of 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 beginner’s permit, driver’s license, or identification card (ID) to do any of the following; drive; vote; access hospital care; enter non-secured federal facilities such as a post office; receive federal benefits for which you’re 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 beginner’s permit, driver’s license, or ID that is not a REAL ID.

These requirements are for someone who is applying for a first-time SC beginner’s permit, driver’s license, or ID, or was previously licensed in SC and is returning after being issued a beginner’s permit, driver’s license, or ID in another state if these documents are not already on file with SCDMV; or when an SC beginner’s permit, driver’s license, or ID has been expired for more than nine months. If you previously held an SC card, you are required to provide at least one updated document with your current address. For reference, use this checklist.

A. You must surrender any beginner's learner's permit, driver's license, or ID issued by another state. 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 beginner’s permit, driver’s license, or ID. However, a CDL holder must get a replacement license from his state of record and surrender it to SC.

B. You must provide the name of your automobile liability insurance company that is licensed to do business in SC (not required for a beginner’s permit or ID). This information is subject to electronic verification. SC Code § 56-1-80(3)

C. You must provide your social security number (SSN) which will be electronically verified with the Social Security Administration (SSA). The SSN, date of birth and name on your application must match the SSA file. 6 CFR § 37.11(e); SC Code § 56-1-90

D. You must provide the following documents. All documents are subject to verification. This list is subject to change at the SCDMV’s discretion. Documents that are not in English must be translated by either a qualified translator, or a certified translator. Qualified translators must have a letter of verification from their employer on letterhead qualifying them as a translator. Certified translators can present their ATA certification. Translations must be made on the Translation Document (SCDMV form 4030).

1. Proof of SC address. 6 CFR § 37.11(f); SC Code §§ 56-1-40(7), -80(3)
   a. Certified Copy of Birth certificate with birth/file, book, volume, page or tracking number and registrar’s signature issued by the county or the Vital Records Office.
   b. Letter from director of SC social welfare institution (such as a homeless shelter, battered women’s shelter, halfway house, group home, orphanage) stating you are a resident of the facility.
   c. Letter or contract from Home Schooling Association.
   d. Letter from director of SC social welfare institution indicating that you live in SC and attend school out-of-state.
   e. Letter from an out-of-state boarding school or a professional career development institute indicating that you live in SC and attend school out-of-state.
   f. Report card (must show your name and current SC address)
   g. Letter or contract from Home Schooling Association.
   h. Official letter from your school or school district on school or district letterhead (must indicate enrollment period).
   i. Transcript (SC school, college, or university).
   j. Out-of-state or in-state tuition bill or receipt of student loan.
   k. Letter from an out-of-state boarding school or a professional career development institute indicating that you live in SC and attend school out-of-state.

2. Proof of US Citizenship/Proof of Identity and Date of Birth - You must provide one of the following documents (must be original):
   a. Certified Copy of Birth certificate with birth/file, book, volume, page or tracking number and registrar’s signature issued by the county or the Vital Records Office.
   c. Certificate of Naturalization - USCIS Form (N-550 or N-570).
   e. Certificate of Citizenship (N-560 or N-561).

3. Documents Supporting Name Change(s) If your birth certificate shows that you were not born in the United States, you must also provide an additional document from the above list to prove US citizenship.

   a. Court order or decree changing your name.
   b. A signed marriage license. You can use a marriage license one time per marriage to change your middle name, last name, or both with the department. A marriage license cannot be used to change your first name.
   c. An unexpired United States Passport or Passport Card. An expired passport or passport card can only be used in following option number four below.
   d. You can present at least three different documents, showing your full name as the name that has been used for at least fifteen years. The name on these documents must show a reasonable link to the other identity documents presented (Section 2, above).
   e. An expired passport or passport card can only be used in following option number four below.
   f. If you have changed your name in the past, but since returned to the name listed on your identity documents, any future name changes with the SCDMV will not require documentation from your name changes.

If you are from a US territory, you must successfully complete the vision, knowledge, and skills tests when applying for commercial driver’s licenses.