

Getting an NC Driver's License

Why do I need one?

A driver's license serves two purposes: permission to drive and identification.

To drive legally in North Carolina, you must have a valid (non-expired):

- NC driver's license, OR
- Driver's license from another state, OR
- Driver's license issued by the government of your home/resident country

Anyone whose legal residence is outside the state of North Carolina is considered a "non-resident" and can drive using their home country or home state license. This includes all F-1 Visa holders. Note that North Carolina **does not** recognize the International Driver's License (IDL).

If you plan on purchasing a car, you will need either a NC driver's license, state ID or Learner's Permit.

Application Process

For detailed information, please visit www.ncdot.org/dmv/driver_services/drivingpublic/applying.html

Bring the following with you to the DMV:

1. Proof of Identity. All items below are required

- Passport (with valid visa date)
- I-20
- I-94 card (printed from online or stapled inside your passport)

2. Proof of Residency.

Pick one of the following. (Original, not a photocopy)

- Utility bill or bank statement addressed to you at a street address (not a P.O. box)
- Your signed lease agreement for a local house/apartment

3. Proof of Automobile Liability Insurance.

Pick one of the following.

- Form DL123 issued by your auto insurance agent
- An original liability insurance policy binder

- An insurance card with: your name, policy number, issued and expiration date.

Once at the DMV you will need to:

1. Present the above documentation.
2. Pass the tests
 - Vision
 - Traffic signs
 - Knowledge of motor vehicle laws
 - Driving skills (on-road test in your car with a DMV examiner).

Note: To practice for the tests on traffic signs and motor vehicle laws, visit

- www.ncdot.gov/dmv/driver/license/test/
to download the manual and access a practice test.**
3. Pay the fee of \$4 per year for a new license by cash or check (NO DEBIT/CREDIT CARDS)

DMV Locations

South Durham Driver License Office

3821 South Roxboro Street, Suite 119
Beside Kroger
Telephone: 919-560-3379 or 919-560-3379
Monday-Friday 8:00-4:30

East Durham Driver License Office

101 South Miami Boulevard
Telephone: 919-560-6896
Monday-Friday 8:00-4:30

DATA Bus 7 goes to the South Durham Office

For other locations in Chapel Hill or Raleigh: www.ncdot.gov/dmv/contact/

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Learner's Permit, State ID Card and Restricted License

LEARNER'S PERMIT

1. Proof of Identity: Same as for NC Driver's License
2. Proof of Residency: Same as for NC Driver's License
3. Pass a computerized test of vision, traffic sign identification, and knowledge of motor vehicle laws. The driving test is not required.
4. Pay \$15 fee by cash or check

STATE IDENTIFICATION CARD

1. Proof of Identity: Same as for NC Driver's License
2. Proof of Residency: Same as for NC Driver's License
3. Pay \$10 fee by cash or check

RESTRICTED LICENSE

(For use with rental cars ONLY)
Same requirements as the full driver's license except does not require auto insurance. Can only be used with rental cars. When renting a car, you must purchase liability auto insurance from the rental car agency.
NOTE: If you are caught driving a private car with the restricted license, you will be subject to the same punishment as driving without a license.

Grace Period and OPT Extensions

Grace Period Extension (60 days for F-1)

Take your license to the DMV no fewer than 20 days before the expiration date on your I-20. Be sure to bring all three pages of your I-20.

Optional Practical Training (OPT) Extensions

OPT approved documents must be shown in order to extend the expiration date on your drivers license.

For spouses, they can go to the DMV without the approval documents IF the principal visa holder goes with them to the DMV. The Principal Visa Holder must also bring his/her EAD card.

Liability Insurance

Types of Automobile Insurance Coverage

Liability Insurance: Payment for losses you cause others while driving. This is usually the minimum amount of insurance you can buy. You must have liability insurance to get a driver's license in North Carolina. If you don't own a car, you must get "non-owner's liability insurance".

Collision Insurance: Payment for repair of your car when it is damaged in a collision, even if you are at fault.

Comprehensive Insurance: Payment for the repair of your car due to non-collision loss, such as theft, storm damage or vandalism.

Medical Payments Insurance: Payment for medical expenses for accident injuries to yourself or passengers.

To Purchase Required Liability Insurance you need:

1. Your Passport
2. Money to cover your 1st insurance payment. (Non-owner's liability insurance costs \$1,200 for 6 months)
3. Valid Driver's License from home or North Carolina Driver's License or Permit

See the handout entitled "Auto Insurance Companies" for a list of local Auto Insurance Agents.