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# REAL ID IN CALIFORNIA: What You Need to Know



In 2005, Congress passed the REAL ID Act, in response to the events of September 11, 2001, as a way to create more secure driver licenses and identification cards. The Act established new minimum security standards for driver license and identification card issuance and production, and requires stricter documentation to guarantee the identity of the person on the card.

Beginning October 1, 2020, the federal government will require all driver licenses and identification cards to be REAL ID compliant to be used as identification to board domestic flights, enter secure federal facilities and military bases.

Californians can choose to apply for a REAL ID driver license or identification card or a federal non-compliant card.

REAL ID federal compliant cards allow Californians to continue to use their driver license or identification card to board domestic flights and enter secure federal buildings and military bases. The federal non-compliant option does not.

This brochure contains information to help expedite the application process by providing information about California's REAL ID driver license and identification card program, how to apply and which documents are required to complete the application process, as well as other options available.

For more information, please contact my district office.

## WHAT IS THE REAL ID?

On January 22, 2018, California began offering REAL ID driver licenses and identification cards that follow the security measures of the federal REAL ID Act. The new REAL ID driver license and identification card is identified by the bear and star located in the upper right corner of the card.

If you do not apply for a REAL ID driver license or identification card at a DMV field office, you will receive a federal non-compliant card that still provides all the benefits of the REAL ID, except it cannot be used to board domestic flights or enter military bases and secure federal facilities beginning October 1, 2020. This non-federal compliant card contains the phrase "Federal Limits Apply" in the upper right corner.

### You do not need a REAL ID to:

- Drive
- Apply for or receive federal benefits
- Enter a federal building that does not require identification
- Visit a hospital
- Participate in law enforcement proceedings

If you have a valid U.S. passport or U.S. passport card, a military ID or another form of federally-approved identification, you may use one of these in place of a REAL ID.

*Important: Check with the federal facility/military base before you visit to verify their identification requirements.*



## WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE REAL ID IN CALIFORNIA?

All U.S. citizens and all legal residents of the United States can apply for a REAL ID driver license or identification card. Minors under the age of 18 are also eligible for a REAL ID, but are not required to have a REAL ID to fly.

## HOW DO I GET A REAL ID DRIVER LICENSE OR IDENTIFICATION CARD?

### To apply for your REAL ID card:

- Visit your local DMV field office.
- Appointments are recommended but not mandatory.
- Provide one proof of your identity (*Ex: certified birth certificate, U.S. passport, etc.*).
- Present one proof of your Social Security number.
- Show two proofs of California residency (*Ex: utility bill, bank statement, etc.*).
- Additional document(s) are required if the name on your identity document is different than your current legal name. (*Ex: marriage certificate, divorce decree, etc.*).

*Only original documents or certified copies will be accepted.*



## VETERAN DESIGNATION

Effective November 12, 2015, eligible veterans have the opportunity to add the word "VETERAN" to the front of their driver license or identification card to indicate that they have served in the U.S. Military.

For veterans who would like to get this Veteran Designation on their REAL ID, please follow the steps below:

- Bring your DD-214 to a local County Veteran Service Office to obtain a Veteran Status Verification Form.
- Bring your Veteran Status Verification Form to the DMV and include this with the documents required for your REAL ID.
- There will be an additional \$5 fee for a Veteran Designation on your driver license or identification card.

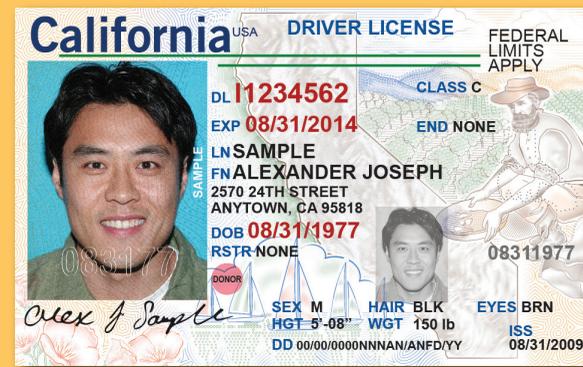


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE DMV

## ASSEMBLY BILL (AB) 60

With the passage of AB 60, California joined many other states to allow undocumented immigrants to apply for a driver license if they can show accepted proof of identification and residency in the state. By law, no one may discriminate against a holder of an AB 60 license, or use this license to attempt to question the holder's citizenship or immigration status.

Undocumented immigrants who are California residents will receive the federal non-compliant driver license.

### This federal non-compliant driver license:

- May **NOT** be used for identification purposes.
- **MAY** be used to drive anywhere throughout the state of California.
- May **NOT** be used against the license holder to determine their immigration status or citizenship, or detain them in any way for reasons other than valid traffic violations.
- May **NOT** be used to purchase firearms and ammunition without satisfactory proof of legal presence.

## F.A.Q.s

### 1. Is a REAL ID mandatory?

A REAL ID driver license or identification card is not mandatory. The alternative is a federal non-compliant driver license or identification card option.

### 2. Why would I get a REAL ID if it is not required?

Without a REAL ID, you will need to show another form of identification to board domestic flights or enter secure federal facilities or military bases. Also, military bases require two forms of identification without a REAL ID.

### 3. How much does the REAL ID cost?

The cost of a REAL ID is the same as a federal non-compliant driver license or identification card.

### 4. Do I need to get a REAL ID driver license or identification card right away?

No, but you may want to plan on applying well before the October 1, 2020 enforcement date. Valid California driver licenses and identification cards will be accepted to board domestic flights and enter secure federal buildings until October 1, 2020. However, some military bases have been enforcing the new security requirements since January 22, 2018.

## RESOURCES

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

[www.DHS.gov/real-id](http://www.DHS.gov/real-id)

California DMV – REAL ID

[www.REALID.dmv.ca.gov](http://www.REALID.dmv.ca.gov)

Transportation Security Administration (TSA)

[www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov)