

**GUIDELINES
For
NEW RESIDENTS**

**Process to obtain a Delaware Driver License
and/or Identification Card**

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:

Every person desiring to operate a motor vehicle shall, within 60 days after taking up residence in this State, apply to the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to obtain the proper license.

You must turn in your previously issued out-of-state driver license and/or identification card, provide proof of legal presence such as a U.S. birth certificate or passport, or immigration documents, proof of social security number, and if applicable, proof of legal name change(s) and two proofs of DE residency. For a complete list of acceptable documents, please visit our website at dmv.de.gov under “general requirements” to ensure you have the appropriate documents prior to visiting the DMV. If you do not have your valid out-of-state license you will need to provide a certified copy of your driving record.

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

If you are under 18 years of age, you must have completed a course in driver education. The Department of Education must ensure out-of-state courses are equivalent to Delaware driver education requirements. For approval, send the necessary documentation to Department of Education, Attn: Mr. Michael Wagner, Education Associate Driver Education, Collette Education Resource Center, 35 Commerce Way, Suite 1, Dover, Delaware 19904, or fax to 302.739.1770 (Telephone 302.857.3320). For more information visit their website at www.doc.k12.de.us.

If the minor applicant was issued an out-of-state license for over 12 months, he/she may be eligible for a Class D operator’s license after meeting all testing requirements. The application must be signed by an approved sponsor. For a list of approved sponsorship, view the requirements for the Graduated Driver License (GDL) program on the DMV website at dmv.de.gov

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

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

The fee for a Class D driver license is \$50.00. It is valid for 8 years (with the exception of immigration length of stay, Hazmat and Driving Privilege Card). Visit the DMV website at dmv.de.gov for a complete list of fees.

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 (DMV) within 30 days.

LIABILITY INSURANCE, FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND PENALTY

Step 1

The DMV 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 DMV does **not** accept photocopies, photos, still pictures, or computer printouts of insurance cards. An electronic insurance card using the insurance company's mobile application from a phone, tablet or laptop is acceptable.
- Faxed copies are only accepted if faxed from the insurance company directly to the DMV.
- A valid insurance policy.
- A written binder within 30 days of issuance 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 card presented **must be VALID** the day of service, or it **will NOT** be accepted. Insurance companies are required to issue a new ID card at least once a year.

Owners who cancel their insurance for any reason **must** surrender their valid tag off of their vehicle to the DMV. Failure to surrender the tag **prior** to the cancellation of insurance will result in fines.

The DMV will perform random audits to ensure all active registrations have valid insurance. 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 of all owners who fail to respond to the notifications.

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 DMV's inspection lanes. All vehicles with an out-of-state title are required to go through inspection. The model year and the registered weight of the vehicle will determine whether a full inspection or simply a VIN verification is required. All vehicles, regardless of model year and weight, will receive a safety inspection.

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 at inspection.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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 in working order
- 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, vehicles that have tint to the immediate right or left of the driver must have an approved valid tint waiver.
- 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.

POOR CONDITION OF ANY EQUIPMENT ITEMS MAY BE CAUSE FOR REJECTION

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

TITLE

Step 3

The third step in obtaining a vehicle title and registration is to apply at one of the four offices. You will have to provide the following:

- If the vehicle is coming from a state which issues certificates of title, it must be surrendered to the DMV at the time of application.
- If there is a lien or encumbrance against the vehicle, the DMV will provide a form (MV-35) for you to send to the lien holder in order to obtain the certificate of title. The MV-35 can be picked up at any DMV location.
- Applications for Certificate of Title (MV-212) and the inspection report (MV-210), which are issued by an inspection Associate when you take your vehicle through inspection.
 - The application for title (MV-212) must be signed by all owners of the vehicle, by someone with power of attorney to sign for such owner(s), or by an officer of the company if vehicle is titled in a business name. Power-of-attorney(s) must be original and notarized, copies are not accepted.

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

Whenever a motor vehicle is transferred into Delaware from another state and a title and a registration is sought, the owner must pay a vehicle document fee of 5.25% of the value of the vehicle (but not less than \$8.00).

**** Exception:** if 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 provides proof the vehicle was titled and registered within ninety (90) days prior to registering in Delaware.

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

The registration fees are:

- \$40.00 per year for passenger vehicles.
- 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.

Current model year passenger vehicles being titled for the first time at a registered weight of 10,000 pounds or less can be registered for up to seven years.

Passenger vehicles seven model years or older, qualify to be registered for one or two years after passing a vehicle inspection.

Beginning October 1, 2025, residents owning an Alternative Fuel Vehicle will be assessed an additional registration fee. The additional fee is intended to offset declining motor fuel tax revenues and cover increased costs associated with these vehicles, which tend to be heavier and have a greater impact on road infrastructure.

- **ELECTRIC VEHICLE –**
 - \$110 per year if the GVWR is 6,000 lbs. or less.
 - \$150 per year if the GVWR is over 6,000 -10,000 lbs.
 - \$260 per year if the GVWR is over 10,000 - 26,000 lbs.
 - \$900 per year if the GVWR is in excess of 26,000 lbs.
- **PLUG-IN ELECTRIC VEHICLES**
 - \$85 per year if the GVWR is 6,000 lbs. or less.
 - \$115 per year if the GVWR is over 6,000 - 10,000 lbs.
 - \$200 per year if the GVWR is over 10,000 - 26,000 lbs.
 - \$600 per year if the GVWR is in excess of 26,000 lbs.
- **NON-PLUG-IN ELECTRIC (hybrids)**
 - \$60 per year if the GVWR is 6,000 lbs. or less.
 - \$80 per year if the GVWR is over 6,000 - 10,000 lbs.
 - \$140 per year if the GVWR is over 10,000 - 26,000 lbs.
 - \$480 per year if the GVWR is in excess of 26,000 lbs.
- **OTHER FUEL VEHICLES (Hydrogen, Natural Gas, etc)**
 - \$110 per year if the GVWR is 6,000 lbs. or less.
 - \$150 per year if the GVWR is over 6,000 lbs. - 10,000 pounds.
 - \$260 per year if the GVWR is over 10,000 - 26,000 lbs.
 - \$900 per year if the GVWR is in excess of 26,000 lbs.

Upon submission of all necessary documents, acceptance, and payment of the required fees, a certificate of title, registration card, and tag will be issued. If there is a lien against the vehicle, the title will be 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 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 any time 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 longer 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.**

**** Note:** Trailers weighing 4,000 pounds or less do not require re-inspection prior to renewal of the registration.

RESPONSIBILITY OF OWNER

The registration card and proof of liability insurance must accompany the motor vehicle whenever it is operated. The tag 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 4:00 p.m.

Wednesday

11:00 am to 6:30 p.m.

- ❖ When applying for a driver license, title or vehicle registration, the DMV suggests appearing at least one hour before closing to allow adequate time for processing.