



North Carolina Driver's License, Learner's Permit, or State ID



<http://www.ncdot.org/dmv/driver>

In the USA, a driving 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 U.S. 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 on their home country or home state license.) *North Carolina does not recognize the International Driving License (IDL).* Remember to check in with Duke Visa Services Office before going to the DMV office. If you are on an F-1 or J-1 visa, your SEVIS information must be *active* before applying. **Wait for 3 days after registering with Duke Visa Services before going to DMV office to get a Learner's Permit, State ID, or Driver's License.**

DMV LOCATIONS	
South Durham Driver License Office 3825 South Roxboro Street (at MLK Parkway) Suite 119 Tel. 919.560.3378 or 919.560.3379 Open: Monday to Friday, 8am – 6pm Saturdays 8am – 12 noon	East Durham Driver License Office 101 South Miami Boulevard Tel. 919.560-6896 Open: Monday to Friday, 8am – 5pm
*** For Chapel Hill or other cities, go to: http://www.ncdot.org/dmv/office_locations/ ***	

PREPARING FOR THE TEST

Hard copies of driving **handbooks** (rules of the road) are available at the International House or can be found online in English and Spanish on North Carolina's DMV website at <http://www.ncdot.gov/dmv/driver/>. Tests can be taken in English, Chinese, Japanese, Korean or Spanish.

1) REQUIREMENTS FOR A NORTH CAROLINA DRIVER'S LICENSE

1. **Proof of Identity** All items listed below are required.
 - valid Passport
 - **I-20** for F-1 & F-2 visa holders – **DS-2019** for J-1 & J-2 visa holders – **I-797** for H-1 & H-4 visa holders
 - Social Security Number card (if you have one) or ITIN (if you have one). If you don't have either SSN or ITIN, this is okay!
 - I-94 card. Visit <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/i-94-instructions> to print off your electronic arrival/departure record as evidence of your I-94.
2. **Proof of Residency** (pick one—must be the **original**, not a photocopy)
 - Utility bill or bank statement addressed to you at a street address (not a box number) or your signed lease agreement.
 - Undergraduates living in dorms must go to the Housing Assignments Office at: 218-C Alexander Avenue to obtain a letter stating your Duke address (Tel. 684.4304 or email: housing@studentaffairs.duke.edu).
3. **Proof of Automobile Liability Insurance**
 - An original liability insurance policy binder.
 - Your auto insurance card with: your name, policy number, issue and expiration date.
4. **Passing the tests:** For an original driver's license, you will be tested on
 - your vision
 - traffic and regulatory signs (see **handbook**)
 - knowledge of motor vehicle laws (see **handbook**)
 - driving skills (road test in your car with a DMV examiner)
5. **Pay** the fee of \$4 per year for a new license by **cash or check** (NO DEBIT/CREDIT CARDS) – maximum number of years is 8.

2) REQUIREMENTS FOR A LEARNER'S PERMIT

1. **Proof of Identity:** same as for NC Driver's License – see above
2. **Proof of Residency:** same as for NC Driver's License – see above
3. **Pass** a test of vision, traffic sign identification (see **handbook**), and knowledge of motor vehicle laws (see **handbook**). The driving test is not required.
4. **Pay** the fee of \$15 by cash or check (NO DEBIT/CREDIT CARDS).

3) REQUIREMENTS FOR A STATE IDENTIFICATION CARD (non-operator identification card)

1. **Proof of Identity:** Same as for NC Driver's License – see above
2. **Proof of Residency** Same as for NC Driver's License – see above
3. **Pay** the fee of \$10 by cash or check (NO DEBIT/CREDIT CARDS)

4) **REQUIREMENTS FOR A RESTRICTED OR FLEET LICENSE (License for use with rental cars ONLY)**

All requirements are the same as the full Driver's License (see above under 1)—except: The restricted or fleet license does not require auto insurance. **But can only be used with** rental cars. If you use a rental 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. If you get a restricted license, you can remove the restriction at the DMV by paying \$10 and providing proof of automobile liability insurance (owner's or non-owner's).

EFFECTIVE September 2009: All applications for State ID, Learner's Permit or Driver's License are being sent to the Raleigh Department of Motor Vehicles office for Homeland Security verification on the day you apply. This means that there is a 7 – 10 day delay in getting your card (which will be mailed to your home address in Durham/Chapel Hill). If you do not receive your State ID or License within 14 days of applying, you may call 919.861.3555 for assistance.

PLEASE NOTE: After you apply, your ID or License will be mailed to your home address. It will arrive in a plain, white envelope with the words "Mail Service Center" in the left-hand corner. Any people mistake this letter for junk mail, so look carefully at all mail if you are waiting for your ID or license.

EFFECTIVE September 2007: You must have a North Carolina State ID Card, a North Carolina Learner's Permit or North Carolina Driver's License before you can register your car in the State of North Carolina. The DMV offices listed above are where you can obtain these items. Please refer to our handout *Registering your Car in North Carolina*.

DEPENDENTS of J-2, F-2, and H-4 visa holders: It is taking around 20 days to receive State ID, Learner's Permit, or Driver's License.

Getting to the DMV

I-House organizes trips once a month to the DMV in the I-House van. To find out when the next trip is, watch out for emails on our listserv or go to: <https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/ihouse/ihouse-services>.

Take GoDurham (DATA) Bus to the Roxboro Road Department of Motor Vehicles

To get to the DMV, walk to ERWIN Road. You can wait at the bus stop in front of Duke Hospital and take GoDurham (DATA) Bus #6 or Bus #11 to Durham Bus Station. Otherwise, you can take the Bull City Connector bus to Durham Bus Station. At Durham station, get on GoDurham Bus #7 (Fayetteville Road & South Point Mall). Tell the bus driver that you are going to the Roxboro Road DMV and that you need to get off at Walmart at MLK Parkway. When the driver lets you off at this bus stop, cross the street over to the Shopping Plaza. Around the corner you will see KROGER grocery store. The DMV is to the right of the Kroger grocery store. You can ask someone if you don't see it as it doesn't really stand out.

Short-Term Auto Insurance Policy

You may purchase auto liability insurance (Non-owner's Car Insurance) for six months without a car. See the handout *Auto Insurance* to obtain a list of Auto Insurance companies. A Non-Owners Auto Insurance Policy costs around \$1200 for six months. One must pay the entire amount upfront. Not all Auto Insurance Companies offer this, so call around to find out who does. Ask for your options and price.

Driving School

Driving schools provide classes and practice for inexperienced drivers. For a fee, they will also provide a car if you want to get your North Carolina Driver's License. See the handout *Driving Lessons* for more information.

Extending your NC License to include your grace period (60 days for F-1; 30 days for J-1)

First, go to Duke Visa Services to obtain the DMV letter. Then, you must take your license to the DMV no fewer than 20 days before your expiration date. For example, if your NC Driver's License expiration date is July 30th, you must go to the DMV by July 10th to ask for an extension to cover you during your grace period (if you are staying in USA). Be sure to bring all three pages of your I-20 or your DS-2019, passport, and I-94 when you go to DMV.

Extending your NC License for Optional Practical Training (OPT)

OPT approved documents (i.e. Employment Authorization Document (EAD), new I-20 showing OPT approval dates) must be shown in order to extend the expiration date on your NC Driver's License. For spouses, they can come to the DMV without the approval documents **IF** they bring the principal visa holder with them to the DMV. The Principal Visa Holder must also bring his/her EAD.

Seat Belt Laws (<http://www.buckleupnc.org/occupant-restraint-laws/child-passenger-safety-law-summary/>)

According to the NC Seat Belt Law, all drivers and passengers, in the rear seat as well as in the front seat, must wear their seat belts.

Children less than age 16 are covered by the NC Child Passenger Safety Law. The **NC Child Passenger Safety Law** requires*

- children **under 16** to be properly restrained in all vehicle seating positions,
- children **under 8 OR below 80 pounds (regardless of age)** to be restrained in a rear-facing car seat installed in the rear seat. (Only children **above 40 pounds** can be restrained in a booster seat installed in the rear seat.),
- **all children in booster seats** to wear both a lap and shoulder belt,
- children of **8 or older OR above 80 pounds (regardless of age)** to be restrained by a properly fitted seat belt in the rear seat,
- to seat only children **12 or older** in the front seat (although the rear seat is recommended).

You will be ticketed and receive points on your driver's license if you are found without the proper restraints.

*For a comprehensive overview of all regulations see this pdf: http://www.buckleupnc.org/resources/crlaw_qa.pdf. As regulations are subject to change, make sure to familiarize yourself with the current regulations. International House is not liable for the information provided in this handout.