



Applying for a Driver's License or State Identification Card

Do I need a Pennsylvania (PA) Driver's License?

- If you plan to drive in Pennsylvania, you need a non-commercial driver's license from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) www.dmv.state.pa.us.
- If you currently have a valid foreign driver's license, you can use that to drive legally for up to one year after your most recent date of entry into the United States. If you plan to continue driving after one year, you must apply for a PA driver's license. The year will start over if you re-enter the country.
- An international driving permit (IDP) in conjunction with a valid foreign driver's license is recommended, but not required. You can only obtain an IDP in your home country.
- If you currently have a driver's license from another U.S. state or Canada (valid within the last 6 months), you must apply to transfer your license to PA within 60 days of moving to the state. A driver's exam is not required for a transfer license, but you must pass the vision screening.
- If you live in another state with a valid driver's license and license plate for that state and commute to Philadelphia, you do not need a PA driver's license.
- If you plan to buy or lease a car in the state of Pennsylvania, you must have a PA driver's license.

Who is eligible for a PA Driver's License or PA State Identification Card?

Students living in Pennsylvania who hold F-1 or J-1 status and their F-2 and J-2 dependents (age 16 or older) who have at least six months remaining on their current I-20 or DS-2019 can apply for either a driver's license or a state ID. If you hold another immigration status, please check with PennDOT's website to find your eligibility: <http://www.dmv.pa.gov/Driver-Services/Driver-Information/License-Types/Pages/default.aspx>

When can I apply for a PA Driver's License?

You must wait until you are registered in SEVIS to apply for a driver's license. Please check in at ISS after you arrive in the U.S. You are required by law to present your F1 visa and passport entry stamp as well as provide your local address as soon as possible. Once ISS has this information, we can register you in SEVIS. You will be able to apply for a driver's license or state ID 24-48 hours later.

How do I apply for a PA Driver's License?

Most foreign license holders* need to apply for and obtain a **Learner's Permit** before receiving a driver's license. You need to pass a computer-based exam that tests your knowledge of Pennsylvania's driving laws at a PennDOT Photo and Exam Center to get a Learner's Permit. You should study the Pennsylvania Driver's Manual for your exam, which is available at ISS or online at:

[http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Public/DVSPubsForms/BDL/BDL Manuals/Manuals/PA Drivers Manual By Chapter/English/PUB 95.pdf](http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Public/DVSPubsForms/BDL/BDL%20Manuals/Manuals/PA%20Drivers%20Manual%20By%20Chapter/English/PUB%2095.pdf)

Note: The Learner's Permit Application form includes a **mandatory physician's exam**, which the Student Health Center can complete. Call the Student Health Center at 610-660-1175 or email health@sju.edu to schedule an appointment. It will cost **\$20** cash or check for SJU health insurance holders or **\$50** for non-SJU health insurance holders. You will take the vision screening at the Photo and Exam Center when you apply.

*Citizens of **France, Germany, and Canada** can transfer their valid driver's licenses *without* a written test or driving exam. However, they must still pass the vision screening.

What is a PA State Identification Card? Why would I need one?

A Pennsylvania State ID is a form of photo identification. It contains the same information as a driver's license without giving you permission to drive. You can use it for official identification purposes while you are living in the U.S. instead of using your passport. ****ISS recommends that you do not carry your passport with you on a regular basis. If you do not intend to drive while you are here, you should obtain a PA State ID Card.***

Application Checklist

Bring the following original documents to a PennDOT Photo and Exam Center:

- Your valid passport and student visa
- Your I-94 admission number; Complete the form at www.cbp.gov/i94 and print your record
- F-1 students:** Your current I-20 Form; *Must be valid for at least six months into the future
J-1 students: Your current DS-2019 Form; *Must be valid for at least six months into the future
- Your Social Security Card *or* a letter of social security ineligibility from the Social Security Administration Office (open Monday - Friday, 9am - 3:30pm) located at:
2 Penn Center, Suite 2000B
1500 JFK Blvd., 20th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102
- Two proofs of PA residency that show the same address you included on your application. They will not accept cards or personal letters. It should be official documents, such as:
 - a. a current utility bill (water, gas, electric, cable, phone, internet, etc.) *
 - b. your apartment lease agreement or mortgage documents
 - c. SJU tuition bill
 - d. a bank statement
 - e. W-2 form or tax records

**Note: If you live with someone and do not have any bills in your name, you still need two proofs of residency. One form of proof can be the person you live with and his/her current driver's license or photo ID. Please bring this person with you to your appointment. You will also need to provide official mail (bank statement, magazine subscription, etc.) that has your name and current address on it. The address must match the address of the person you live with.*

- Learner's Permit:** Non-Commercial Learner's Permit Application (**Form DL-180**) completed by you and a health care provider <http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Public/DVSPubsForms/BDL/BDL Form/DL-180.pdf>
- State ID Card:** Application for PA Photo Identification Card (**Form DL-54A**) *You do not need to take any exams or see a doctor: <http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Public/DVSPubsForms/BDL/BDL Form/DL-54A.pdf>
- A check or money order for the correct fee (**\$34.50** for the Learner's Permit or **\$27.50** for the State ID) made out to PennDOT – Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. They do not accept cash or credit/debit cards.

I have my Learner's Permit and I am ready to take the road test. What's next?

Once you receive a Learner's Permit, you can schedule an appointment for the **road test** to demonstrate your driving skills on the road. You will need to bring the following items for the road test:

- A valid Learner's Permit (if it's expired, you do not need to retake the test; results are valid for 3 years)
- A valid registration for the car you plan to use
- Proof of car insurance
- A properly functioning car (be sure that everything works, e.g. lights, turn signals, seatbelts, etc.)
- The car's owner. He/she must accompany you to the appointment with a valid driver's license. If you have a valid foreign license and a car that is registered in your name, you can go alone.

How can I renew my PA Driver's License?

You can visit a PennDOT Photo and Exam Center to renew your license as early as six months before your card expires or any time after that. If you have less than 6 months but more than 30 days left on your I-20 or DS-2019, PennDOT will grant an extension of your license up to the end of your program plus the 60-day grace period. You must provide all of the documents listed in the application checklist on page two, but complete a license renewal form (**Form DL-143**) instead. You do not need to retake the exams. You can find the form online at <http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Public/DVSPubsForms/BDL/BDL Form/DL-143.pdf>

Where can I find a PA Driver's License or PA State Identification Center?

Go to the link below and enter your zip code and the service you are looking for. The site will list the nearest offices and their hours: <https://www.dot33.state.pa.us/locator/locator.jsp-top?20170117102212498=20170117102212498>

Below are the two PennDOT locations closest to Saint Joseph's University:

801 Arch Street, Philadelphia PA 19107

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Photo License Center	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-6:00pm	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-4:15pm
Driver License Center	Closed	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-4:15pm

7121 Ogontz Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19138

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Photo License Center	Closed	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-6:00pm	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-4:15pm
Driver License Center	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-4:15pm	8:30am-4:15pm

What else do I need to know?

State law says that you *must* have car insurance to drive in Pennsylvania, whether you are driving with a state license or an international permit. Having insurance makes sure that if you are at fault in a car accident, the costs of repairing the other driver's damages or paying their medical bills are covered. Additionally, you can

purchase insurance to cover damages to your car and your own medical expenses. There are many companies that provide insurance. ISS does not endorse or recommend any company, but several well-known companies include: Allstate, Liberty Mutual, Progressive, State Farm, Geico, and AIG among many others. You can find information online. You should contact a local insurance agent for a price quote and to discuss coverage options.

If you encounter any problems while trying to obtain your PA Driver's License or State ID, please gather as many details as possible and contact the International Student Services staff at ISS for further assistance.

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