



**EXPERIENCED  
DRIVERS IN  
Delaware**  
& Laws You Need to Know

Are You Federally Compliant?



# GOLD STAR?



YES YOU  
ARE!

**REAL ID** is an optional program which upgrades the security of your Driver License or Identification Card credential. After **May 7, 2025**, anyone with a non-compliant credential will need to provide additional documentation to board a domestic flight, access a secure federal building, and more.

## The difference between credentials:

	Federal ID	Standard ID
Driving Privileges (DL Only)		
General Identification		
Boarding a Domestic (U.S.) Flight after <b>May 7, 2025</b>		
Entering a Secure Federal Facility		

Questions? Visit [secureid.dmv.de.gov](https://secureid.dmv.de.gov)

or call (302) 744-2500

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# WELCOME

from the Director

Dear Delaware Driver,

Delaware wants to do everything possible to ensure all drivers in The First State have the necessary tools and information to operate their vehicles safely on Delaware's roadways.

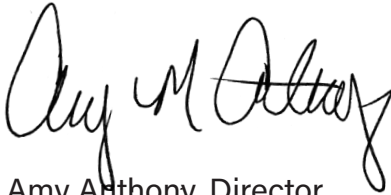
Delaware has already taken steps to improve the driving environment for experienced Delaware drivers. Some of these steps include:

- Improving street signage with larger overhead signs where possible, particularly at critical signalized intersections.
- Significantly increasing the size of critical signs such as STOP, YIELD, and ONE-WAY, as part of all DelDOT projects.
- Installing roundabouts, which statistics show reduce fatal accidents by 70-90%. There are currently 14 roundabouts on state-maintained roadways.
- Replacing red and green incandescent traffic signals with LED modules, which greatly increase visibility. 99% of traffic signals are now LED.
- Installing countdown pedestrian traffic signals. Over 350 have been installed at intersections statewide, and are being included in all new and retrofit signal designs.
- Installing audible pedestrian signals by request, as funds allow.

The Division of Motor Vehicles and our partners have created this informational handbook to show our commitment to you, Delaware's experienced drivers. Whether you are still driving regularly, or just drive occasionally, we hope you will find the following information helpful in making your driving experience easier, safer and more enjoyable.

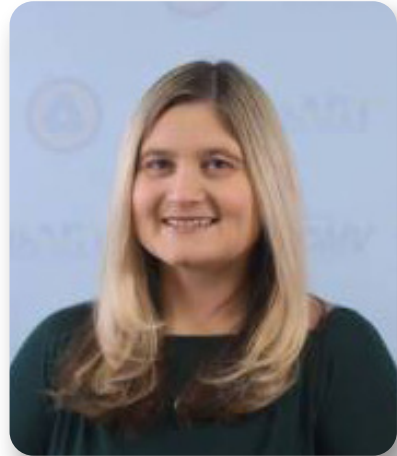
If you have any questions regarding the information in this handbook, please visit the Delaware Experienced Driver website at [seniordriver.dmv.de.gov](http://seniordriver.dmv.de.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy M. Anthony". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Amy Anthony, Director

Division of Motor Vehicles

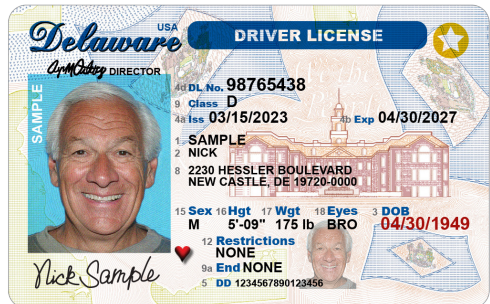


# Driver License Information

If you live in Delaware and drive on the roadways, you must have a valid Delaware driver license. To get your license, you need to apply in person at any of the offices of the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Addresses for these offices are listed on the back cover.

In August 2018, the Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) began issuing new secure driver licenses and identification cards to our customers, with an optional Medical Indicator (located on the card front to the direct right of driver's signature, with a description of the condition(s) on the reverse). The Medical Indicator is a voluntary feature which can quickly alert law enforcement officers or first responders to vital information in an emergency. Those wishing to participate in this program may obtain and complete a form specifying the condition(s) and allowing the DMV to notate the condition(s) on the back of the card.

New rules and changes affect what you need to bring to the DMV when applying for or renewing your driver license or identification card. Please take a moment to visit our website [www.secureid.dmv.de.gov](http://www.secureid.dmv.de.gov)



and read about the new procedures to find out what documents you will need to collect and bring with you so you can secure your new driver license or identification card.

When it comes time to renew your driver license, you can do so at any DMV facility or online (in some situations). Driver licenses will be issued for eight years. Renewal reminders are mailed to you approximately 60 days before the expiration date (your birthday). You must turn in your previously issued driver license, fill out an application, and pass an eye screening. A knowledge and road exam may be given. If you moved, you may be required to show proof of residency. You may also be asked to provide a proof of social security number and/or proof of legal presence at renewal. You may renew at any time during the six months prior to the expiration date.

# Transfer of Licenses from Other Jurisdictions

**Drivers from other states** – If you move into Delaware from another state, you must apply for a Delaware driver license within 60 days after becoming a resident. You must turn in your previously issued out-of-state driver license or have a current certified copy of your driving record, provide proof of legal presence (such as proof of Social Security number) and two proofs of Delaware residency. Applicants will be required to fill out an application and pass an eye screening. Written and road tests may be given, but they are normally waived if your license is valid. Suspended and revoked licenses cannot be transferred until all outstanding withdrawal actions are cleared.

**Drivers from other countries and U.S. territories** – Non-resident drivers over the age of 16 years who have a valid driver license issued by their home country or U.S. territory may operate motor vehicles on the highways of this State when their license is in their immediate possession. Sixty days after the non-resident driver becomes a Delaware resident, he/she must apply for a Delaware driver license. Drivers from other countries may retain their foreign licenses. All drivers licensed in other countries and U.S. territories must pass both the written and road exams. Exception: Delaware has reciprocity agreements with Germany, Taiwan (Republic of China) and France thereby exempting these drivers from the written and road exams for a Class D license only. Endorsements are not included in reciprocity agreements. In addition to testing, applicants must provide proof of legal presence in the U.S., proof of Social Security number, and two proofs of Delaware residency.

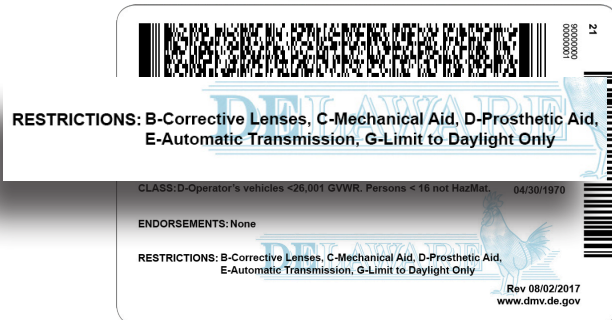
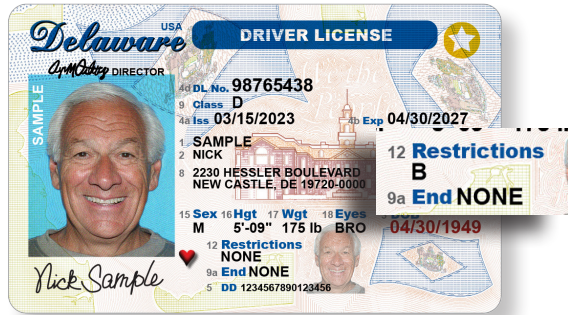
Please go to [www.secureid.dmv.de.gov](http://www.secureid.dmv.de.gov) and click “Document Guide” for an interactive tool to help in determining what documentation you will need.



# Restricted License

If you have a disability which would interfere with driving a motor vehicle safely, it may be possible through use of special equipment to compensate for your disability. Special examinations are required by the Division in such cases, and a license with restrictions may be issued to you allowing you to drive only when you, your vehicle, or both are fitted with the specified equipment.

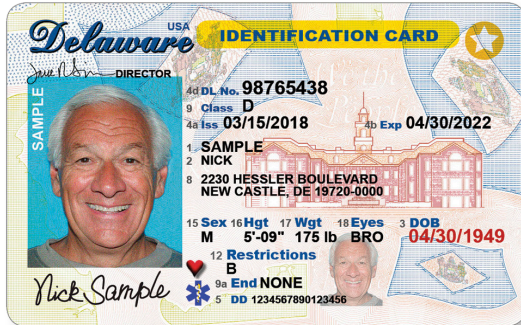
A common example of a restricted license is one which requires you to wear glasses when driving or restricts you to daylight driving only. If you drive without the required equipment you are subject to arrest and your driver license may be suspended.





# Identification Card

If you do not drive but need an identification card (ID), you can get one at any DMV location. You must be a Delaware resident and bring the required documents with you. To find out what you will need, go to [secureid.dmv.de.gov](https://secureid.dmv.de.gov) and click “document guide” for an interactive tool to help in determining what documentation you will need.



*If you are already federally compliant, your Driver License or ID card will display a Gold Star in the top right corner.*

## REAL ID and Federal Compliance

REAL ID, or federally compliant identification, is a recommended program which upgrades the security of your Driver License or ID card. After October 1, 2021, anyone with a non-compliant Driver License or ID credential will need to provide additional documentation (such as a valid passport) to board a domestic flight, access a secure federal building, and more.

To become federally compliant, residents must present DMV with additional proof of identity for a one-time confirmation. Some of this documentation includes a birth certificate, Social Security card, etc. Use the Document Selector Guide online at [secureid.dmv.de.gov](https://secureid.dmv.de.gov) before visiting your local DMV.

REAL ID is an optional program, but strongly recommended to save time and money when identifying oneself in 2021 and beyond.

# Titling/Registering Your Vehicle

New residents must title/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 within 30 days. You can find more detailed information on titling/registering a vehicle at [www.dmv.de.gov](http://www.dmv.de.gov), then click on “vehicle services.”

For registration renewals, the DMV emails or sends notices to each vehicle owner that has supplied us with an email address or phone number. Notices are sent 90, 60, and 30 days before your vehicle’s registration expiration date. We no longer send registration renewal notifications by mail. You may register for the email/phone reminder program on our website.

## Vehicle Inspection

Before your vehicle can be titled/registered in Delaware, you need to have it inspected at one of the DMV office locations. You will need to bring a certificate of title and proof of insurance. There is no charge for an inspection for Delaware residents. You will need to have your vehicle re-inspected periodically.

During the inspection, a technician will examine the key components of a safe vehicle and will not require you to do anything that you would not normally do while driving. You should check the list on the next page before taking your vehicle to get it inspected. It may save you a return trip for re-inspection. This list does not include all the items inspected, but those which commonly fail inspection.

Vehicles in unsafe condition, lacking required equipment or not in proper repair or adjustment will fail. Before a title,

registration card or license plate is issued, the failed items must be corrected and the vehicle re-inspected and passed. Vehicle owners whose registration is about to expire may be eligible for a temporary tag if the failure item is not safety-related.

## Items that Commonly Fail Inspection

- All lights must be clean, in working order and properly aimed. This includes brake lights, turn signals, license plate light, parking lights and headlights.
- Brakes must stop the vehicle within required distances. A performance brake test is given to all vehicles presented for inspection.
- Mirrors must be clean and unbroken.
- Windshield wipers must be fully operational (the rubber blades must be in good condition).
- Hood and trunk latches must work and keep 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.
- Door handles 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 visible gasoline, oil, or coolant leaks.
- Seat belts must be worn.

- No tinting or sun screening device may be applied to the front windshield or to the front side windows. Vehicles that have tint to the immediate left or right of the driver must have an approved valid tint waiver.
- Passenger cars, 1968 and newer, and trucks 1970 and newer, will be tested for exhaust emissions. Most vehicles 1975 and newer will be tested for fuel vapor leakage. 1996 and newer vehicles will be tested using the Onboard Diagnostic Test (DBDII).
- Windshield must have no cracks which interfere with vision (within wiper range); holes, breaks or cracks over 5 inches on any window are mandatory failure items; minimum height of visibility in windshield is 10 inches.
- A new vehicle may be registered for seven years without an inspection. Vehicles seven years old and older can receive one year of registration without inspection; all others receive a 2, 3, or 4 years of registration based on model year. Vehicles that have never been titled in Delaware must go through inspection. The vehicle may receive a VIN verification or a full inspection depending on model year.
- A late fee (\$20) is assessed for renewal after vehicle registration expiration.

## Handicap Plates and Placards

If you are a handicapped driver, you can apply for either a license plate or a placard that will allow you to park closer to buildings. Disabled plates/placards are valid for three years. To obtain a handicap plate/placard for the first time, you must meet one of the following requirements:

- Cannot walk 200 feet without stopping to rest
- Cannot walk safely without using a brace, cane, crutch, another person, prosthetic device, wheelchair or other assistive device

- Is restricted by lung disease to such an extent that the applicant's or household member's forced (respiratory) expiratory volume, one second, when measured by spirometry, is less than one liter or the arterial oxygen tension is less than sixty mm/hg at room air or rest; or
- Use portable oxygen
- Have a cardiac condition classified as Class III or Class IV according to the standards set by the American Heart Association
- Are severely limited in your ability to walk due to an arthritic, neurological or orthopedic condition
- NOTE: Applicants 85 years of age and older need only show proof of their age to obtain a placard.



To apply for a handicap plate/placard, you must fill out an application form and have it signed by your physician. To renew a handicap plate/placard, complete and submit a self-certification form stating that you continue to need a handicap plate/placard because of the disability for which they were previously issued. Your physician's signature is not needed for a renewal.

## Go Online to Access More Resources!

At [www.dmv.de.gov](http://www.dmv.de.gov), you can access our forms, manuals, and fee schedules for easy downloading or printing. There is a variety of information relating to driver services, vehicle services and transportation services. We also have a teen driver website [teendriving.dmv.de.gov](http://teendriving.dmv.de.gov) and a senior driver website [seniordriver.dmv.de.gov](http://seniordriver.dmv.de.gov).

## Medical Indicator

The medical indicator is a voluntary program that allows Delaware residents to have the option to include a medical indicator on their driver license or state ID cards. There is no charge to have the indicator on the license or ID card. A blue medical indicator may appear on the document as a means for the holder to share a medical condition to those giving emergency medical care. The specific medical condition will appear on the back of the driver license or ID.

## Veteran Identification Cards

This card is available to any Delaware veteran that served in the U.S. military and was honorably discharged. To obtain the card, veterans must have a valid Delaware driver license or identification card and provide proof of military service, by presenting any of the following original documents: a valid Military ID, DD-214, Deployment orders or Honorable Discharge Certificate. The veteran ID cards are designed to verify an individual as a veteran in the State of Delaware, so that businesses can opt to recognize the contributions of those veterans who have faithfully served our country and represented our great State. It will also afford the veteran protection as they will no longer have to carry a DD-214, which contains sensitive information, to prove their veteran status in order to obtain the benefits provided by local businesses.

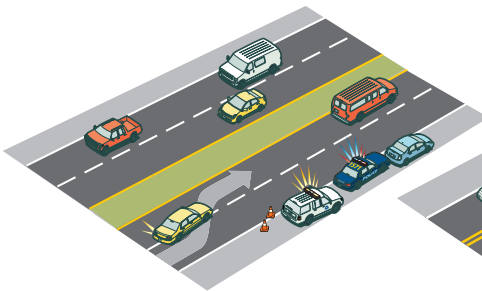
The veteran ID cards can be obtained at all DMV facilities. Please note that this card is not a military ID and does not entitle veterans to all military benefits. Veterans would need to contact the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to determine the federal benefits to which they are entitled.

# No Hand-Held Cell Phones while Driving

It is against the law to text or use a hand-held cell phone when driving in Delaware. If you need to talk on your phone while driving, you must use a hands-free device. You also cannot use a pager, PDA, BlackBerry, laptop, game or portable computer, two-way communication devices, or any other hand-held electronic communication devices while driving.

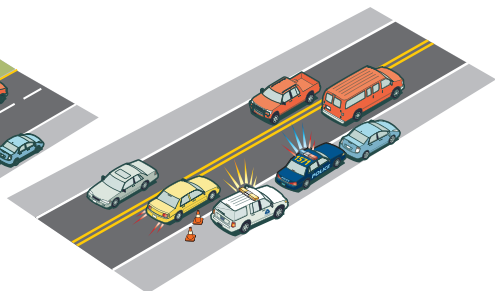
## Move Over - It's the Law

Upon approaching a stationary authorized emergency vehicle (for example, a police car on the side of the road), DeIDOT vehicle, or tow truck with flashing lights, you should proceed with caution and "move over" so the lane next to the stopped vehicle is clear. If it isn't possible to switch lanes, you should proceed with caution and reduce to a safe speed. Move over laws help reduce risk of serious injuries and death to all public servants who are working in harm's way.



### **MULTI-LANE ROADWAY**

Move over a lane from the stopped vehicle(s) until you are safely past.



### **TWO-LANE ROADWAY**

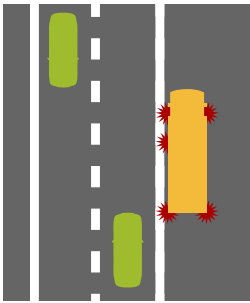
Slow down below the posted speed limit until you have completely passed the stopped vehicle(s).



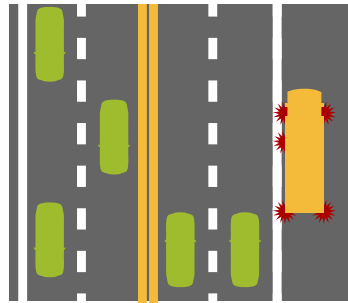
Whenever you see an emergency vehicle approaching (flashing lights or siren), you must immediately drive to the right-hand edge or curb of the roadway clear of any intersections until the authorized emergency vehicle has passed, except when otherwise directed by a police officer. This law extends to DeIDOT vehicle operators (who are requested to provide support to fire and police at the incident scene).

## Stop for School Buses

You must always stop when approaching any school bus from either direction when it is stopped to load or unload school children, except for when you are on the opposite side of a highway having four or more lanes.



**LESS THAN 4 ROADWAY LANES**  
**BOTH directions must STOP**



**4 OR MORE ROADWAY LANES**  
**Only traffic following must STOP**

School buses have two overhead flashing yellow lights in the front and back. They will be activated about 10 seconds before the overhead flashing red lights to warn drivers that a stop is about to be made. Approach a bus with flashing yellow lights with caution and anticipate a stop. Children may be waiting for the bus or may be running to board it.

The overhead flashing red lights and stop arm will be activated when the bus is stopped to pick up and discharge pupils. You must not proceed until the red lights have stopped flashing, and the stop arm has been retracted, then proceed cautiously.

## Yielding to Pedestrians

Pedestrians have the right-of-way when:

- Crossing a highway at an intersection and the green light or walk signal is in their favor
- Crossing within a marked or unmarked crosswalk
- On a sidewalk as it crosses an alley, entrance, or driveway
- They are blind and crossing with white canes or guide dogs

Pedestrians must yield the right-of-way when:

- Crossing a highway other than within a marked crosswalk or an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection
- Crossing the roadway where a pedestrian tunnel or overhead crossing is provided

## Traffic Stop Protocol

### **An individual's constitutional and other legal rights during a traffic stop**

In accordance with 11 Del. C §1902 an individual must provide his/her name, address and an explanation as to why he/she is driving on the roadway and where he/she is going. Similarly, passengers in a vehicle must also provide their information and/or exit the vehicle, if requested to do so by the officer. An individual may ask the officer to identify themselves and the agency that employs him/her.

An individual's vehicle may be searched on-site if consent is provided to the officer to do so, if the officer believes he/she has probable cause to do so, or as part of an inventory assessment of a vehicle that is being towed. During roadside investigations a person does not have a right to an attorney; however, that right will present itself later in the process.

### **Laws regarding questioning and detention by a law-enforcement officer, proof of identity and consequences for failure to comply**

No person shall drive a motor vehicle on a public street or highway of this State if he/she does not have a license to operate it. Failure to have the proper license or endorsement may lead to, at a minimum, fines and/or the loss of driving privileges. A person who fails to provide identification or who fails to explain his/her actions to the satisfaction of the officer, may be detained, further questioned, and investigated. A detention does not mean a person is under arrest. At the end of the detention period, which may not exceed two hours, the person will either be released, or arrested and charged with a crime. You may refer to 11 Del. C §1902, 21 Del. C §2701 and 21 Del. C §2721 for additional information.

### **The role and procedures of a law-enforcement officer in general and during a traffic stop**

An officer will initiate a traffic stop by giving a visible or audible signal, which could include using his/her emergency lights or sirens. The officer may approach your vehicle from either the driver or passenger side, identify him/herself and his/her agency, and state the reason for the traffic stop. Many times the officer will ask the driver if he/she has any reason for committing the traffic violation.

Driving a motor vehicle is a privilege, not a right. To comply with the law both the operator and the vehicle they are driving need

to satisfy certain requirements. One of the roles of an officer is to enforce those safety requirements. The officer will ask for your driver license, proof of insurance, and vehicle registration. The officer may ask a series of questions. The officer may return to his/her vehicle to conduct inquiries. You and your passengers should remain in your vehicle at all times unless instructed to do otherwise by the officer.

## **What to do and expect when stopped by law enforcement**

Law enforcement officers conduct traffic stops because they observe a traffic violation or are conducting a police investigation. Being stopped by a law enforcement officer can be a stressful experience but knowing what to do during the stop will help ensure your safety, the safety of other motorists, and the safety of the officer. When you see emergency lights behind you, stay calm, activate your turn signal, and pull off or to the side of the roadway as soon and safely as possible. When pulling over for an emergency vehicle, movements should be made to the right side of the highway, whenever possible.

Turn off the ignition and radio, and stay in your vehicle unless directed by the officer to exit. Keep your hands on the steering wheel so they are easily observable. Ask your passengers to remain calm and to stay in the vehicle while keeping their hands in plain view as well. Give the officer your full attention. Cell phones and mobile devices should not be used by you or any of your passengers. Do not make sudden moves or search for your driver license or vehicle documents – wait for the officer to give you instructions. If you have a weapon(s) in the vehicle, inform the officer upon first contact. If it's nighttime, the officer may direct a spotlight at your vehicle once stopped.

To assist with visibility, turn on your interior lights as soon as you stop to help the officer see inside your vehicle. The officer will usually explain why they stopped you and may ask you questions

about your trip. If the officer isn't in uniform they will show you their law enforcement credentials or you may ask to see them. Follow all instructions the officer gives you or your passengers. The officer may ask to see your driver license, proof of insurance, and vehicle registration. If the documents are out of your reach, tell the officer where they are before you reach for them. If you have questions, politely ask for clarification. If the officer asks you to exit the vehicle, stay safely away from traffic and keep your hands in plain view. When the officer completes their interaction with you, they may issue a warning or traffic ticket which may include a fine. The officer will typically explain whatever action is being taken. If you have questions, respectfully ask the officer to clarify. If you disagree with the officer's decision to issue a traffic ticket, don't prolong the contact by arguing with the officer. If you wish to contest the ticket, you will have the opportunity to explain your point of view of what happened in court. Your acceptance of a traffic ticket is not an admission of guilt.

If you believe the officer acted inappropriately, document the officer's behavior and report it to the officer's agency in a timely manner. The name of the officer and law enforcement agency will be on the ticket or you may ask the officer to provide this information. The enforcement of traffic laws is an effective tool in changing unsafe driving behavior and reducing crashes. If you receive a warning or a ticket for a traffic violation, its purpose is to deter illegal and/or unsafe behavior. Good communication from all involved parties can make a traffic stop a safe experience for all parties involved.

### **How and where to file a compliment on behalf of, or a complaint against a law enforcement officer**

You should contact the officer's agency via means determined by such agency. Most agencies have a website with contact information. It is the goal of law enforcement to protect the public and conduct traffic stops in a manner that protects the safety of everyone involved. Your cooperation with law enforcement is the best way to ensure that your safety, and that of others, is not compromised during the stop.

**myDMV**

online  services

*my time, my way*



**20+**

*online services*

Renew your Delaware vehicle registration, ID card or driver license, and so much more. Register for an account today!

**[mydmv.delaware.gov](https://mydmv.delaware.gov)**



# QUICK CONTACT Information

..... **WILMINGTON DMV**

2230 Hessler Boulevard  
New Castle, DE 19720  
302-434-3200

..... **DELAWARE CITY DMV**

2101 Mid County Drive  
New Castle, DE 19720  
302-326-5000

..... **DOVER DMV**

303 Transportation Circle  
Dover, DE 19901  
302-744-2500

..... **GEORGETOWN DMV**

23737 DuPont Boulevard  
Georgetown, Delaware 19947  
302-853-1000

Regular hours at all offices:

**8:00 am to 4:30 pm**, Monday - Friday

**12:00 pm to 8:00 pm**, Wednesday only

Online services available 24/7 at [myDMV.delaware.gov](https://myDMV.delaware.gov)