

Driver's Licenses

If you plan to own a car while you are here in the U.S., you will need to obtain a U.S. drivers license. Each state issues its own licenses to allow residents of that state to drive legally. Although you obtain a license from the state in which you live, this license will legally allow you to drive in other states. However, if you move from one state to a different one, you must obtain a drivers license for the new state within 30 days.

There are a few things you will need in order to obtain a driver's license from The Department of Motor Vehicles. The application procedures vary depending on your state of residence.

For a complete list of the required documentation in the area where you live, please refer to the following websites:

- DC residents
<http://dmv.washingtondc.gov/serv/dlicense/getlicense.shtm>
- Maryland residents
<http://www.mva.state.md.us/>
- Virginia residents
<http://www.dmv.state.va.us/webdoc/citizen/drivers/applying.asp>

Be sure to bring your passport and immigration documentation. Be prepared for long waits.

Once you obtain your license, carefully obey traffic signals and road signs and practice good driving habits. The DMV for the state of Virginia has excellent tips for developing and maintaining good driving habits.

There are many traffic cameras around the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area that photograph vehicles that ignore traffic signals or posted road signs such as speed limits. If one of these cameras takes a picture of you, you will receive the picture in the mail along with traffic tickets assessing fines that you will be expected to pay.