

DRIVERS LICENSE INFORMATION

International Student and Scholar Services
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WHERE DO I GET A GEORGIA DRIVERS LICENSE?

The closest Driver's License Customer Service Center to downtown is the South DeKalb Center located at 2801 Candler Road, Decatur, GA 30034. However, go to the Department of Driver Services (DDS) website (www.dds.ga.gov) to find the most convenient location for you. All locations are open Tuesday-Saturday from 9am to 5pm. Note that they are closed on Mondays, and Tuesdays are normally very busy.

HOW DO I GET A GEORGIA DRIVERS LICENSE?

You may make an appointment at the South DeKalb Mall, Marietta, Lithonia, and Lawrenceville Centers by calling (678)413-8500 and selecting option 3. Other Centers will provide the service but do not accept appointments.

Take the following documents with you:

- Passport
- I-94 Card
- I-20 (F-1) or DS-2019 (J-1)
- Proof of local residence (such as a signed lease agreement, a utility bill with your name and local address on it, or a bank statement—each must be issued within the last 45 days)
- \$20 cash
- Social Security Card (Your number will be verified if you do not have the original SSN card.)

NOTE: For those drivers who are not citizens and not authorized to work in the United States, you will need to obtain a Form SSA-L676 'SSN CARD DENIAL NOTICE' from a local SSA office before visiting a DDS Customer Service Center to apply for a driver's license. You may contact the SSA at (800) 772-1213 or visit their website at <http://www.ssa.gov/onlineservices/> and select 'field office locator' to find the SSA office nearest you. Form SSA-L676 is not available from the web site. After obtaining the form, please bring it to the Customer Service Center when you apply for your driver's license or identification card. In addition to the form, please remember to bring your valid passport and valid I-94 permit, and proof of Georgia residency.

You will be asked to surrender all foreign driver's licenses before you are issued a Georgia license. If you state that you do not have a license from your home country, then you will have to take both the road and written tests, which are waived if you give up your home country license. However, all applicants are subject to taking the eye exam.

WHAT IS A GEORGIA ID CARD?

An identification card contains the same personal information, photo, signature, and special protection against alteration and fraud as a driver's license. It is issued at the same Centers that issue driver's licenses and looks very similar to a driver's license. All the same items listed above are required for the ID card as well, including the \$20 fee.

DO I NEED A GEORGIA DRIVERS LICENSE?

An international student DOES NOT NEED TO GET A GEORGIA DRIVER'S LICENSE if 1) you have a valid driver's license from your home country, 2) are registered for classes as a student in a school in Georgia, and 3) have paid your tuition for that semester. **If you choose not to get a Georgia license, be aware that your insurance premiums will likely be higher, and the average police officer may not be aware of this legal exemption for international students.** Because of these risks, International Services recommends you get a Georgia license. However, if you choose to drive using your international license, please have the following items always in your possession:

- The foreign driver's license
- Student ID card or proof of registration
- Proof of payment of tuition for the current semester
- A copy of the following legal citation from the Official Code of Georgia annotated (O.C.G.A.), page 147 of Title 40 (Provided on back of this form).

For more information on obtaining a Georgia Driver's License or ID Card, see the Department of Driver Services website: <http://www.dds.ga.gov/>

From the Official Code of Georgia annotated (O.C.G.A.), page 147 of Title 40:

40-5-21(b) O.C.G.A.

(b) Notwithstanding any contrary provisions of Code Section 40-5-20 or subsection (a) of this Code section, a nonresident of this state who is attending a school in this state shall be exempt from the driver's licensing requirements of this chapter if and only if:

1. He or she is at least 16 years of age and has in his or her immediate possession a valid license issued to him or her in his or her home state or country; provided, however, that any restrictions which would apply to a Georgia driver's license as a matter of law would apply to the privilege afforded to the out-of-state license; and
2. He or she is currently enrolled in a school in this state, has paid for the current period of enrollment the tuition charged by the school to nonresidents of Georgia, and has in his or her possession proof of payment of such tuition for such current period of enrollment.