

Eligibility: International students and scholars and their dependent family members who will be in Michigan for a semester or more are considered Michigan residents and are therefore eligible to apply for a Michigan Driver's License or Identification Card. All Michigan residents must obtain a driver's license as soon as possible after arrival in order to legally drive. There is no grace period during which you may use your home country license to drive.

Short-term visitors who will be in Michigan for less than one semester are not considered to be Michigan residents and are therefore not eligible for a Michigan Driver's License or Identification Card. However, you are eligible to drive in Michigan with your home country's driver's license and a certified English translation as long as your country appears on the attached document titled "International Drivers' Licenses and Reciprocity Update." The International Driving Permit by itself does not grant permission to drive in Michigan; however the combination of the home country's driver's license and the International Driving Permit does indeed grant permission to drive in Michigan for your short-term visit.

Driver's License Applications

Step One: Present your identification at the Secretary of State Branch Office. Please consult the attached "Checklist of Required Documents..." to see which identification documents are required for F-1/F-2 and J-1/J-2 applicants. To start the application process, show the necessary identification documents to the local Secretary of State branch office. Information on where to find the East Lansing branch office is included on the next page of this handout.

Step Two: Take tests on written knowledge, road signs, and vision. When you visit the branch office to show your identification documents, you will schedule your tests. In order to prepare for the written knowledge and road signs tests, please review the "What Every Driver Must Know" handbook, which is available at the branch office, at OISS, or online at www.michigan.gov/sos. The vision test is a simple test to ensure that your visual abilities are adequate for driving. When you are at the branch office for the tests, you will also pay the \$25 license fee.

Step Three: Take driving skills test. You can prepare for your driving skills test by reviewing the "Driving Skills Test Study Guide," which is available at the branch office or online at www.michigan.gov/sos. Ordinarily you would receive a temporary driver's license after passing the tests in Step Two and would be required to wait 30 days before taking the driving skills test. During that 30 days you would not be able to drive without a licensed driver above the age of 18 in the passenger seat. However, if you can provide your home country's license with a certified English translation (see below), you can be exempted from this 30-day waiting period and will be allowed to take the driving skills test immediately after passing the tests in Step Two. Your driving test must be conducted by an organization appearing on the following

list: www.sos.state.mi.us/bbos/3rdpt/counties/ingham.html. Some of the listed organizations will allow you to rent a car to use for your driving skills test (no car is provided to you for the test).

Step Four: Return to the branch office to finalize your license application. Once you pass your driving skills test, take your proof of legal presence documents (the same documents you provided in Step One above), Temporary Instruction Permit, and Skills Test Certificate back to the branch office. You will receive a temporary valid driver's license to use until your actual license arrives in the mail.

Renewing Your Driver's License

Approximately 45 days prior to the expiration of your license, a renewal notice will be mailed to the address on your license. If the renewal notice says that you are eligible to renew your license by mail, you may do so if you wish, but you are not required to do so. If you wish to renew by mail, simply follow the instructions on the notice. If you do not wish to renew by mail, if your notice says that you are not eligible to renew by mail, or if you do not receive a notice, then you should renew your license in person at the local branch office. When you apply for your renewal, you will pay the

\$18 renewal fee, be asked a few general health questions, and be given a vision screening test. You may also be asked to provide the following documents:

- **Proof of Social Security (one of the following):** Social Security card, Social Security Number Verification letter (NUMI), Pay stub showing SSN, W-2 form showing SSN, or, if no SSN, letter of ineligibility (Form SSA L-676).
- **Proof of legal presence (all of the following):** Passport, Visa stamp, I-94 card, I-20 or DS-2019.
- **State of Michigan Personal Identification Card (State ID card)** Many students and scholars who do not plan to drive while in Michigan apply for the state ID card. It can be quite convenient to have one, as it allows you to prove your identity, age, address, etc. without the need to risk carrying your passport with you. (The MSU ID card only shows your name, picture, and identification number and is therefore not as useful for identification purposes outside of campus.) In order to apply, visit the branch office, pay the \$10 application fee, and show all of the documents listed on the Checklist of Required Documents (below).
- **Replacing a Lost Driver's License or State ID Card**

If you lose your driver's license or state ID card, you must apply for a replacement at a branch office. The fees are \$9 to replace a driver's license and \$10 to replace a state ID card. You will be asked to provide the documents listed in the box above (i.e. proof of Social Security and proof of legal presence).

The Albion Secretary of State Branch Office Address: 308 Superior Street Albion, MI 49224
Phone: (517)629-5933 Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 9am – 5pm Wednesday: 11am – 7pm.

Checklist of Required Documents for F-1/F-2 or J-1/J-2 Students and Scholars seeking Michigan IDs and Driver's Licenses

- Proof of a Social Security Number (Social Security card, pay stub, W-2, non SSA 1099) or proof of ineligibility for a number (Form SSA L-676). Note: Providing proof of ineligibility will trigger an additional identity verification process which may take several days to complete.
- Valid, unexpired foreign passport, visa (may be expired), and I-94 stamped with entry date indicating duration of status (D/S) or a specific future date for proof of legal presence and identity verification. Note: Providing an expired visa stamp or an I-94 card issued more than one year ago will trigger an additional identity verification process which may take several days to complete.
- I-20 Certificate of Eligibility for Non-immigrant (F-1) student or DS-2019 Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) status indicating enrollment in a Michigan school, college or university (needed for both the student and the spouse or any other dependents). Students on Optional Practical Training (OPT) must provide supporting evidence from the school.
- Two documents are needed to prove residency: acceptable documents include an apartment lease or housing rental agreement, utility bill, bank or other financial institution statement, credit card statement, school account records, insurance policy, pay stub, government document, or vehicle title and registration.
- A letter from the school, college or university Designated School Official (DSO) confirming enrollment and current address can be accepted as one of the residency documents. (CIE can do this if none of the above-listed residency documents can be obtained).
- If the student has a driver's license from his/her home country, it must be translated into English or have English subheadings (please use university letterhead for the translation). It can be used as evidence of driving experience, waiving the 30-day practice period before taking a driving skills test. It is not accepted for identification purposes.

Translating Your Driver's License

If you have a driver's license from another country (other than Canada), please make sure that it is translated into English. Having a translated driver's license will speed up your application for a Michigan driver's license. **Note:** 1. You cannot translate your own driver's license. 2. Michigan does not accept translations of international permits or licenses. Please make sure you have your national driver's license translated.