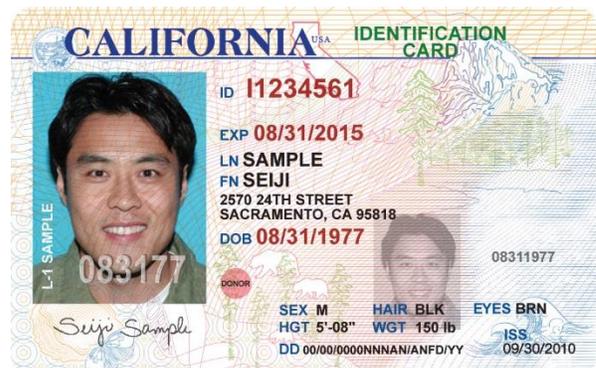
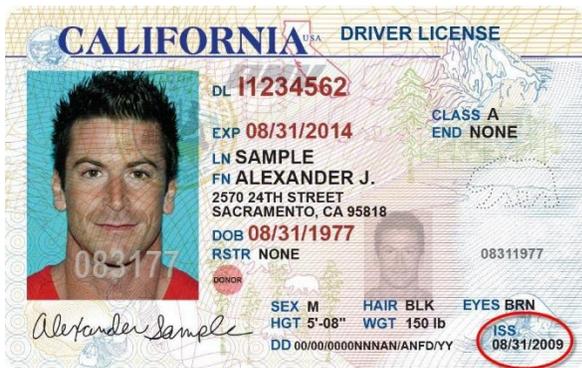


MARYMOUNT CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY

Obtaining a California Driver's License or I.D.



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How to Obtain a California Driver's License or Identification Card

Driving in California

Students are encouraged to obtain a California Driver's License if they plan to drive in the United States. A California Driver's License is required to purchase a car and obtain auto insurance. However, you must wait until AFTER the add/drop date for classes for the current semester before applying. See explanation below under "Application Process." More information about non-resident drivers is available [here](#).

International Driving Permit

The State of California **does not** recognize an International Driving Permit (IDP) as a valid driver license. The International Driver's Permit is also referred to as an International Driver's License or International License.

Overview

The [California Department of Motor Vehicles \(DMV\)](#) website outlines the process of obtaining a California Driver's License. The steps include a written and driving skills test administered by the DMV. The [California Driver's Handbook](#) is the best resource to help you prepare for these tests. [Samples](#) of written tests are also available online. Many Apps also exist to quiz you on the written test. Check with your provider's App Store for details.

Application Process

1. To apply for a driver's license, students must be enrolled full-time and pay the SEVIS fee. If either of these requirements is not met, your application will be rejected. MCU does SEVIS semester registration approximately one week **after** the ADD/DROP period for class to ensure full-time registration for every F-1 visa holder.
2. If you live in the MCU Villas ask for a letter from the OIS to prove your California residency. The OIS will provide you with this letter, which you will need as part of your application.
3. Students who have a full driver's license from their home country (not the IDP) may be exempt from the "Road Test". The DMV requires that you present the **originals** of all immigration documents: passport, printout of your [I-94 Arrival/Departure record](#) and I-20. Your passport and I-20 cannot expire less than 60 days from the date of application. If these documents expire in less than 60 days, you cannot apply. Be sure to bring your driver's license from your home country to present to the officer at the DMV as it may exempt you from the driving test.
4. [Make an appointment](#) at your local DMV to schedule any tests you may have to take.
5. Fill-out an application form at the DMV. If you do not have a Social Security Number (SSN) and are not in the process of applying for one, mark on the DMV application that you are **not** eligible for a SSN. You are only eligible for a SSN if you have a job offer for on-campus or authorized off-campus employment.
6. Students who have problems with their application should record the name of the DMV employee(s) you spoke with and make an appointment to meet with OIS for further assistance.
7. You must wait at least 30 days before calling the DMV office to inquire about your application. Most licenses will be issued within two weeks of the appointment. They cannot assist you before the 30-day window ends.

Students on OPT

Students on OPT who wish to renew their driver's license are required to obtain a Social Security Number (SSN) if they have not done so already. Without a SSN, the DMV will not approve of the driver's license extension. Also, you must wait until the "Employment Start Date" on your EAD card to submit your driver's license application for it to be accepted. See the Office of International Services for more information on how to obtain a SSN and/or apply for OPT.

Obtaining a California Identification Card

A California driver's license is the primary form of identification. International students and scholars who do not drive can obtain a California Identification (ID) card instead. The [DMV website](#) offers detailed guidelines on obtaining an ID card.

DMV Located Closest To MCU Oceanside Campus

1511 N Gaffey St
San Pedro, CA 90731

[Office Hours and Customer Wait Time Information](#)

MCU students are encouraged to visit this office because of its proximity to campus. The staff at this location is familiar with assisting the MCU international community.

DMV Offices In The Greater South Bay Area

1785 W. 220th St
Torrance, CA 90501

[Office Hours and Customer Wait Time Information](#)

3700 E. Willow St
Long Beach, CA 90815

[Office Hours and Customer Wait Time Information](#)

This location has Saturday hours

To reduce wait time at the DMV, the Office of International Services recommends [making an appointment online](#).

Driver Education and Driver Training

If you are a brand new driver (never had any training or lessons prior to your interest in seeking a CA driver's license) you should seek driving lessons. The California DMV outlines information on what to look for in a good driving school on the [California DMV Website](#).

Automobile Insurance

As a reminder, if you plan to obtain a driver's license in California and drive a vehicle for which you are licensed, you are required to obtain the proper automobile insurance. There are several companies that offer auto insurance in the State of California. A simple web search will reveal these companies.

If you have any questions about a certain company, the Office of International Services can help you evaluate these companies in a general sense to ensure they are trustworthy companies, but will not recommend any one company over another.