

DRIVING IN ILLINOIS

Driver's license issues are among the most common issues international students must deal with.

COMMON QUESTIONS

**Is my home country license valid while I am a student at the University of Illinois?
Is my international driver's license valid while I am a student at the University of Illinois?**

- Your home country license or international license is valid for purposes of driving in Illinois so long as you are enrolled as a student at the University of Illinois. Your home country/International license must not have "expired" for it to be valid. The Illinois law permitting this can be found by use of google using 625 ILCS5/6-102.
- Your home country/international license is valid in Illinois but there are 49 other states in the United States and each state tends to have different rules regarding use of various licenses.
- While driving you must have the home country/international driver's license in your possession. While you are NOT required to carry your passport while driving many police departments will ask you to produce your passport as a way of being assured that you are a nonresident lawfully in the United States.
- If you are stopped and receive a ticket/citation for not having a valid license please do not panic. Come into Student Legal Service and bring your home country/international license with you to the appointment and we will contact the state to resolve the ticket. To schedule an appointment, please call (312) 996-9214.
- It is advisable to have your home country license translated into English and have the translation certified if the license is not written in English. Carry this translation with you when driving along with the actual license.
- Your spouse and children who live with you while you are an enrolled student may lawfully drive in Illinois on their personal home country/international driver's licenses. Your enrollment covers them but they must still have their own license.

How do I get an Illinois driver's license? A temporary visitor's license?

To obtain a full Illinois driver's license you will need to take several steps at Drivers' Services:

- Produce a current social security card and number
- Proof of date and place of birth
- Current resident address and zip code (a piece of mail or lease should be sufficient)
- The fee for application
- Pass the computer-based "written" test
- Pass the driving/road test, which you request in person at the driver's license facility. You must be able to show proof of insurance on the vehicle you use for the driver's test. Weather and number of other people waiting to take the driving test may affect whether you will be able to take the test that day.
- If you are between age 18 and 21 you must have proof of completion of 6 hours of driver's education if you are seeking your first license. If you are over age 21 proof of driver's education is not required.

To obtain a temporary visitor's license you need to take several steps:

- You must be **ineligible** to lawfully obtain a Social Security card and number.
- You must have proof that you have resided in Illinois for at least one full year. A lease signed by you and the landlord, or a residence hall contract along with your Visa should be sufficient.
- A university transcript of enrollment/grades may also be additional evidence of residency.
- You must produce a valid, unexpired passport.
- Pay any fees set by the Illinois Secretary of State.
- If you are under 21 years of age you must have proof of 6 hours of driver's education.

The Illinois Secretary of State is NOT the same thing as the U.S. Secretary of State/Consulate that deals with passports and entry and exit from the United States. The Illinois Secretary of State cannot deport/remove or exclude you from the United States. The main website is <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/>

Operating an uninsured vehicle.

You must have valid insurance when driving any motor vehicle in Illinois including one a roommate allowed you to borrow.

If you are stopped by the police you must produce proof of insurance. If you had insurance but not in the automobile at the time you were stopped, your ticket will be dismissed at court when you show proof.

If you did not have valid insurance you will be required to purchase such insurance. Ask your insurance agent about minimum insurance that complies with Illinois law.

Written by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Student Legal Services office