Important info re Maryland REAL ID license

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June 26, 2019 | If you recently received a letter in the mail from MVA about your driver's license, do not ignore it! A valid license allows you to earn a good living. Don't put it at risk. Here's what you need to know:

All Maryland drivers must have a federally compliant REAL ID driver's license by October 2020. After Oct. 1, 2020, you will be required to have a REAL ID compliant driver's license or ID card in order to use your driver's license to board commercial aircraft for domestic flights or to gain access to federal facilities. Getting a REAL ID requires you to present documents (see below) for secure scanning that verify proof of age and identity.

Drivers who are not scheduled to renew their licenses before October 2020 must also provide required REAL ID compliant documentation proving age and Maryland residency with the MVA before October 2020. In addition, drivers who have renewed their licenses since May 2016 but were not asked to provide the federally-required documentation will have to make a trip back to the MVA to submit the information in order to be REAL ID compliant.

Are you REAL ID compliant? The REAL ID Lookup Tool on the MVA website will tell you your status.

Be aware that you risk having your driver’s license declared invalid if you don’t pay attention to the new requirements’ deadline. A police officer will confiscate the revoked license if you are stopped for a traffic violation and you’ll have to go through the trouble to go to an MVA office with the proper documentation to get it back.

The following list will give you an idea of the documents required to prove age and Maryland residency. Note: A full list of documents can be found here.

1. Original or certified copy of your birth certificate – or a valid passport. (If you have ever changed your name, you’ll also need documents such as a marriage certificate or license, divorce decree or other forms documenting the name change.)
2. Social Security card, W2, or SS 1099 that displays your name and full Social Security number.
3. Two (2) documents proving Maryland residency – such as vehicle registration, insurance card, credit card bill, mail from a government agency, utility bill, or bank statement.

Attention CDL holders: Make sure you let the MVA worker you speak with know you hold a CDL. Members have reported inconsistencies in the information received from MVA employees who may not be familiar with CDL requirements. Some have been charged $20 for a replacement license, others no charge at all. Be sure to ask questions!

It’s advisable to make an appointment: Appointments for REAL ID can be scheduled using the Online Document Guide, which also walks you through the documents you’ll need and allows you to pick a branch location, date and time.