

Central Issuance of Driver Licenses

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Q. What is the central issuance of driver licenses?**
A. North Carolina driver licenses are issued from a central location in Raleigh. Customers will no longer receive their driver license “over-the-counter” at the driver license office. Instead, they will receive their driver license by mail within 20 days. *Most customers can expect their license to arrive within 5 to 10 days.*
2. **Q. How will this change the way I apply for my driver license?**
A. You will continue to visit your local DMV driver license office to apply. You will take the required tests and have your photo made. You will continue to pay for your license at the DMV office. However, instead of receiving your license on the same day, you will be given a Temporary Driving Certificate (TDC) which is valid for 20 days until your driver license arrives in the mail.
3. **Q. What can I do with the Temporary Driving Certificate?**
A. The Temporary Driving Certificate is only valid for driving purposes. It is not to be used as an identification document (i.e., for boarding planes, financial transactions, etc.). However, you may register a vehicle with your TDC if you already hold a North Carolina license. You will be able to keep your current driver license to use for photo identification until you receive your new license.
4. **Q. What information is contained on the Temporary Driving Certificate?**
A. The 20-day Temporary Driving Certificate contains the same demographic (name, address, etc.) information as that on the driver license. However, it will not carry a photograph of the driver and, therefore, cannot be used as photo identification.
5. **Q. What if I do not receive my new driver license within the 20-day period provided by the Temporary Driving Certificate?**
A. If you have not received your driver license within 15 days from the issue date of your TDC, you must contact DMV at (919) 861-3555.
6. **Q. Why is North Carolina making this change?**
A. This change is an outgrowth of concerns across the nation for the need to safeguard the production, manufacture and issuance of driver licenses. Bringing the production and issuance of driver licenses together in a central location will help prevent identity theft, address fraud and counterfeiting, making North Carolina driver licenses more secure.
7. **Q. When did North Carolina decide to move to central issuance?**
A. This new requirement was passed into state law by the General Assembly in July 2006. It is meant to help stop identity theft and address fraud. Driver licenses will be produced in one central Raleigh location rather than in 114 different locations around the state, improving the security of production materials and equipment.

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8. **Q. Has North Carolina issued licenses from a central location in the past?**
A. Yes. Until the late 1960s, when North Carolina first started using photographs on driver licenses, all licenses were issued centrally and mailed to drivers. Additionally, members of the military and their families have continued to be served centrally for many years. With central issuance, we are in a way “going back to the future.”
9. **Q. What is the MOST IMPORTANT THING to know about central issuance?**
A. *DMV urges drivers to renew their licenses early.* North Carolina driver licenses can be renewed as early as six months prior to the driver’s birthday renewal date.
10. **Q. Why is renewing early so important?**
A. It is important to maintain identification for such activities as boarding airlines and completing financial transactions.
11. **Q. Is a Temporary Driving Certificate issued when an address change or name change is made to the driver license?**
A. Yes, a TDC is issued when the customer makes an address or name change. The customer must wait to receive the new license by mail. However, the customer may use his/her old license as photo ID until the new license arrives.
12. **Q. Can a new North Carolina driver (teenager, driver from another state) use a TDC for driving before his/her license arrives?**
A. Yes. A new driver can use the TDC to drive. Information on the TDC bar code can be scanned by law enforcement and, if photo verification is needed, DMV’s photo files can also be checked. However, a new driver to North Carolina **may not** use a TDC to register a vehicle.
13. **Q. What should I do with my license from another state after I receive my North Carolina license in the mail?**
A. When you are issued a North Carolina license, North Carolina automatically notifies your former state of residence that North Carolina has transferred your license to this state. Your out-of-state license is no longer valid in any state. After you receive your North Carolina license in the mail, you may shred and discard your out-of-state license or mail it to NCDMV at 3120 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27697-3120.
14. **Q. Can a customer register a car during the 20-day waiting period that he/she holds a Temporary Driving Certificate?**
A. If the TDC is issued for the renewal of a North Carolina driver license, a customer can present a valid TDC and an unexpired/expired North Carolina driver license to register a vehicle.
15. **Q. How will a customer who is not served by the Post Office obtain their new driver license from DMV?**
A. If a customer lives in a undeliverable mail zone not served by the Post Office, DMV will mail his/her driver license to his/her Post Office box.
16. **Q. Who should citizens contact for additional information about the new program?**
A. Citizens may visit www.ncdot.gov/dmv or call (919) 861-3555 with questions about the program.

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