

Frequently Asked Questions

National Driver Licence Service (NDLS)

What's happening? The way you apply for a driving licence or learner permit is changing

When is this happening? Tuesday 29th October, 2013.

What's happening to the driving licence? In January of this year Ireland switched from producing paper licences to producing plastic card licences and learner permits. At the end of October there will be further changes to the way you apply for a full driving licence or learner permit.

What exactly is happening? Instead of applying for a licence or learner permit in your local motor tax office you will need to apply in person at one of the new National Driver Licence Service NDLS centres located around the country

What is the National Driver Licence Service or NDLS? NDLS, or National Driver Licence Service, is the name given to the new, dedicated service which will receive applications for learner permits and driver licences

Why do I have to apply in person? Could I not get a relative to apply for me like I did before? You will need to apply in person at any of the NDLS centres if applying for a driving licence or Learner permit from the 29th October onwards. This 'face to face' application is part of a new security process which will increase security around the licence, combat fraud and keep unlicensed drivers off our roads by ensuring that the only person who will use your licence is you. You should only need to attend an NDLS centre once to do this face to face application – after that, you will be able to get subsequent licences and learner permits by phone/postal application. We will also be strengthening our online services over the next couple of years.

Who is running the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS)? The Road Safety Authority was tasked by the Government to manage the processing and production of driving licences in Ireland.

How do I apply for a licence or learner permit before the 29th October? You apply for your driving licence or learner permit in your local Motor Tax Office until Friday 25 October.

When do I apply for a licence from one of the new National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) centres? From Tuesday 29th October, applications for a full driving licence or learner permit can be made at any one of the NDLS centres nationwide.

Where can I find my nearest National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) centre? You can visit our website www.ndls.ie and view a map of locations to find your nearest NDLS centre. You can also download the handy new App for smart phones which will show the nearest centre to your current location. It is important to note that once the new service begins on the 29th October you will no longer be restricted to applying for a licence or learner permit in your local area. You will now be able to apply for a licence at any NDLS centre in the country.

Is the App available for all smart phones? Yes the APP is available for both iPhones from iTunes and for Android through Google Play Store.

Will there be a National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) centre in my county? The new National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) has at least one centre in every county in Ireland. A new feature of the service means you will be able to apply for your licence in any one of the centres nationwide.

How many National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) centres are there? The new NDLS will provide motorists in Ireland with a dedicated, customer-focused licensing service with 34 centres nationwide. 32 full time centres and two part-time NDLS centres in counties, Galway and Mayo. The locations of the centres have been chosen to ensure that 95% of the population is serviced within a 50km radius of a centre.

What are the opening hours of National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) centres? The centres will be open to the public from Tuesday 29 October. They will be open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, and from 9am to 2pm on Saturdays. In an improvement to the service all centres will remain open through lunchtimes. These opening hours are more flexible and will enable customers to visit one of the NDLS centres at a time that is convenient to them, particularly outside normal working hours.

Where are the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) centres located? There is at least one centre in every county in Ireland. As part of the new service you don't have to apply in the one closest to home. Instead you can apply for your licence in any one of the NDLS centres nationwide many of which are located in convenient places such as shopping centres.

Is the cost of a driving licence or learner permit going up as a result of these changes? No. There will be no increase in the cost of a driving licence or learner permit. The cost of a ten year licence is €55. A three-year licence is €35 and a one-year licence is €25. The cost of a Learner Permit is €35. If you want to make a change to your existing licence/permit the cost is €35. Since January 2013 a three-year licence is only available to those over 67. This may also be the case for drivers based on a Doctor's recommendation on medical grounds. For those who are 60 to 66 years their licence will expire on their 70th birthday. Licences for the over 70s will remain free of charge.

What about the cost of the photo? As part of this process, your photo will be taken and a digital signature will be captured. These will be included in the existing fee for the learner permit or driving licence which will remain €55 for a full 10 year licence and €35 for a learner permit. Licences for the over-70s will remain free of charge.

Why must I apply for my licence or learner permit in person? From 29 October 2013, if you are applying for your first licence or learner permit, or renewing or replacing your current licence or learner permit, you are required to visit one of the new NDLS centres nationwide in person. This is because a new 'face to face' application process is being introduced which will help to increase the level of security around the driving licence, combat fraud and keep unlicensed drivers off our roads by ensuring that the only person who will use your licence is you.

What's involved in this 'face to face' application? Security and safety are at the heart of the new service which will be consistently delivered throughout the country. Since the change from paper to plastic card, learner permits and licences and more secure, long-lasting and convenient. Now we're adding a layer of security to make sure that the only person who uses your licence is you. For that reason, a number of new security measures are being introduced to the licensing process as part of the changeover to the NDLS.

These changes include:

- A requirement for you to bring additional documentation to confirm your identity;
- A face to face meeting with a Customer Service Agent in an NDLS centre;
- Having your digital photograph taken and digital signature captured by a Customer Service Agent in an NDLS centre.

What will happen when I visit an NDLS centre to apply for my licence?

- You will be greeted by a Customer Service Agent to begin the application process
- S/he will ask you for documentation to confirm your identity.
- S/he will take your photograph and a digital signature will be captured. This photograph will be used on your licence. The cost is included in the licence fee. When you need to renew or replace your licence or learner permit, you can use any photo you wish, as long as it meets the criteria
- Once you have completed the application process and paid for your licence, you will be given a receipt. Your application will be sent to the Central Licensing Processing Unit (CLPU) and your new plastic card learner permit or licence should be posted to you within eight working days.

Can I submit my own photo? Not at present. However, when phone/ postal applications begin in mid 2014, it will be possible for those already validated by the NDLS centre to submit photographs with new applications that will be scanned into the system and will appear on the new licence.

How long will it take to complete the 'face to face' security checks when I visit the NDLS centre? Because the NDLS centre is dedicated to taking applications for a learner

permit or driver licence, the application process should not take on average less than 10 minutes.

Will I have to do this ‘face to face’ security process every time I apply for a licence?

No. In most cases you will only need to do the ‘face to face’ security validation process on the first occasion you apply for a licence or learner permit through the a NDLS centres.

Having to apply in person is a real inconvenience. Is this not all a bit over the top?

These new measures are not intended to inconvenience you but rather to improve the service for all drivers and to comply with EU Directives and best international practice. The number of unlicensed and illegal drivers on Irish roads is of great concern to the RSA and An Garda Síochána. Sharing the road with unlicensed drivers can have serious consequences for other road-users, particularly in the event of a crash. This new identity validation process means that we can ensure that the only person who gets your licence is you. This will help to reduce the number of counterfeit and fraudulent licences currently in circulation and ensure that you are sharing the road with licensed, legal drivers. International experience shows that confirming your identity with a face-to-face meeting is an important element of the process as it allows the licensing authority to build up details on file that act as an additional security feature so as to eliminate the chance of anybody else fraudulently using your identity to get a licence. This face-to-face application is similar to what you might do if you are opening a bank account or registering for college.

What do I have to bring with me? You will need to bring certain documents with you in order to confirm you are the person that is applying for the licence. If you are an existing Irish driving licence or learner permit holder, you need to bring your current driving licence or learner permit and evidence of your PPS number.

If you are applying for a full licence or learner permit for the first time or you have never held a licence or permit before you will need to supply documents to verify your identity, such as:

- photographic ID, for example, a current passport or public services card
- proof of residency entitlement, for example, a current passport or birth certificate
- evidence of address, which will be captured as your official address for all future correspondence, for example, a utility bill such as a gas, broadband or TV bill, or a statement from your bank

- evidence of your PPS number which can be found on a medical card or Drug Payment Scheme card, or on your payslip

A full list of the types of documents that will be accepted in each category is outlined below.

You can also download this list from www.ndls.ie or find it on the guidance notes accompanying the driving licence and learner permit application form.

We would strongly advise you to review this list before visiting an NDLS centre as not having the right documents with you will lead to a delay with your application as it cannot be processed. Any documents you bring with you must be originals – photocopies will not be accepted. Please note that some documents can be used to satisfy two criteria, for example, using your passport as photographic ID and proof of your residency entitlement.

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What documents can be used to verify my identity when visiting a National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) centre?

List 1: Photographic ID

- Irish passport
- Current passport for all non-Irish citizens
- Current National Identity Card for EU/EEA/Swiss Citizens
- Irish Certificate of Naturalisation
- Current UK (photo) driving licence
- Current Public Services Card
- Current Irish Travel Documents

List 2: Proof of your residency entitlement

- Irish/UK long-form birth certificate or adoption certificate
- Foreign birth registration
- Irish passport
- Current passport for all EU/EEA/Swiss Citizens
- Current National Identity Card for EU/EEA/Swiss Citizens*
- Irish Certificate of Naturalisation
- Current Certificate of Registration (GNIB card) for non-EU/EEA/Swiss Citizens
- Diplomatic passport

*** National Identity Cards are acceptable from the following countries; Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland**

List 3: Evidence of your PPS Number

- Public Services Card/Social Services Card
- Correspondence from Revenue/Social Welfare showing PPS Number
- P21/Tax Assessment/ Notice of Tax credits
- Receipt of Social Welfare Payment
- Medical Card/Drug Payment Scheme (DPS) Card
- Payslip or P60/P45

List 4: Proof of address**

- Utility bill (i.e. from your electricity/phone/gas/cable television/broadband provider). Mobile phone bills are not acceptable
- Correspondence with an insurance company
- Statement from your bank/building society/Credit Union, Statements from store cards/catalogue companies are not acceptable
- Letter from the Department of Social Protection/Revenue
- Other official correspondence from an Irish State agency e.g. Government departments; HSE; Register of Electors/Polling card; CAO; Private Residential Tenancies Board or third level college/training agency

**** These documents can be no more than 6 months old at date of application**

Important

- **EU/EEA and Swiss Citizens:** Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland.
- An Irish passport which has expired by less than 12 months is acceptable as a photographic ID.
- All other identity documents submitted must be current and in their original format. Photocopies will not be accepted.
- Please note that amendments and additions will be made to this list of documents in the future as new identity cards are released by EU/EEA member states or by other state agencies.
- Evidence of address submitted should correspond with the name recorded on the primary identity document supplied with the application. For example, if a customer's primary identity document is their current Irish driving licence and the name on it is 'Michael O'Malley', then their evidence of address should have 'Michael O'Malley' or 'M. O' Malley'.

If I attended an NDLS centre to get a Learner Permit do I need to visit the centre again to get my full driving licence when I pass my test? Yes. If you pass your test and apply for your full licence before the proposed phone / postal applications procedures have come into effect, you will need to visit an NDLS centre to apply for your full licence. Applications by phone/post are planned for roll out in early 2014.

Can I apply for my licence / learner permit by post? No. This is because a new 'face to face' application process is being introduced which will help to increase the level of security around the driving licence, combat fraud and keep unlicensed drivers off our roads. Therefore you need to apply in person at any one of the NDLS centres nationwide in order to complete the 'face to face' security validation process.

A facility will be in place in 2014 where customers can renew their licence by contacting the NDLS Customer Service Team by phone and providing supporting documentation by post. This facility will only be available to customers who have already completed the identity verification process during a face to face meeting in an NDLS centre on or after 29 October 2013.

Why can I not apply by post like the old service? From 29 October 2013, if you are applying for your first licence or learner permit, or renewing or replacing your current licence or learner permit, you are required to visit one of the new NDLS centres nationwide in person. This is because a new 'face to face' application process is being introduced which will help to increase the level of security around the driving licence, combat fraud and keep unlicensed drivers off our roads by ensuring that the only person who will use your licence is you. As such it is not possible to apply for a licence or learner permit by post.

You should only need to attend an NDLS centre once to do this face to face application – after that, you will be able to get subsequent licences and learner permits by phone/postal application. We will also plan to allow applications through an online service over the next couple of years.

My driving licence isn't due for replacement yet. Can I apply for a new plastic card licence once the new NDLS centres open on the 29th October? No. Only the following may apply to the NDLS for a plastic card licence:

- Those who have passed their driving test and are applying for their first driving licence
- Those applying for their first learner permit having passed their theory test
- Those who are renewing their learner permit/ driving licence if it is due to expire
- Those who are replacing a lost or stolen learner permit/ driving licence
- Those who are exchanging a foreign driving licence for an Irish driving licence
- Those who have lost their licence or had it stolen.

When can I apply to renew my licence? You can apply to renew your licence up to three months before it expires at any NDLS centre in the country.

Once I've applied when will I get my new licence / learner permit? Your licence will be posted out to you after you have made your application and should be received within eight working days.

Why is this change happening? To date the licensing service in Ireland has involved a number of Government Departments as well as individual Motor Taxation Offices around the country and it was the Government's view that the new National Driver Licence Service should be managed and implemented by one body. There are a number of benefits to centralising the licensing service. By delegating responsibility to the RSA, one authority will now have full responsibility for road safety, including driver education, training, and testing and vehicle roadworthiness. Over the past six years the delegation of responsibility for road safety to one standalone authority has proven to be very successful. Deaths on our roads have reduced by over 50% since the RSA was established, from 365 in 2006 to 162 in 2012. It is also important to highlight that the safety of vehicles, the quality of motoring and road safety standards in Ireland have improved dramatically in that time.

The NDLS is a key road safety tool to keep those who are illegally driving a vehicle off our roads. It will complement the other elements of the Road Safety Strategy that has been so successful in recent years. It is therefore logical to have this national service centrally managed by the authority with responsibility for road safety. The NDLS will build on the current licensing process and provide a secure, user-friendly, efficient, customer-focused service of the highest possible standard.

Where can I get more information on the new National Driver Licence Service (NDLS)?

The NDLS will have a full range of online services to help you in applying for a driving licence or a learner permit. They include the website NDLS.ie, a lo-call telephone service 0761-087-880, a new App for your smart phone, which can be found by searching for 'NDLS' in the app store, as well as a range of information leaflets.

Where can I get an application form for a driving licence / learner permit? You can download an application form from www.ndls.ie or collect one from your local NDLS centre, Garda Station, Driving Test Centre or Driver Theory Test Centre.

I need to change the name on my licence / learner permit. What do I need to do? To change your name on your licence or learner permit, you will need to provide evidence of your name change, for example, a civil marriage certificate/deed poll in addition to the documentation required to confirm your ID. If you are reverting to your birth name following divorce or separation, please submit your birth cert and your divorce or separation

agreement. You must show a link between your names on your identity and change of name documents.

Remember that the documents required to confirm your identity are in addition to any other documents that might be required as part of your application, for example, an eyesight report or medical report, a Certificate of Competency or a Theory Test Certificate. If you already have a licence or learner permit and are simply renewing it, bring this with you too.

How do I contact my local NDLS Centre? You can call into any of the 32 full time and two part time NDLS centres around the country for advice and assistance. You can also email your query to info@ndls.ie

Do I need to bring my own photographs with me when applying for a driving licence or learner permit? No. Your photograph will be taken digitally by the NDLS Customer Service Agent when you visit the centre to apply for your driving licence or learner permit. There will be no additional charge for this as the fee for the licence / learner permit will remain at its current level. The other benefits of this approach are that it:

- provides greater certainty in relation to identity validation;
- streamlines the process to enable a faster and more efficient service to the public;
- enables uploading of photographs onto the licence database with minimum of requirement for other hardware or software;
- reduces the number of customers who are turned away because they have presented unsuitable or inappropriate photographs. It is worth noting that the RSA has experienced significant difficulties with regard to the quality of photographs presented by some applicants. The problems relate to incorrect background, contrast, formatting and simply unsuitable photographs.

Why does the driving licence service have to move to the RSA - surely it can stay with the Motor Taxation Offices? To date the licensing service in Ireland has involved a number of Government Departments as well as individual Motor Taxation Offices around the country and it was the Government's view that the new National Driver Licence Service should be managed and implemented by one body.

There are a number of benefits to centralising the licensing service. By delegating responsibility to the RSA, one authority will now have full responsibility for road safety, including driver education, training, and testing and vehicle roadworthiness.

Over the past six years the delegation of responsibility for road safety to one standalone authority has proven to be very successful. Deaths on our roads have reduced by over 50% since the RSA was established, from 365 in 2006 to 162 in 2012. It is also important to highlight that the safety of vehicles, the quality of motoring and road safety standards in Ireland have improved dramatically in that time.

The NDLS is a key road safety tool to keep those who are illegally driving a vehicle off our roads. It will complement the other elements of the Road Safety Strategy that has been so successful in recent years. It is therefore logical to have this national service centrally managed by the authority with responsibility for road safety.

What should I do while I'm waiting for my new card e.g. if I'm stopped by a member of An Garda Síochána and asked to produce my licence? As is currently the case, if a member of An Garda Síochána asks you to produce a licence and your licence application is being processed, you will have an opportunity to produce your licence at a Garda station within 10 days

Is there a new application form? Yes, both the Learner Permit and Full Licence forms have been revised. These are available to download from www.ndls.ie and are available in NDLS Centres, Driver Theory Test Centres, Driving Test Centres and Garda Stations.

Where is the learner permit/driving licence produced? For added security and cost effectiveness the licences are personalised at a centralised location in Ireland. The actual cards themselves are produced in Finland as there is no company based in Ireland that can produce the card itself.

It has been said that applicants will be required to travel for up to four hours to have their licence renewed. Is this true? No, this is not true. This new network will ensure that the proposed locations will provide service to 95% of the population within a 50km radius. You can visit any one of the NDLS centres nationwide so you could make it part of another journey, such as travelling to work or college, or visiting relations in another county. And once you get to the NDLS centre, it is our intention to have your meeting completed as quickly as possible. You can also apply for your licence or learner permit 3 months before it expires and you can do this in any centre nationally.

What are those living in the remaining 5% supposed to do, will they have to travel for hours to get to an NDLS centre? As part of the new application process an applicant must travel to an NDLS centre to apply for their licence or learner permit. Every effort has been made to accommodate the public within a reasonable distance. It is worth noting that an applicant can apply for the licence or learner permit up to 3 months before it expires and they can do this in any centre nationally. This means that the application can be completed as part of weekly shopping trip or for example other family trip or occasion.

Why is there no NDLS centre in my town? The locations of the NDLS centres will ensure that 95% of the population is within 50 kilometres of a centre. One of the features of the new service is that customers can now go to any NDLS centre in the country, not just the centre in their own county as was previously the case. So customers can visit an NDLS centre as part of another journey, for example, on the way home from college, doing the weekly shopping or visiting family in another county. Remember you can renew your licence up to three months before its expiry date.

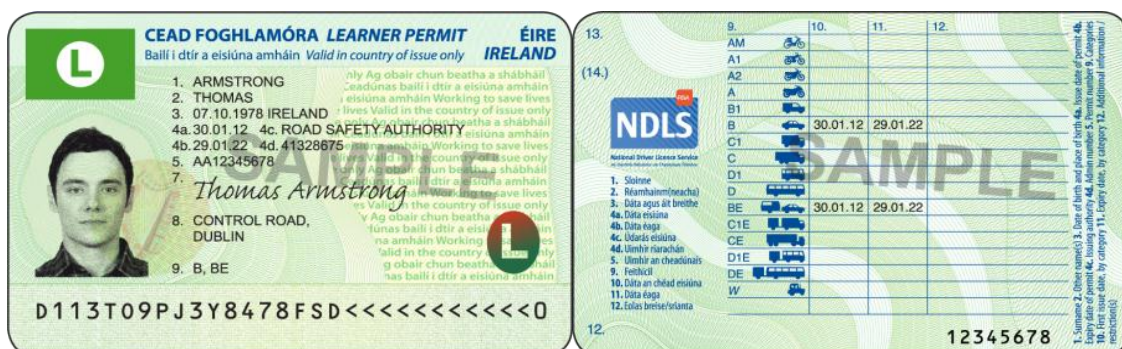
Will you send people a reminder of when their licence is due to expire? Yes. The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport sends out licence renewal reminders to the address on their database to those whose licences are due to expire and this will continue.

Why has there been a reduction in the services in my area? Previously there were more Motor Tax Offices looking after this service locally? The NDLS centre in your area is solely dedicated to managing the issuing of driving licenses. Unlike the old MTOs that handled a number of tasks, our team will work to streamline the process and make your driving licence safer. In addition the issuing of the plastic card licence itself means that the existing structure had to change. It was also important to centralise the service, which up to now was dispersed across a number of Departments and State Agencies. Future developments, including online services, can be more effectively delivered within a centralised service.

How come there are fewer locations offering this service now that when the Motor Tax Offices looked after the driving licence service? Our network of NDLS centres has been chosen to ensure that 95% of the population is within 50km of a centre. These offices are dedicated, solely, to manage the issuing of driving licences and the teams in the centres are supported by a sophisticated system using the latest technology to help applicants through the process as efficiently as possible,

What is a part time NDLS Centre? The NDLS is committed to providing a network of centres that ensures that 95% of the population is within 50kms of a centre. In Galway and Mayo we identified areas that are part of the other 5% so we are arranging for our NDLS team to visit these areas on a regular basis to facilitate applicants in those areas.

I haven't seen one yet. What do the new learner permit/ driving licences look like? The new learner permit/ driving licence are a credit-card sized format.





Licence Features

1. Surname
2. First Name
3. Date and Place of birth
4. Date of issue/ Date of Expiry/Issued by/ Driver Number
5. Licence Number
6. Photograph
7. Signature
8. Address
9. Categories
10. Date Issued from
11. Date Issued to
12. Additional Information / Restrictions
13. Administrative information
14. Optional for information in relation to licence or road safety

What are the benefits of this new-style driving licence? The new plastic card driving licence has a number of benefits. It is:

- Modern and safer because of high-level security features;
- Recognisable because it is in a standard format used throughout the EU states;
- Convenient to carry and less likely to be damaged because it is a neat size and made of polycarbonate.

How long will it take for the old driving licences to be replaced by the new credit card sized licences? Since 19 January 2013 all new licences and renewals were plastic and credit card sized. As all old paper licences are valid for a maximum of 10 years, it follows that all old paper licences should be replaced by 2023.

Will my existing paper learner permit/ driving licence continue to be valid until its expiry date? Yes. You can apply for the new licence when your current one expires. It will continue to be valid until its expiration date.

Can I apply for a learner permit/ driving licence online? Not at present. It is envisaged that this service will become available in late 2014 following the face-to-face identity validation. However, the learner permit and driving licence application forms are available to download from www.ndls.ie.

Can I use the Plastic Card Licence as an organ donation card? For the first time, application forms for the driving licence and learner permit allow applicants the option of having the code '115' on their licence or learner permit to signify that they are willing to be a multiple organ donor. As of 16 September 2013, more than one third of all licence holders have indicated that they wish to be an organ donor.

How many Learner Permits with code 115 have been issued? As of 16 September 2013, the number of Learner Permits issued with code 115 organ donor is 32,980, 29% of total Issued.

How many Full Licences with code 115 have been issued? As of 16 September 2013, the number of Full Licences issued with code 115 organ donor is 97,034, 37% of the total issued.

After getting their licence from the NDLS will people still need to get a separate international driving licence? Yes, there are no changes to the issue of international permits.

Is the new learner permit/ driving licence issued through NDLS less susceptible to fraud? Yes, because there are enhanced security features on the card as well as in the application and issuing process.

How many learner permits / driving licences are issued each year? There were 186,302 learner permits and 485,103 full driving licences issued in 2012.

What is the total number of learner permits and driving licences in Ireland at the present? As of 31st December 2012 there were 271,428 learner permits and 2,395,131 full driving licences in Ireland

How many learner permits and driving licences are renewed each year? There were 114,528 Learner Permits and 336,711 Full Licences renewed in 2012.