

## **Pennsylvanians Will Soon Need REAL ID To Travel**

Article By:

Raymond G. Lahoud

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The Pennsylvania Department of Motor Vehicles recently announced that Pennsylvanians will soon require a REAL ID-compliant form of identification for certain activities, including boarding domestic flights, accessing military bases, and entering certain federal facilities. This announcement underscores the final efforts by states to implement the REAL ID Act of 2005 and standardize certain forms of identification in the United States.

### **What is REAL ID?**

The [REAL ID Act of 2005](#) is an Act of Congress that modified federal laws governing the security, authentication, and issuance procedure standards for drivers' licenses and identity documents across the 50 states. Different state laws govern the issuance of different forms of state identification, such as driver's licenses, including what data is contained on the card, what documents were required to obtain the card, and what information is stored on each state's database for card holders. The REAL ID Act of 2005 sought to standardize these variations among the states by setting forth federal guidelines to control these factors. The Act, though passed in 2005, has not been fully implemented in many states, including Pennsylvania, and the deadline for full implementation of these standards is quickly approaching.

### **Pennsylvania Implements REAL ID**

The Pennsylvania Department of Motor Vehicles [has announced](#) that beginning May 3, 2023, Pennsylvanians will require REAL ID-compliant identification for certain purposes including boarding domestic flights, entering military bases, and entering certain federal facilities. Those who do not have a REAL ID card must take the necessary documents to a Driver Licensing Center for in-person verification, since to date, Pennsylvania does not offer this process electronically.

### **Can Non-Citizens Obtain a REAL ID Card in Pennsylvania?**

Yes! Non-U.S. citizens who are legal residents with either a green card or visa may apply for a REAL ID driver's license. To be approved, the noncitizen must present the following evidence at a Pennsylvania Driver Licensing Center:

#### **Proof of Identity:**

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- Unexpired Employment Authorization Card (“EAD”) issued by the Department of Homeland Security – Forms I-766 or I-688B; or
  - Valid, Unexpired Permanent Resident Card issued by the Department of Homeland Security/INS – Form I-551; or
  - Unexpired foreign passport with unexpired U.S. visa affixed and an I-94 travel record indicating temporary evidence of permanent residence

**Proof of Social Security Number:**

- Original Social Security Card issued by the Social Security Administration. If you do not have a social security number, provide an original copy of your ineligibility letter provided by the Social Security Administration.

**Proof of Pennsylvania Residency:**

- You must provide any TWO of the following documentation to prove residency in Pennsylvania for REAL ID purposes:
  - Pennsylvania vehicle registration card
  - Auto insurance card
  - Utility bill showing name and address
  - W-2 form reflecting residency
  - Tax Records
  - Lease agreements or mortgage documents

Once the proper documentation is submitted and a REAL ID card is issued, the expiration date for that card will depend on the card holder’s immigration status. Green card holders will pay a one-time fee of \$30 to get the REAL ID card, which will expire after the remainder of the current license validity period plus an additional four years. Thereafter, the REAL ID card must be renewed every four years.

For those with temporary immigration status, such as temporary visa recipients, the expiration date will coincide with the expiration of the immigration status.

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