



## Youth or Young Adult in Foster Care Driver License Fact Sheet

July 2020

A Texas driver license (DL) is free to the following persons if funding is available in the Identification Fee Exemption Account:

- Youth younger than 18 years of age in the managing conservatorship of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)
- Young adults 18 to 21 years of age residing in a paid DFPS foster care placement

These applicants are also exempt from the standard residency requirements to obtain a driver license.

### All Original Driver License (DL) Applicants Must:

- Apply in person at a Texas DL office.
- Present documents that verify the applicant's [identity](#).
- Present documents that verify the applicant is a [U.S. citizenship or has lawful presence](#). All information on each document must match. Additional documentation may be required to verify conflicting information, incomplete names, and/or date of birth.
- Surrender any other DL or identification card (ID) issued by any other state or country, including Texas.
- Present proof of [Social Security Number](#). If the applicant does not have a Social Security Number, a Social Security Affidavit form is available at the DL office.
- Present proof of Texas vehicle registration and liability insurance on all vehicles the applicant owns.
  - If the applicant does not own a vehicle, this will be affirmed on the application and registration and insurance information is not required.
- Complete the application for a driver license; adult ([DL-14A](#)) or minor ([DL-14B](#)).
- Present proof of [Texas residency](#).
  - Eligible youth will present the DFPS *Form 2042, Youth or Young Adult in Foster care Residency Verification for a Driver License or State ID Fee Waiver* – no additional proof of residency documents are required. This form is completed by the caseworker.
- Present proof of the appropriate [Impact Texas Driver \(ITD\) course](#).
  - ITD is an online video available through the DPS website. All applicants who are required to complete a skills test must complete the course appropriate for their age no more than 90 days before taking the skills test.
- Consent to be photographed, fingerprinted, and provide a signature at the time of application.
  - See requirements for foster youth under age 18 for notarization requirements
- Pass the written, driving (skills), and vision examinations.
- Provide a vehicle for the driving exam and present current liability insurance and Texas vehicle registration for the vehicle.
  - The vehicle insurance must not exclude the applicant. Named driver and similar policies that have exclusions and restrictions may not be acceptable.

### Additionally Foster Youth Under Age 18 Must:

- Complete all requirements for an original DL applicant.
- Be between 15 and 18 years of age and in the managing conservatorship of DFPS.
- Use the address of the caseworker office (recommended) or placement if intended to be permanent (with their consent) when completing the DL application.
  - The mailing address should normally be the caseworker office address.

- The caseworker signature of authorization is required on the driver license application to issue the license. If the caseworker does not go with the youth to the DPS office, they must ensure the driver license application is notarized before the youth goes to the DPS office.
  - NOTE: The adult who signs the application is the only person eligible to withdraw authorization for the license. See DFPS policy for more information about when it is appropriate to withdraw authorization to cancel the license.
- Provide completed *DFPS Form 2042, Youth or Young Adult in Foster Care Residency Verification for a Driver License or State Identification Card Fee Waiver*. This form is completed by the caseworker.
- Present the driver education completion certificate with application. All applicants who are applying for a [learner license](#) or a [provisional](#) DL must also submit their driver education completion certificate.
- Submit a high school diploma, its equivalent (GED), a Verification of Enrollment and Attendance (VOE) ([DL-104](#)) form, or a letter from the school administrator as a substitute for the VOE form with the application. The letter must contain the same information as the VOE form.

**NOTE:** The VOE form verifies the applicant is enrolled in a public school, home school, private school or GED program. **The VOE form is required for original and renewal applicants under the age of 18.** The VOE form is valid for 30 days after issuance in the spring and fall semesters and for 90 days during the summer. If a VOE cannot be obtained during the summer, DPS will accept a final report card from the most recent semester if it includes the applicant’s attendance record and passing status.

**NOTE:** Caseworker means the DFPS primary caseworker or other authorized DFPS staff such as the SSCC caseworker.

### **Driver Education Requirements**

There are three options for youth under the age of 18 to fulfill the driver education requirement – Commercial Schools, Parent Taught Driver Education and Public Schools. Regardless of the method of instruction, requirements include:

- 32 hours of classroom instruction; and
- 44 hours of in-car training consisting of 7 hours of behind the wheel driving, 7 hours of in-car observation and an additional 30 hours of behind the wheel driving – of which 10 hours must be done at night.
  - The additional 30 hours of driving may be monitored by the parent or an adult meeting the requirements listed in [Texas Transportation Code Section 521.222 \(d\)\(2\)](#) if the driver education course is completed at a Commercial School.

**NOTE:** A parent, step-grandparent, stepparent, foster parent, grandparent, or legal guardian or their qualified designee may teach the Parent Taught Driver Education (PTDE) Program. A legal guardian is defined as a guardian who has been legally appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction.

For additional information about driver education visit: <https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/driver/driver.htm>

### **Graduated Driver License (GDL)**

A GDL applies to a driver license applicant who is under 18 years of age. Acquiring a GDL is a two-phase process. Phase I applies to a learner license and Phase II applies to a provisional license.

#### **To complete Phase I of GDL an applicant must:**

- Be a minimum of 15 years of age;
- Complete at least 6 hours of the classroom training in a concurrent driver education program or 32 hours in a block mode of instruction;
- Pass the vision and written knowledge examination; and
- Provide verification of school enrollment.

Phase 1 restricts driving privileges for at least six months and requires the applicant to:

- Be accompanied by a person at least 21 years of age when operating a vehicle;
- Maintain a learner license for six months without suspension; and
- Not operate a vehicle while using a wireless communication device, except in case of an emergency (applies to all drivers under 18 years of age).

**To complete Phase II of GDL an applicant must:**

- Be at least 16 years of age and maintained a valid learner license for at least six months;
- Successfully complete a driver education course;
- Provide proof of completion of the [Impact Texas Teen Drivers \(ITTD\)](#) course;
  - All applicants who are required to complete a skills test must complete the course no more than 90 days prior to taking the skills test.
- Pass the road skills test at their local driver license office or through an [authorized third party](#) testing provider;
- Provide verification of school enrollment.

Phase II restricts driving privileges until the license holder's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday requiring the applicant to:

- Not operate a vehicle with more than one passenger in the vehicle under age 21 who is not a family member;
- Not operate a vehicle between midnight and 5:00 am unless necessary for employment, school-related activity or medical emergency; and
- Not operate a vehicle while using a wireless communication device, except in case of an emergency (applies to all drivers under 18 years of age).

A provisional license expires on the license holders' 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. The license can be renewed no more than 30 days prior to that date.

**NOTE:** GDL Phases do not apply to motorcycles.

**GDL Exceptions**

Time frames for GDL Phases I and II may vary based upon the teenager's age at the time of original application as illustrated by the following examples.

- 15-year-old starts GDL Phase I on their 15th birthday, extending Phase I to a full year because they are not eligible for Phase II until their 16th birthday.
- 17-year-old starts GDL Phase I eight months before their 18th birthday. They will have a six month GDL Phase I followed by a two month GDL Phase II before they are eligible for an unrestricted license.

**Age 18-21 Requirements:**

- Complete the requirements for all standard DL applicants (see Page 1).
- Be between 18 and 21 years of age and reside in a paid DFPS foster care placement. The DFPS primary caseworker or other authorized DFPS staff must sign *DFPS Form 2042 - Youth or Young Adult in Foster Care Residency Verification for a Driver License or State Identification Card Fee Waiver* affirming this.
- Use the DFPS caseworker office (recommended) or placement address if intended to be permanent (with their consent) when completing the application for a DL.
  - If the placement address is used, a change of address needs to be submitted to DPS within 30 days of leaving the placement.
- An 18-year-old applicant is not required to complete the GDL Phase I or Phase II (see information on page 3). However, they must complete a six-hour Adult Driver Education course and pass the vision and road skills test at their local DL Office or through an [authorized third party testing](#) provider.

For additional information about Adult Driver Education visit:

<https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/driver/driverfaq.htm#adult>