



Show Us the **REAL YOU** Get a Federally Approved ID Card

Tips for Florida Residents to Get an ID That Complies With the Real ID Act

The Act, signed into law in 2005, requires you to have an identity card that meets national standards set by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. These standards are intended to prevent fraud and protect national security. The Act requires you to have documents that prove two things:

- Your identity, and
- Your residence in Florida.

You may not have been affected by the Act yet. However, once your current Florida driver license or ID card expires, you will need the new card not only to drive, but also to collect Social Security and other benefits, open a bank account, travel, and to access most government services.

How will I be affected?

You shouldn't have any problem getting your new license or ID if:

- Your name is the same as the one on your U.S. birth certificate, and you have that document, a Social Security card, and two proofs of your residential address;
- You have legally changed your name or changed your name through marriage or divorce and have **certified copies** of the court orders; or
- You have alternate proof of legal U.S. residency (for example, a valid passport) and your Social Security number.

However, you may not have all the required documents, and getting them may be difficult, expensive, or even impossible. Without the proper ID you may not be able to:

- Access medical care;
- Vote;
- Get a job;
- Enter school;
- Cash a check;
- Obtain temporary assistance such as food stamps or Medicaid; or
- Obtain permanent housing for your family.

If you are a military veteran, you may not be able to prove your eligibility for service-related benefits.



Resources

Real ID Act overview and FAQs

www.flhsmv.gov/realid

www.gathergoget.com/checklist

Driver License New/Renew

Renew online in English and en Español

www.GoRenew.com

Florida Birth Certificate

www.floridahealth.gov

Birth Certificate for any State

Vital records for all states and Territories

www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm

No photo ID required to order your own birth certificate or have an attorney order for you

www.vitalchek.com

Florida Clerks of Court

Clerk websites by county

www.flclerks.com/directory.html

Florida standardized legal forms

www.flcourts.org/gen_public_family/forms_rules/index.shtml

Florida Law Help

Directory for legal aid/ services providers

www.floridalawhelp.org

Social Security Card

Order new or duplicate cards

www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber

Florida Bar Lawyer Referral Service

Dial toll-free: 1-800-342-8011

Florida Senior Legal Helpline

Dial toll-free:

1-888-895-7873



What will I need to prove my identity?

Proof of identity usually means you must provide an **original or certified copy** of your birth certificate or school records. This may be challenging. Over time, official documents may be lost. If you were born in a rural area, at home, or in another country, your official birth record may not exist. You may also have had a name change, which can complicate matters. Purchasing official records, particularly from another state, can be expensive and time-consuming.

If you are missing your birth certificate

You can get information about how to get your birth certificate for any state by visiting the following website: www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm. If you are a Florida resident, you may be able to get your birth certificate in person at your County Health Department. For a list of departments by county, visit www.floridahealth.gov.

If you are missing your marriage license or divorce decree

You can contact the Clerk of the Court in the county where you were married or divorced. In Florida, you can find that information at www.flclerks.com/directory.html. You will need **certified** copies of your records. Before you send in a written request, check with the Clerk for the associated fees, which you will need to enclose when you order the documents.

If the name you use doesn't match your birth certificate or Social Security card:

You may be able to link your current name to your birth name through documents, such as official school records, affidavits from people present at your birth, and your own children's birth certificates.

What will I need to prove my residency?

Proof of residency may be shown with items available to most of us, such as a recent utility bill, bank statement, voter registration card, or mail sent by a government

agency to your home address. However, if you have just moved to Florida, you are renting a room, or you are temporarily without a residence of your own, there are other ways to prove where you live:

- Certification of Address form with a letter from a homeless shelter;
- FDLE Registration form completed by the local Sheriff's Office for transients and former inmates; or
- Two proofs of address in the name of a parent, step-parent, legal guardian, or other person with whom you reside AND a statement from that person verifying that you live there.

When you need to go to Court to establish your identity

A court order may be the only way to prove your identity. If the names on your documents don't match, a court can order a legal name change. If you never had a birth certificate, a Florida court can create one for you, *even if you weren't born in Florida*.

For a legal name change:

- File a Petition for Name Change and pay a filing fee to the court.
- Florida has standardized forms for this type of lawsuit which are available at www.flcourts.org. Instructions are included. In many cases it is possible to obtain a Final Judgment of Name Change without an attorney.

For a court-issued birth certificate:

- Show that no birth certificate exists for you. You do this by getting a **certified** statement from the agency that issues certificates in the state where you were born. For a listing of where to write for vital records by state, visit www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm.
- Show the date and place of your birth and the identity of your parents. You must have some documentation, such as your baptismal certificate, official school records, or a sworn statement from a relative or other person who was alive at the time you were born.
- File a Petition and pay a filing fee to the Court.

Since there are no standardized forms for this type of lawsuit, you may need to hire an attorney to help you. Check with your local legal aid or legal services organization to see if you qualify for free services, or call the Florida Bar Lawyer Referral Service, 1-800-342-8011 for a referral in your community. If you are a Florida resident age 60 and older, you may also call the Florida Senior Legal Helpline for free legal advice, 1-888-895-7873.

