

Upgrading driver licences

from paper to photo

Factsheet

54

November
2018

ISSN 1172-0689 (print)
ISSN 1172-0778 (online)

Photo driver licences were introduced to New Zealand in 1999.

They are one of the best ways to catch unlicensed and disqualified drivers and, along with tough roadside penalties, get them off our roads.

Licences with photos also help the police to check that new and inexperienced drivers (those in the graduated driver licensing system) don't break the conditions under which they're allowed to drive.

You should carry your driver licence with you at all times when driving, as drivers are required by law to produce their driver licence immediately on request to a police officer.

What if I still have an old paper licence?

If you haven't changed your paper driver licence to a photo driver licence, you are strongly advised to do so **as soon as possible**.

All old style New Zealand driver licences (booklet or paper) have now been expired for more than five years. This means you can't drive using your old New Zealand driver licence, and you'll need to requalify your licence to get it back.

If you're caught driving on an expired licence you could face a \$400 fine and, if summonsed to court, you could be fined up to \$1000. Driving on an expired licence could also affect your ability to get car insurance, delay any insurance claim or result in a claim being declined.

Where do I go to requalify my licence?

Go to any NZ Transport Agency driver licensing agent. These are selected branches of:

- the Automobile Association (AA)
- Vehicle Testing New Zealand (VTNZ).

Go to www.nzta.govt.nz/agent to find an agent in your area.

How do I requalify my licence?

You'll need to:

- complete an *Application for reissue of driver licence* (DL7) form (available from any driver licensing agent or online at www.nzta.govt.nz/form-dl7).
- provide evidence of your identity - this can be your current New Zealand passport or two other acceptable forms of evidence of identity such as:
 - your New Zealand birth certificate and a student ID card or 18+ card, or
 - your New Zealand birth certificate and a utility bill (eg power bill or rates account).

If neither of the documents you provide has a photo you will also need to provide a verified image. See Factsheet 20: *Identification for driver licensing* for further information and a full list of acceptable identity documents.

All documents must be original documents. Photocopied or scanned documents are not acceptable.

- prove your eyesight meets the required standard.
- provide a medical certificate if required.
- have your image and signature captured.
- pay the requalification fee.
- pass a theory and practical driving test. You'll also need to pay a test fee for the relevant tests.

What if I've been driving overseas?

If you have been licensed to drive overseas within the last five years, you may not need to sit the tests to requalify your licence. Bring your overseas driver licence with you when you make your requalification application at an agent.

How much will the requalification cost?

The requalification fee will depend on the class of licence you're requalifying.

Car or motorcycle learner licence

Application fee	\$48.20
Theory test fee	\$45.70
Total	\$93.90

Car or motorcycle restricted licence

Application fee	\$48.20
Theory test fee	\$45.70
Practical test fee	\$86.60
Total	\$180.50

Car, motorcycle or truck* full licence

Application fee	\$49.60
Theory test fee	\$45.70
Full licence test fee	\$59.90
Total	\$155.20

*if you're requalifying a truck learner licence, please call us on 0800 822 422 to determine which tests you'll need to complete and the fee you'll pay.

Eyesight requirements

You must prove that your eyesight is up to standard. You can:

- pass an eyesight screening check at a driver licensing agent, or
- present a satisfactory eyesight certificate or medical certificate (no more than 60 days old).

The certificate must be issued by a New Zealand registered optometrist or health practitioner, for example your usual doctor (GP), a registered nurse or nurse practitioner, or a specialist if appropriate.

If you don't pass the eyesight screening check at the agent, you'll need to provide a certificate instead.

If you have sight in only one eye, or have only one eye (monocular vision) you'll need to present an eyesight certificate.

Do I need a medical certificate?

You'll need to present a medical certificate from a New Zealand registered health practitioner if you:

- are turning 75 or older (see Factsheet 57 *Older drivers: licence renewal*)
- have a medical condition that affects your ability to drive safely
- have heavy vehicle driver licence classes.

Medical certificates must:

- be the original
- be no more than 60 days old
- be issued by a New Zealand-registered health practitioner, for example your usual doctor (GP), a registered nurse or nurse practitioner, or a specialist if appropriate
- state that you can drive safely, or set out the conditions under which you can drive.

Medical declarations

The photo driver licence application form contains medical questions that need to be answered by all drivers.

If your ability to drive safely has been adversely affected by a medical condition or conditions in the last five years, you must present a medical certificate with your application.

Examples of medical conditions that can adversely affect your ability to drive include diabetes, double vision, Alzheimers, epilepsy, fits, head or spinal injuries, high blood pressure, amputations, mental illness, joint or limb problems, strokes and convulsions.

The information in this factsheet is a general guide only. It is not the source of the law and should not be used in place of authoritative legal documents. Some factsheets are updated frequently and print versions can quickly become out of date. If the currency of the information you are reading is important, check the factsheet index on our website (www.nzta.govt.nz/factsheets) or call us on 0800 822 422.

Is your name different now?

If the name you want on your photo driver licence is different from the name on the driver licence register or on either of your two forms of identity, you will need to provide one of the following documents (which must be an original) as proof of your name change. Suitable documents are:

- your marriage or civil union certificate
- a dissolution of marriage (or civil union) order
- a certificate of annulment
- a deed poll certificate, change of name certificate or a birth certificate showing both names

a statutory declaration confirming change of name which has been registered with the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

What if I had endorsements on my licence?

If your old licence allowed you to operate special-type vehicles, these will be automatically requalified to the appropriate forklift, rollers, tracks or wheels endorsement(s).

If your old licence allowed you to operate a taxi, bus or tow truck, these are not automatically requalified. You will need to apply for these separately.

Contact details

- Call our contact centre: 0800 822 422.
- Visit our website: www.nzta.govt.nz.
- Email us: info@nzta.govt.nz.
- Write to us: NZ Transport Agency, Private Bag 11777, Palmerston North 4442.