

Overseas travel

by New Zealand licence holders

This factsheet provides helpful information for New Zealand driver licence holders travelling or intending to travel overseas.

Overseas travel by New Zealand driver licence holders

Most countries will allow you to drive legally on your New Zealand driver licence for a limited period of time. However, you can only do so if your New Zealand licence is current and valid for the purpose of driving in New Zealand.

You can't use your New Zealand licence to drive overseas if:

- your licence has:
 - » expired, or
 - » been revoked, or
 - » been suspended or disqualified, or
 - » been cancelled.
- you're required to reinstate your licence at the end of a demerit point suspension or disqualification and you haven't done this.

See *Driving offences and penalties* (Factsheet 55) for more information about reinstating your licence.

Older style driver licence

All New Zealand driver licence holders should have upgraded to photo driver licences, but if you've been living overseas, you may not have had the opportunity to do so.

Everyone needs to apply for a new photo driver licence in person. This is because the photo is taken on a secure digital camera linked to the driver licensing system. All agents authorised to process driver licences are based in New Zealand.

When you get home to New Zealand

All old style New Zealand licence (eg booklet or paper driver licences, commonly known as lifetime licences) have now expired. If you come back to New Zealand with one of these licences you won't be able to use it to drive in New Zealand.

Instead, you'll need to upgrade and requalify your licence to get it back. See *Upgrading driver licences from paper to photo* (Factsheet 54) for more information.

Photo driver licences can only be renewed in New Zealand

New Zealand driver licences can only be renewed in New Zealand.

If your licence expires while you're overseas, you may find it difficult - if not impossible - to drive legally in another country. For example, you may not be able to convert to an overseas driver licence or rent a car.

Once you're back in New Zealand

If your New Zealand driver licence is expired (either booklet, paper or photo licence) you can't use it to drive in New Zealand.

However, if you also hold a current and valid overseas driver licence you can drive on your overseas driver licence for up to 12 months from your last date of entry.

If your licence expired more than five years ago, you may have to pass theory and practical tests to requalify your licence. However, if you can produce evidence you've been licensed to drive during the past five years (for example with an overseas driver licence) you may not need to sit the tests.

If you're still overseas

In some cases, you may be able to extend the expiry date of your New Zealand photo driver licence if it expires while you're overseas. Your licence expiry date can be extended only once, for a period of no more than 12 months from the expiry date.

If you want to have your driver licence expiry date extended, you'll need to make an *Application to replacement driver licence and/or extension of licence validity* (DL2A). Go to www.nzta.govt.nz/DL2A-online-replacement to do this online.

Renew your licence before you go

If your licence is due to expire while you're overseas, we strongly encourage you to renew your photo driver licence before you leave New Zealand. Usually, a renewed licence is valid for 10 years from the date of issue and costs \$43.90.

Don't wait until the last minute to renew your licence. It takes up to 10 days for your new licence card to arrive in the mail, and you need to make sure you get it before you leave. Also, you may need time to get a medical or eyesight certificate for your application.

If you're 74 or over

If you're 74 years of age or older, you can only renew your licence within six months of your licence expiry date. Your licence will expire on your 75th birthday, your 80th birthday, your 82nd birthday and every second birthday after that. For example, if your licence expires on your 75th birthday, you'll only be able to renew your licence six months before your 75th birthday.

If you renew up to six months early, your new licence will then have an expiry date as if you had renewed it on your birthday. For example, if you renew your licence three months before your 80th birthday, then the new licence will expire on your 82nd birthday.

For more information about renewing your licence go to www.nzta.govt.nz/driver-licence-renewal or read *Older drivers: licence renewal* (Factsheet 57).

Replacing a lost or stolen licence

If your current driver licence is lost or stolen while you're overseas, you can apply for a replacement.

Verified RealMe identity

If you have a verified RealMe identity you may be able to apply online at www.nzta.govt.nz/online-replacement.

You'll need a Visa or MasterCard credit or debit card or your New Zealand internet banking details (POLi) to pay for your replacement driver licence. It costs \$38.20 (including GST).

We'll send your replacement driver licence directly to your overseas address.

No verified RealMe identity

If you don't have a verified RealMe identity, you can still apply online, but your application will take slightly longer.

Before you make your application, you'll need to call us to pay the replacement licence fee of \$38.20 over the phone with a Visa or MasterCard debit or credit card. You can call us on +64 6 953 6270 to make the payment: we're open Monday to Friday 8am to 5.30pm (New Zealand time).

You'll also need to get certified copies of your evidence of identity. They must be certified by an official to confirm they're true and accurate copies of the original documents. An official is a lawyer, solicitor, notary public, court registrar, embassy official, justice of the peace or police officer. Please ensure the person certifying the documents clearly indicates in which capacity they're acting.

Go to www.nzta.govt.nz/DL2A-online-replacement to make your application online.

Alternatively, you can have someone with a power of attorney pick up a form at a driver licensing agent and apply for a replacement licence on your behalf.

Confirming licence status or details

Some overseas licensing authorities and rental car companies may want to confirm:

- how long you've held your licence for
- which classes of licence you hold, or
- the status of your driver licence.

To do this, you can apply for a certificate of particulars. It outlines which classes of driver licence you hold, the issue date of the licence classes, and if the classes are current, etc.

Applying for a certificate of particulars

To apply for a certificate of particulars, call us on +64 6 953 6270. We're open Monday to Friday 8am to 5.30pm (New Zealand time).

You'll need a Visa or MasterCard debit or credit card for paying the fee of \$11.10.

Getting an overseas driver licence

If you're planning on being overseas for an extended period, you should consider getting a driver licence from the country you're staying in. Many countries only allow holders of overseas licences to drive on those licences for a limited time. After this, people are generally required to convert to a driver licence from that country.

If you're staying in one country for some time, you should check with the driver licensing agency there to find out how long you may drive on your New Zealand licence and what you need to do to get a licence from that country.

International driving permits

The New Zealand Automobile Association (AA) advises that international driving permits (IDPs) are recommended for most countries - check the AA website for an up-to-date list.

Note: an IDP is not a driver licence. It's a translation of your driver licence and is only valid while the accompanying driver licence is current. You must always carry both your New Zealand licence and the IDP while you're driving.

You can get an IDP from the AA. It will be valid for a maximum of one year from the issue date.

For more information go to <https://www.aa.co.nz/drivers/driver-licences/driving-permits-for-driving-overseas/>

Where can I find out more?

Read driver licensing information on our website www.nzta.govt.nz/driver-licence.



This factsheet is a general guide only. It doesn't replace legal advice, and your exact requirements will depend on current legislation.

Make sure you have the most up-to-date version of this factsheet by checking www.nzta.govt.nz/factsheets



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