

DID YOU KNOW – “REAL ID” DRIVER’S LICENSE NOW AVAILABLE

Is flying in your future? Soon, you will need a REAL ID to board a flight within the U.S. if you do not already have a passport or Enhanced Driver License. According to the federal [REAL ID Act](#), beginning October 1, 2020, those wishing to fly within the U.S. using their New York State-issued license or ID card will need a REAL ID or Enhanced Driver License (EDL).

Passed by Congress in 2005, the REAL ID Act enacted the 9/11 Commission's recommendation that the Federal Government “set standards for the issuance of sources of identification, such as driver's licenses.” The Act established minimum security standards for state-issued driver's licenses and identification cards and prohibits Federal agencies from accepting for official purposes licenses and identification cards from states that do not meet these standards. States have made considerable progress in meeting this key recommendation of the 9/11 Commission and every state has a more secure driver's license today than before the passage of the Act.

New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is encouraging all New Yorkers, especially those renewing or getting a license or ID for the first time, to get a REAL ID now. The new REAL ID license comes with no extra cost and will enable its holder to fly within the US. For more information about REAL ID and Enhanced Driver Licenses, visit the [DMV website](#) or watch DMV’s YouTube video [Which License or ID is Right For Me?](#) I watched this video and it is well done and helpful for choosing which license you should get.

The Enhanced Driver License (EDL) enables the holder to travel between the US and Canada and Mexico, and to fly within the US as well. The EDL costs an extra \$30 but is good for eight years, or only an extra \$3.75 per year. This is the license I have had since it first became available many years ago. Yes, I also have a passport, but I only need to carry this when I fly outside the US. Along with New York, Michigan, Minnesota, Vermont, and Washington are the only states that currently issue EDLs.

To summarize, there are now three basic driver’s licenses available in NYS. They are the Standard License, the Enhanced License, and now the REAL ID License. The Standard license is all that is required to drive within the nation. However, it will be marked in the upper right corner “*Not for Federal Purposes*”. Thus it may not be accepted at Canadian or US Customs for travel between the two countries nor will it be accepted for flights within the US after October 1, 2020.

REAL ID is available at DMV offices statewide. It will require a trip to the DMV to get a photo taken and to present the required documents. To ensure you have all the documents you need before your trip to the office, visit DMV’s easy-to-use [Document Guide](#).