

DRIVING IN THE U.S.

International Student
Information Session



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Vocabulary



- **RMV** – Registry of Motor Vehicles
- **Learner's permit** – Legal document that allows you to begin learning how to drive with a licensed driver
- **Driver's license** – Legal document that proves you have the skills and knowledge to drive on your own
- **Fine/Ticket** – Financial consequence of doing something illegal on the road



Obtaining a Driver's License:

- If you hold a driver's license from Canada, Mexico, South Korea, France, Taiwan, or Germany, your license can be converted without taking a test.
- If your license is from any other country, you will need to complete the learner's permit exam and road test.
- Please note, permit exams are available in 34 languages.

What documents will I need?



You will need to following documents to complete the permit and license process:

- Proof of citizenship or lawful presence
- A Social Security number or SSN rejection letter
- Proof of Massachusetts residency
- Please note, you must bring originals documents. Also, a document cannot be used to prove more than one requirement.

How to Apply for your SSN Rejection Letter



1. Gather your documents

- Application SS-5, unexpired passport, F-1 Visa, and form I-20

2. Go to the Social Security Administration (SSA) Office with your documents

- The Worcester SSA Office is located at 51 Myrtle St.
- You may also fax or mail COPIES (do not mail original documents!) to the SSA, but the processing time will be longer.

3. You will **receive your SSN Rejection Letter** either at the SSA office or in the mail, depending on how you applied (in-person or via mail/fax)

Learner's Permit



A learner's permit is the first step to obtaining a license.

How to complete the permit process:

1. Submit application (online) before taking the test. Collect all documents necessary according to the RMV's instructions.
2. Schedule an appointment at your local RMV to take the test.
3. You will need to pass a written knowledge test which costs \$30.

To access the online application form, further instructions on how to obtain a Learner's Permit, and a link to a practice test, [visit the MA RMV website](#).

I have my permit so now I can drive, right?

No! You must be accompanied by a licensed driver who is at least 21 years of age and who has at least one year of driving experience until you have obtained your driver's license.

- If you are over 18 years of age and feel you are ready, you can apply to take the road test immediately after you get your permit.
- If you do not already know how to drive, you may want to take lessons. Here are a few driving schools in the area:
 - [Laporte's Driving Schools](#)
 - [Richways Auto School LLC.](#)
 - [Best Driving School Inc.](#)



Driver's License Test

Tests are only in-person and require you to:

1. Hold a MA learner's permit prior to applying.
2. Call or [go online](#) to schedule a licensing test (\$35)
3. Present test application, learners permit, sponsor, safe vehicle to take the test in. A car is **not** provided for you. You can rent one if you don't have one.
4. Complete a road test of your driving skills. If you pass, you will be issued a license.



Road Test Sponsor

- In order to take the road test, you will need to have a sponsor present at the RMV to take the road test with. The sponsor must:
 - Be 21 years of age or older
 - Have at least 1 year of driving experience
 - Be duly licensed by their state of residence
- Your sponsor **MUST** bring their driver's license to the road test for the examiner to review



Road Test Vehicle

The vehicle must:

1. Have a valid registration and current inspection sticker.
2. Be designed to let the examiner make an emergency stop using the parking brake.
 - Any vehicle with a center console that does not have a parking brake as part of the console CANNOT be used.
 - Any vehicle that does not allow the examiner unobstructed access to the parking brake CANNOT be used.

Driving in the US with a Foreign License

Massachusetts does allow visitors to legally drive a car on a foreign license. As a student at Clark you are now a Massachusetts resident, and therefore are expected to obtain a Massachusetts license.

If you get pulled over and only have your foreign license on you, telling a police officer that you are a visitor is technically lying and is a risk.

You also will not be able to use your foreign license for things like buying alcohol or buying a car.

Where can I get my License?



The Worcester RMV branch is located at

- 50 SW Cutoff
- You must make an appointment online before visiting.

Costs Associated with Owning a Car



- **Car Insurance:** You are required to have car insurance. The cost is dependent on a variety of factors including which insurance company you use, your driving history, your home address, etc.
- **Registration:** You are required to register your car with the State of Massachusetts every two years. (\$60)
- **Inspection:** Your car must be inspected every year and an inspection sticker must be placed on the windshield. (\$35)
- You must pay annual local **car (excise) taxes**. These are taxes that you pay to your city or town of residence. The Registry of Motor Vehicles will inform your city or town of residence when you register a car and they will send you a bill for the excise taxes.
- **Car payment:** if you take out a loan to purchase a car, you will have a monthly car payment.
- **Gas**
- **Car repairs**

Important! Know the Rules of the Road



It is extremely important for international students, scholars, and employees to understand and follow all requirements for driving responsibly while in the U.S.

Traffic laws are strictly enforced by the police. Just because you do not know the rules does not give you permission to break them!



Driving Under the Influence (DUI)



You should be especially aware of the consequences of [driving under the influence](#) (DUI) of alcohol or other drugs.

- A DUI arrest or conviction may lead to revocation of your visa, as well as other extremely serious legal consequences.
- If you are subject to arrest or conviction due to driving under the influence or as a result of another serious driving violation, we encourage you to consult with the International Students and Scholars Office and a qualified immigration and/or criminal attorney to assist you.

Is Clark Responsible for me if I get into an Accident?



Clark University is not responsible for students who get into car accidents or trouble on the road, however, we are still here to help.

If you do get into an accident:

- Do not leave the scene of the accident.
- Have your license and insurance information ready to share with the other driver/property owner.
- Sometimes the police will be called to make an official report, so be ready to relay the details of the accident to them.

What do I do if I get pulled over?



- Remain calm.
- Be sure to have your license and car registration to give to the police officer.
- Do not argue with the police officer. Apologize and do as they say.
 - For first-time offenses, you may only be issued with a warning as opposed to a fine.

Resources



For more detailed information, check out the [MA RMV's website](#).

You can also look on our website [here](#) for additional information.

QUESTIONS?

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