

Uh, what's REAL ID?

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Do you have questions about REAL ID? The California Department of Motor Vehicles has answers ...

QUESTION: I keep hearing that I'll need to get a new ID to fly next year. Just what is this REAL ID I keep hearing about?

A: REAL ID is the next generation of identification recognized across the country. As of Oct. 1, 2020, a REAL ID will be required to board a domestic flight and to enter secure federal facilities, such as military bases, federal courthouses and other secure federal locations.

Q: I just renewed my driver's license last year. How will I know if it's a REAL ID or not?

A: A REAL ID has an icon of a Golden Bear, with a star on the top-right corner of the license. The standard driver's license will have a statement that reads "federal limits apply" in the top right corner. The biggest difference between a REAL ID and a standard driver's license is the convenience of using your REAL ID for domestic flights and for entering federal facilities.

Q: I'm confused by the news about REAL ID. How do I know if I need one?

A: Starting Oct. 1, 2020, a standard California driver's license or identification card will no longer be accepted as a valid form of federal identification. While these cards will still be a valid form of California ID, they will not be sufficient to enter federal courthouses or military bases, or to board domestic flights within the U.S. If you don't have a passport, passport card, or another federally accepted form of identification (such as a military ID), you will need a REAL ID. To determine whether you should get your REAL ID now or later, go to realid.dmv.ca.gov and take a short "Do I need a REAL ID?" quiz. It will give you your options and when you should apply.

Q: Which documents will I need to get a REAL ID?

A: A complete checklist of approved documents can be found at realid.dmv.ca.gov/how-do-i-get-a-real-id/. Step 4 includes a checklist to help you ensure you gather all of the correct documentation necessary when you come into a field office to apply for your REAL ID. We recommend you also complete the online application before coming into an office for your appointment.

If you have a question regarding REAL ID, the DMV or available online services, email AskDMV@dmv.ca.gov, or go to www.realid.dmv.ca.gov for a list of frequently asked questions.