

Fast Facts 8

Social Security Number (SSN)



Why Collect an SSN?

The *California Vehicle Code* (CVC) requires the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to collect your social security number (SSN). (CVC §§1653.5(a)(b), 12800(a), 12801) Federal law also allows any state to use a person's SSN for the purpose of establishing his/her identification. (42 U.S.C. §405(c)(2)(C)(i))

SSN Verification

All applicants for a driver license and/or identification (DL/ID) card must submit his/her social security number to DMV. DMV electronically verifies your SSN, name, and birth date with the Social Security Administration (SSA) while you are in the DMV office. This process adds to the accuracy, reliability, and integrity of DMV's driver license database. The name and birth date you provide on your DL/ID card application must match the name and birth date the SSA has for you in its database.

If the information you give DMV does not match SSA's database, you will not be issued a DL/ID card. You will receive a Request for Verification of Information letter from DMV informing you that the information you provided (name, birth date, and/or SSN) does not match SSA's records. You will need to go to a local SSA office to correct the information SSA has on its database so that the information on both DMV's and SSA's databases match.

Application Requirements

You may not start a noncommercial Class A, B, or C driver license application or an ID card application without providing an SSN to DMV. You do not need to show your SSN card or any other visual verification of your SSN to apply for a noncommercial driver license or an ID card. Visual verification of your social security number is required only on original commercial driver license (CDL) applications and for any request to correct an SSN that is already on the on the driver record database, regardless of your DL class.

Verification Documents

The only documents acceptable for visual verification of your SSN are originals of the following:

- An unlaminated social security card
- A Medicare card
- A United States Armed Forces ID card:
 - Active-DD form 2*
 - Retired-DD form 2*
 - Reserve-DD form 2*
 - Dependent-DD form 1173
- Military separation document-DD form 214 (original copy)

* Letters following the number "2" indicate the specific branch of service.

How do I Know if I'm Eligible for an SSN?

All customers applying for an original DL/ID card must provide evidence of legal presence in the United States as authorized under federal law.

- If you were born in the United States (U.S.) or become a U.S. citizen, you are eligible for an SSN, and must provide it to DMV.
- If you are not a U.S. citizen, but in the United States legally and authorized to work, you are eligible for an SSN, and must provide it to DMV.
- If you are not a U.S. citizen, but in the United States legally and are not authorized to work, you are not eligible for an SSN.

If you are legally present in the U.S., but ineligible for an SSN, you are exempt from the DMV SSN requirement. You may start an application for a noncommercial driver license or ID card, and once your eligibility status is verified, DMV will complete your application.

You must still provide an acceptable birth date/legal presence document for any future DL/ID card application or provide a valid SSN. You may not start an original CDL A, B, or C application until DMV visually verifies your SSN.

What do I do if I Have Changed my Name?

Please contact the Social Security Administration (SSA) to change your name on SSA records before you make an appointment with DMV to have your name changed on DMV records. DMV electronically verifies your name, birth date, and social security number with the SSA.

If your information does not verify, DMV will not be able to change your name on your DL/ID card. You will receive a Request for Verification of Information letter from DMV informing you that the information you provided (name, birth date, and/or SSN) does not match SSA's records.

If you have changed your name since your last renewal, you will need to visit your local SSA office to correct your name on SSA's database before you visit DMV to renew your DL/ID card and have your name changed at the same time.

You will need to provide DMV with evidence of your name change. Acceptable evidence of your new name may be provided by showing an original or certified copy of a birth date/legal presence or a true full name document. Visit the DMV website at dmv.ca.gov for the list of acceptable birth date/legal presence or true full name documents.

What if I Refuse to Disclose my SSN?

If you refuse to disclose your SSN, you will not be able to start any DL/ID card application.

SSN Confidentiality

Your SSN is confidential and will not appear on the photo license or be encoded on the magnetic stripe. Your SSN will also not appear on any document requested by the public which DMV is authorized to release. However, your SSN will be released to the authorized state agencies specified in CVC §1653.5(e)(1).

SSN Card Information

Social security cards are issued by the Social Security Administration. To apply for an SSN card:

- go to your local Social Security Office, or
- visit SSA's website at ssa.gov

To apply for an original SSN, you will need to:

- Complete an Application for a Social Security Card (Form SS-5)
- Provide documents proving your:
 - U.S. Citizenship (or Immigration status and work eligibility)
 - Age
 - Identity

Contact the SSA or visit the SSA's website for a list of acceptable documents. If you are age 12 or older requesting an original SSN, you must appear for an interview at a Social Security Office.

You may contact the SSA at 1-800-772-1213. Specific questions are answered from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. Information can also be provided by an automated phone service 24 hours a day.