

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Office of Public Affairs

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**DHS Launches “Be Your REAL ID Self” Public Awareness Campaign**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has begun a new nationwide public awareness campaign, “[Be Your REAL ID Self](#)” to promote awareness of the REAL ID requirements and encourage the public to act before the October 1, 2021 full enforcement deadline.

Just over 8 months remain until the October 1, 2021 REAL ID full enforcement deadline goes into effect at all federally regulated airports, federal facilities, and nuclear power plants.

The Department continues to urge Americans to obtain a REAL ID-compliant card or acceptable alternative, such as a U.S. passport or passport card prior to the October 1, 2021 enforcement deadline.

Passed by Congress in 2005 following a 9/11 Commission recommendation, the REAL ID Act establishes minimum security standards for state-issued driver’s licenses and identification cards and prohibits federal agencies, like the Transportation Security Administration, from accepting licenses and identification cards for official purposes from states that do not meet these standards.

Security standards include incorporating anti-counterfeiting document security features into licenses and identification cards, preventing insider fraud in the production of those licenses and cards, ensuring security of production facilities, and requiring presentation and verification of information to ensure a person is who he or she claims to be. It also prohibits federal agencies from accepting non-compliant licenses and identification cards for accessing federal facilities, entering nuclear power plants, and boarding federally regulated commercial aircraft. These standards have significantly improved the reliability and accuracy of state-issued driver’s licenses and identification cards across the country.

To avoid confusion regarding the REAL ID Act requirements and enforcement milestones, residents can use the following guidelines to be fully informed and prepared.

- Check your state-issued driver’s license or identification card for the star. REAL ID-compliant cards have a star marking in the upper left- or right-hand corner. Most acceptable alternatives, such as state-issued Enhanced Driver’s Licenses (EDLs), which are available in five states and can be used for entering the U.S. at land and sea border crossings, do not have the star, but are acceptable for official REAL ID purposes. For more information on EDLs, please go to [www.dhs.gov/enhanced-drivers-licenses-what-are-they](http://www.dhs.gov/enhanced-drivers-licenses-what-are-they).
- Bring identity documents to the airport that are acceptable for flying domestically. Check to see if you have the proper identification to fly

at [tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/identification](https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/identification). TSA's website has a list of acceptable forms of identification that individuals may use to verify their identity at the screening checkpoint. If you need to obtain a new form of ID, please allow enough processing time before you travel. For example, the current processing times for U.S. passports are approximately 10 weeks for routine service and two to three weeks for expedited service.

- Check with the federal agency you plan to visit, in advance, to find out whether identification is required, and if so, what types of identity documents are acceptable. While most Federal agencies will continue to accept legacy and non-compliant marked driver's licenses and identification cards until the October 1, 2021 full enforcement deadline, some – like Department of Defense facilities and posts – may no longer accept them.

Read answers to REAL ID frequently asked questions at [www.dhs.gov/real-id-public-faqs](https://www.dhs.gov/real-id-public-faqs).

DHS continues working closely with all states and territories to implement REAL ID Act requirements.

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