



HOW TO GET A VALID ILLINOIS DRIVER'S LICENSE



Instructional Guide for First Time
Driver's License Application and
Reinstatement After Suspension

**CREATED BY REVOLUTION WORKSHOP, IN
PARTNERSHIP WITH THE TRANSIT TABLE**

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Getting a driver's license can feel overwhelming, especially if you have previously lost one due to unresolved tickets or ticket debt. Figuring out where to go and what you need to do can be very confusing. Whether you are looking to get your driver's license for the first time or attempting to reinstate a suspended one, this booklet will show you how to create a plan to get a valid driver's license.

Each of the three main chapters start with an action plan worksheet you can use to help you in your process. The following sections of each of the chapters will explain what to do for each step of your action plan.

To use this book, click on one of the following statements which best matches your situation:

1. [I have never had a driver's license and I need help getting one. Go to Chapter 1.](#)
2. [I have a driver's license but I need help checking the status of it. Go to Chapter 2.](#)
3. [I had a driver's license but it has been suspended or revoked and I need help getting it reinstated. Go to Chapter 3.](#)

Anything in blue is a link. You can click on the links in the [Table of Contents on the following page to go directly to any section](#) you want. While reading, you can click on the link on the bottom of each page to be brought back to the Table of Contents at any point in this book.

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CHAPTER 1

HOW TO APPLY FOR AN ILLINOIS DRIVER'S LICENSE

ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET: APPLY FOR A DRIVER'S LICENSE:

IF YOU ARE 18 - 20 YEARS OLD

1. [Learn to drive](#) (if you don't know already)
2. [Get proof from driver's training course](#) you already attended
-or-
Certificate from 6 hour [online driver's education course](#)
3. [Prepare DMV visit](#)
 - a. Practice written test online
 - b. Get all documentation together: proof of identity and residence
 - c. Plan day/time of your visit
 - d. Secure a friend/family member with insured car to take you and let you use their car for the driving test
4. [Go to DMV and take Driver's test](#)
 - a. Get photo taken
 - b. Take written test
 - c. Take eye exam
 - d. Take driver's test
5. **GET YOUR LICENSE!**

IF YOU ARE 21 YEARS OR OLDER

1. [Learn to drive](#) (if you don't know already)
2. [Prepare DMV visit](#)
 - a. Practice written test online
 - b. Get all documentation together: proof of identity and residence
 - c. Plan day/time of your visit
 - d. Secure a friend/family member with insured car to take you and let you use their car for the driving test
3. [Go to DMV and take Driver's test](#)
 - a. Get photo taken
 - b. Take written test
 - c. Take eye exam
 - d. Take driver's test
4. **GET YOUR LICENSE!**

APPLY FOR A DRIVER'S LICENSE: CHAPTER OVERVIEW

If this is the first time you are going to get your driver's licence or you have cleared up issues with a suspended license and are ready to reapply, congratulations! Follow the steps below to success.

1. Learn to drive (if you don't know already)
2. Prepare DMV visit: Get all necessary documents together
3. Go to DMV and take Driver's test.

There are different rules for adults over 21 and adults under 21. Please follow the steps below depending on your age.

If you are between the Ages of 18-20: you will need to have proof of a driver's ed training course -or- a certificate of completion of a 6 hour online driver's training class: [See Page 7](#).

If you are 21 years or older: You are not obligated to have any formal driver's training. [Follow steps 1-3 on pages 8-11](#).

1. Drivers Training For Ages 18-20:

Adults between the ages of 18-20 need proof of taking a driver's education program to apply for a driver's license.

Proof of Driving Education Program

You will need either:

- **proof of a driver's ed training program**
- or -
- **a certificate of completion from an [online training course](#)**

Driver's ED: If you took a driver's training program in high school, you can try contacting the highschool to get proof of your training completion.

Online Training Course: If you didn't take a class or you can't find proof of driver's ed completion, you will need to take a 6 hour online course. We suggest this [online training class](#). It costs \$49, can be completed online, and requires six hours to complete. You will take a test at the end of the course. You need 75% to pass. You get one retake if you do not pass the first time. Once you pass, print out the certificate of completion and you are done.

After obtaining proof of your driver's training program or a certificate of completion of a 6 hour online course, you can now move forward to [follow the steps on pages 8-11](#)

1. LEARN TO DRIVE

IF YOU ALREADY KNOW HOW TO DRIVE: [SKIP TO STEP 2](#)

If you DO NOT know how to drive:

You will need to take a behind the wheel practical test when you apply for a driver's license so having some previous driving experience is important. If you do not know how to drive, you have **two basic options for getting driving experience:**

Take a class: If you do not know how to drive, taking a class is recommended. You can take a driver's training class at [Nova](#), with basic classes starting at \$99.

Learn on your own: You can also ask a friend or family member with an insured vehicle to take you driving. You can start practicing in a parking lot and then go to the street when you have mastered the parking lot. **It is strongly recommended that you get a Driver's Permit before you practice on the street.**

Driver's Permit

You are **not required to have a [driver's permit to apply](#)** for a driver's license.

If you have a Driver's Permit: you will not have to take the written test when you go to take the driver's test and the \$20 you paid for your permit will be deducted from your final driver's license fee.

If you do not have a Driver's Permit: you will be charged a \$20 permit fee in addition to the DL fee upon your Driver's License application.

To get a permit follow these steps:

To get a Drivers Permit:

1. Prepare for permit written test before you go to DMV by reading the most current volume of [Rules of the Road](#)
2. [Practice written test online](#)
3. Go to DMV with photo ID
4. Pay \$20 to apply for permit
5. Take written test

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2: PREPARE FOR GOING TO DMV

Now that you know how to drive, you are ready to prepare for your DMV trip. **It is important to prepare before you go** because there is nothing worse than waiting an hour or two at the DMV to leave empty handed.

1. Gather proper identification documentation
2. Prepare for tests
3. Schedule your visit

GATHER DOCUMENTATION

If you are getting your driver's license for the first time you will need to bring proof of your identity as well as your permanent residence. Here is a list of [documentation needed by the Secretary of State](#).

Standard Driver's License Application: you will need one document that satisfies each of [Group A, B, C and D](#).

Acceptable Identity documents include: Signature verification document such as a cancelled check, an ID card, legal or court documents or a passport.

Acceptable Residency documents include: Address verification document or proof of address such as a bank statement, rental or mortgage agreement, or a pay stub.

REAL ID Driver's License Application: If you travel often by plane, you should apply for a REAL ID Driver's License which will be required at airports after October 2020. To apply for a REAL ID, you will need one document that satisfies each of [Group A, B, C](#) two documents from [Group D](#).

PREPARE FOR THE TESTS

1. **Prepare for the Written Test:**
 - a. Read [Rules of the Road](#) to understand all road signage and laws
 - b. [Practice written test online](#)

Please note: If you already have your permit, you will not have to retake the written test again.

2. **Prepare for the Driver's Test**
 - a. Practice driving with a friend or family member so your skills are not rusty.

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3. Prepare for vision test:

- a. If you are concerned about your vision and are not sure if you will pass the eye test, take the following at [home Vision Test](#).

The minimum visual acuity **requirements are** 20/40 in at least one **eye** and no less than 20/70 in the other **eye**, with or without correction.

SCHEDULE YOUR VISIT

1. **Find a car to test with:** Identify a friend or family member with a car with valid license plates and insurance to take you to the DMV.
2. **Select a DMV** which does road testing for you to take your test at. [Chicago North, CHicago South and Chicago West](#) all offer driver's testing.
3. **Schedule a time for your friend/family member to drive you to the DMV** and wait with you while you test. Allow for 3-4 hours for the test. It may not take this long, but it is worth scheduling for more time than you may need.
4. **Bring Proof of Insurance:** Make sure your friend/family member has proof of insurance with you on the day of the test. You will be required to show the DMV proof on insurance before you can take the test.

3: TAKE THE TEST AT THE DMV:

Once you have learned to drive, prepared for the test and scheduled your trip, you are ready to go to the DMV.

When you get to the DMV you will do the following things

1. Check in at the front desk. Have all documentation and proof of insurance ready to show clerks
2. Get your photo taken
3. Get your eyes tested
4. Pay for your test: see fees below
5. Take written test (if you have permit, you do not have to take the written test)
6. Take driver's test
7. Get your valid driver's license!

FEE FOR DRIVER'S LICENSE APPLICATION

[List of driver's license fees:](#)

- Instruction permit - \$20
- Basic license with permit, ages 18-20 - \$5
- Basic license without permit, ages 18-20 - \$25
- Basic license, ages 21-68 - \$30
- Basic license, ages 69-80 - \$5
- Basic license, ages 81-86 - \$2
- Basic license, ages 87 or older - Free

You can pay with cash, money order or with a debit card. You can also use a credit card but will be charged a 2% processing fee.

To Pass the Written Driving Test:

The official **Illinois DMV written test** consists of 35 questions. To pass the test, you'll need to answer at least 28 of them correctly as the **passing score is 80%**. This practice test features the same exact ratio.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU FAIL A TEST

If you fail the written test, you can take it again the same day. There is no limit to how many times you can take the written test.

If you fail the driving test, you need to wait 24 hours to take it again. You can only take the practical driving test three times in one calendar year.

If you fail any of the tests, you do not have to pay to retake it a second/third time

If you fail the vision test, you need to visit an optometrist to get updated glasses/contacts before applying again.

If you fail the vision test with an updated pair of glasses/contacts, your vision may not allow for a standard driver's license. You **can try applying for a restricted license**. Visit your optometrist to see if they will sign off for you to apply. You will need your optometrist to fill out this [medical report](#) which will allow you to apply for a restricted driver's license. If you qualify, make sure to discuss with the DMV when you apply what restrictions will be placed on your driver's license.

Transfer An Out-Of-State Driver's License to Illinois Driver's License

To transfer an out-of-state Driver's license to an Illinois driver's license is relatively easy. Here are the steps:

1. **Gather documentation (see below)**
2. **Go to DMV with documentation and pay \$30 for a Driver's License**
3. **If your out-of-state license is expired: take written test**

If your out-of-state driver's license is currently valid then you WILL NOT be required to take a written or driving test.

If your out-of-state driver's license is expired: you WILL be required to take the written test. The DMV may also require you to take a driver's test depending on your DMV record.

GATHER DOCUMENTATION

To transfer your license to an Illinois license, you will need to bring your out of state driver's license as well as proof of your permanent residence. Here is a list of [documentation needed by the Secretary of State](#).

Standard Driver's License Application: you will need one document that satisfies each of [Group A, B, C and D](#).

Acceptable Identity documents include: Signature verification document such as a cancelled check, an ID card, legal or court documents or a passport.

Acceptable Residency documents include: Address verification document or proof of address such as a bank statement, rental or mortgage agreement, or a pay stub.

REAL ID Driver's License Application: If you travel often by plane, you should apply for a REAL ID Driver's License which will be required at airports after October 2020. To apply for a REAL ID, you will need one document that satisfies each of [Group A, B, C](#) two documents from [Group D](#).

HOW TO RENEW AN EXPIRED DRIVER'S LICENSE

When a driver's license is issued to you, it will only be valid for a certain period of time. It is not legal to drive with an expired driver's license. If your license has expired, it will need to be renewed at the DMV to be valid again.

HOW LONG IS A DRIVER'S LICENSE GOOD FOR?

Ages of 21 and 80: Driver's licenses are valid for four years.

Ages of 81 through 86: Driver's licenses are valid for two years.

Age 87 or older: Driver's licenses are valid and need to be renewed every year.

Under the age of 21: Driver's licenses are valid until your twenty-first birthday.

WHEN DOES A DRIVER'S LICENSE EXPIRE?

Ages of 21 and over: Driver's license expires on your birthday.

Under the age of 21: Driver's license expires three months past your twenty-first birthday.

WHERE CAN I FIND MY EXPIRATION DATE?

Your license expiration date will be listed on your driver's license.

HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO RENEW MY DRIVER'S LICENSE?

You can renew your driver's license for up to one year after the expiration date.

If your license has been expired for over one year, you will have to reapply in-person at a DMV and may be required to retake all tests. (Follow steps on pages 5-8 of this document)

HOW TO RENEW YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSE:

If you do not need to make any changes to your license, such as your address, you will only need your current valid license to complete your Illinois driver's license renewal.

1. Go to DMV with your old ID and pay \$30 for a Driver's License
2. If you need to make any changes to your ID or lost your last driver's license you will need to prove your identity and your residency.
3. [Gather proper documentation](#) (see page)
4. Go to DMV with your old ID and pay \$30 for a Driver's License

CHAPTER 2

CHECKING THE STATUS OF YOUR ILLINOIS DRIVER'S LICENSE

HOW TO FIND OUT STATUS OF YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSE WORKSHEET

Figuring out how to resolve issues with your driver's license can be really complicated. If you have felt frustrated in the past, you're not alone. We will do our best to walk you through the process and give you guidance on how to deal with various issues you may come up against.

The first step is to find out the current status of your driver's license.

The easiest way to check the status of your driver's license by calling the Secretary of State automated system. For this **you will need your Driver's license number and Social Security Number**. If you **do not know your DL number or your SSN**: see page 12.

Follow these steps:

1. Find your social security number and driver's license number and have them ready
2. Call the Secretary of State at **217-782-3720** and select option number **1**
3. Enter your Social Security Number
4. Enter your driver's license number
5. Make a check mark on the list below

The automated system may say the following for your license status:

- Valid
- Expired
- Suspended
- Revoked
- Unable to verify

If your license is Valid: Your license is legal and your driving privileges are active. Breathe a sigh of relief and go do something fun.

If your license is Expired: [See page 14](#)

If your license cannot be verified with the automated system: [See page 17](#)

If your license is pending suspension: [See page 18](#)

If your license is suspended or revoked: [See CHAPTER 3](#)

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WHAT TO DO IF YOUR LICENSE CANNOT BE VERIFIED

Periodically when you call the automated line to check the status of your driver's license, it will say that your driver's license cannot be verified.

If you **cannot verify your license** via the automated line

-Or-

You are **unable to use the automated system because you do not know your driver's license number or social security number.**

You will have to speak to a person at the Secretary of State to check your information.

1. Call the Secretary of State at **217-782-3720** and select option **7** to speak to an operator
2. When operator answers tell them you are calling to check the status of your Driver's License.

- Valid
- Expired
- Suspended
- Revoked

If your license is Valid: Your license is legal and your driving privileges are active. Breathe a sigh of relief and go do something fun.

If your license is Expired: [See page 14](#)

If your license is pending suspension: [See page 18](#)

If your license is suspended or revoked: [See CHAPTER 3](#)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN IF YOUR LICENSE IS PENDING SUSPENSION

You may find out that your license is currently valid but is pending suspension for issues that you have. You may have unresolved traffic violations you need to take care of. If you are required to have [SR-22 insurance](#), a late payment can create a pending suspension on your license. Depending on what issues are affecting your license, **the Secretary of State handles a pending suspension in two different ways.**

If your license is pending suspension, the Secretary of State may **give you a set amount of time** to address your issues before suspending your license. You can ask when you speak to someone how much time you have to address your issues.

WHAT IS A FAILURE TO PAY FINES STOP

A Failure to Pay Fines stop is the result of a request by an Illinois Circuit Clerk's office for non-payment of court imposed fines. **If you were convicted of a traffic offense and have not paid your fines, you may get a Failure To Pay Stop.**

A Failure to Pay Fine Stop will prohibit you from renewing your driver's license. If you lose your license or change addresses at any time after a Failure To Pay Fines Stop, the Secretary of State will **not allow you to get a duplicate copy or make any changes to your driver's license** until you address the issues holding your license back.

Although it is not considered the same as having a suspended license, in practice it is the same, once your license expires or if you lose a copy of your driver's license as you will not be able to obtain a valid renewal/replacement until you address your issues. Since this is not a suspension of driving privileges, there is **no reinstatement fee required.**

To get help addressing the issues with a license pending suspension or a Failure to Pay Fine Stop, [follow the same steps for a suspended license.](#)

LICENSE TO WORK ACT (L2W)

WHAT IS LICENSE TO WORK ACT

As of July 2020, the **License to Work Act has put an end to previous driver's license suspensions due to certain non-driving violations**, including inability to pay parking and vehicle compliance tickets. Moving forward, these issues will no longer cause a suspension penalty.

Here is a full list of previous suspensions ended by L2W.

- Failure to pay parking tickets
- Failure to pay vehicle compliance tickets (including city sticker tickets, expired meter tickets, and license plate registration parking tickets)
- Failure to pay 5 tolls or penalties for tollway violations
- Failure to pay any fees to the Illinois Commerce Commission
- Motor Fuel Theft
- Being adjudicated as a 'truant minor' who is 'in need of supervision, addicted, or delinquent'
- An offense committed by a juvenile to further the criminal activities of an organized gang
- Damaging, removing any part of, tampering with, going into, on or working or attempting to work on a vehicle without authority to do so unless actual physical control over the vehicle is exercised
- Being convicted of criminal trespass to a vehicle (unless the individual exercises 'actual physical control of the vehicle')
- Certain violations of the Liquor Control Act 1934 (unless the violation occurred in a vehicle)

License suspensions issued for these reasons should have already been lifted by the Secretary of State. Moving forward, licenses can no longer be suspended for those reasons.

In most cases, reinstatement should happen automatically. You should, however, [check the status of your license with the Secretary of State](#) to make sure it has been restored. You can do that in the beginning of this [Chapter](#).

If your license has not been reinstated, you'll want to figure out why and how to fix it. If your license suspension was the result of a court action, you might have to do more to resolve the issue. [Go to Chapter 3](#) of this booklet to help you resolve issues to get your license reinstated.

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Additionally, your license could be suspended for multiple reasons at the same time. If any of those suspensions were for reasons not covered by the License to Work Act, like driving under the influence or failure to pay child support, your driving privileges won't be automatically restored. You'll want to go through the processes outlined in this guide to figure out why it's still suspended and what you must do to get it restored.

It is important to note that the **License to Work Act does not eliminate existing parking or compliance ticket debt** to government agencies. You likely still owe this debt even though it no longer results in license suspension. See our guide to [payment plans](#) to address your past debt.

CHAPTER 3

REINSTATING A SUSPENDED LICENSE

ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET: REINSTATING YOUR SUSPENDED LICENSE

1. [Figure out why your license has been suspended](#) and what you need to do to get your license reinstated.
2. [Identify how much money you will need to get compliant](#) with all your issues including any ticket debt and reinstatement fees and.
3. [Deal with unresolved old tickets](#).
4. Find out if you are eligible for a payment plan and how much money you need to enroll.
5. Create a financial plan to save up the money.
6. Pay tickets/get on a payment plan.
7. Pay any reinstatement fees.
8. Reapply for a driver’s license.

1: Contact Secretary of State and Fill out Ticket Grid

Secretary of State Departments direct numbers

Safety: 217-782-3720 (option 7)

Traffic: 217-785-8619

Fraud: 217-782-7604

Hearings: 217-782-7065

Date of ticket	Ticket #	Description of ticket (no insurance, etc.)	Location of incident (City/County)	Amount owed

If you must pay all tickets up front

Total amount tickets owed	Reinstatement fees owed to SOS	Total \$ Needed

If you can get on a payment plan:

Total amount tickets owed	Total Amount needed to get on payment plan	Reinstatement fees owed to SOS	Total \$ Needed

2. Confirm/update any ticket totals in amount owed section
3. Bring up any old tickets in Traffic Court and update totals
4. Find out if you are eligible for a payment plan. If yes, fill out following:

1. Total amount of tickets owed	2. Downpayment	3. Boot fees not covered by payment plan	4. Total Amount owed to start payment plan

Add Box 2 (downpayment) and Box 3 (boot fees not covered by payment plan) and enter it into Box 4. Box 4 is the total amount of money you need to put down to get on the payment plan.

5. Create a financial plan to pay ticket debt/get on a payment plan.

I need to save up _____ (total amount of money) to **pay tickets** or **get on a payment plan**. I need to save up _____ (total amount of money) to **pay my reinstatement fees**.

In total I need _____ to get compliant with my ticket debt.

I will save up _____ for _____ months to have the money ready to pay tickets/down payment for payment plan and reinstatement fees.

I plan to pay the tickets/payment plan (select all that apply):

- With a credit card (over the phone, credit card or in person payment plan)
- With a money order
- With cash

If I need to pay with a credit/atm card and do not have one, I will obtain one by _____.

6. Pay tickets and/or pay down payment to get on a payment plan.

I will pay my tickets/payment plan down payment on _____ day by paying: (select all that apply)

- In person at this address _____
- Over the phone at this number _____
- Over the internet at this web address _____

7. [Pay reinstatement fees.](#)

I need this amount of money to pay my reinstatement fees. _____

I will pay:

- **Pay online with credit card:** [Pay Reinstatement Fees online](#)
- **By phone:** Suspension and revocation fees may be paid by telephone using a Visa, MasterCard or Discover credit card by calling 217-785-8619.
- **By mail** with a check, cashier's check or money order made payable to the Secretary of State with the affected driver's license number written on the front of the fee to:

Secretary of State, Driver Services Department
2701 S. Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, Illinois 62723.

8. [Reapply for a driver's license](#)

HOW TO REINSTATE A SUSPENDED LICENSE: CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Dealing with a suspended license can be a very frustrating and overwhelming experience. Each person's situation will be different and unique, however this guide will show you where to start and what to do to make a plan for dealing with most typical situations. For unique issues, this guide will supply you with advice on what departments to call to get more information from the Secretary of State.

The general plan for addressing a suspended license is:

1. [Figure out why your license has been suspended](#) and what you need to do to get your license reinstated.
2. [Identify how much money you will need to get compliant](#) with all your issues including any ticket debt and reinstatement fees and.
3. [Deal with unresolved old tickets](#).
4. [Find out if you are eligible for a payment plan](#) and how much money you need to enroll.
5. [Create a financial plan](#) to save up the money.
6. Pay tickets/get on a [payment plan](#).
7. [Pay reinstatement fees](#).
8. [Reapply for a driver's license](#).

Before we get started, **here are some terms** you may hear while dealing with a suspended license and this is what they mean.

Suspension: you temporarily lose your driving privileges due to problems on your record for a set period of time (mandatory suspension period). You will need to address these problems and get in compliance to be able to apply for another driver's license.

Mandatory Suspension Period: this is the period of time your license will be suspended for. You cannot apply for a driver's license until the mandatory suspension time period is over and you are in compliance with past issues.

Revoked: Revocation means that your driving privileges are taken away indefinitely. If revoked, you may not reapply for your license for at least one year.

1: FIGURE OUT WHY YOUR LICENSE IS SUSPENDED

To find out what issues are suspending your license, you will need to speak to someone at the Secretary of State.

HOW TO CONTACT THE SECRETARY OF STATE

There are **two main ways of contacting the Secretary of State**. You can make a phone call or go to a Secretary of State office in person.

GO TO SECRETARY OF STATE IN PERSON. Although this option is more time consuming, you are generally able to get everything you need from one person. They will write down a list of issues you may have and give you paperwork to help you resolve your issues. **Although going in person is more time consuming, I recommend it above calling if you can.**

CALL SECRETARY OF STATE. Calling can be easier than going in person, however, expect to be on hold for anywhere from 5-30 minutes waiting to speak to someone. You may have to speak to multiple departments to get all of your information and may be on hold with each department. I suggest you **set aside an hour for when you plan to make your call**. You will also **be responsible for writing down any information they give you** so make sure you have pencil and paper ready and listen carefully to everything they say. It is a good idea to reread what you have written down with each person you speak with to confirm you have written everything down correctly.

GOING TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN PERSON

1. **Plan your visit.** Find a location which works for you. Here is a list of [Secretary of State locations](#) in Illinois. Check hours to make sure when they will be open when you plan your visit.
2. Go to SOS and wait in line.
3. When you get to speak to someone, ask the following questions
 - a. **My driver's license is suspended and I am trying to find out what I need to do to get it back. What issues are suspending my license?**
 - b. Do I owe any **reinstatement fees**?
 - c. Will I be required to have [SR-22 insurance](#)?
 - d. Ask them to write down any unresolved tickets you have to take care of?
 - e. If you want to pay \$12, you can also ask for a copy of your Driver's Abstract which will have all the information on your driving history and record on it.

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HOW TO CALL THE SECRETARY OF STATE

1. Call the Secretary of State at **217-782-3720** and select option **7** to speak to an operator
2. You will first be connected to someone at the “Safety Department”. **Ask the operator the following questions:**

My driver’s license is suspended and I am trying to find out what I need to do to get it back. What issues are suspending my license?(write the details here)

What is the minimum I will need to do to get my license back?

Do I owe any [reinstatement fees](#)? (write the details here)

Will I be required to have [SR-22 insurance](#)?

3. If you have unresolved tickets, they will transfer you to the “**Traffic Department.**” When you speak to an operator, **repeat that you are trying to find out what issues are suspending your license.** Try to find out all of the info in this chart. If they cannot tell you, ask them how you can find out. **Repeat all info you write down to confirm.**

Date of ticket	Ticket #	Description of ticket (no insurance, etc.)	Location of incident (City/County)	Amount owed

Do you have other tickets that **aren’t** suspending your license, but you still need to pay? (write the details here)

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MOVING ON TO ADDRESS YOUR ISSUE

Once you have gotten your information from the Secretary of State, you will know the basic facts on what issues you need to deal with to get your license back. The next section will walk you through how to address the most common problems which include old ticket/parking debt and unresolved tickets.

If your license was suspended for any of the following issues [Proceed to step 2 of this process.](#)

- Traffic Violations/Traffic Ticket Debt
- Non-appearance in Traffic Court
- Parking Ticket Debt

There are a few issues which require special handling.

If you have a DUI on your record, skip forward to the [DUI section](#).

Click here if your license has been suspended due to [Unpaid Child Support](#).

For all other issues, you may want to schedule an [informal hearing at the Secretary of State](#) to get more information on your case.

2. IDENTIFY HOW MUCH MONEY YOU WILL NEED TO GET COMPLIANT

The most common reasons for getting your license suspended has to do with **unresolved traffic violations and/or non-appearance in traffic court**. If the Secretary of State tells you that you have unresolved tickets, you will need to get into compliance with these tickets before you can apply for a new driver's license

This will probably be the most complicated step of this process. There are many different issues which can suspend someone's driver's license. The Secretary of State/DMV can give you a list of issues, but you will probably have to address these issues with other offices.

To get started on this, have the [ticket grid](#) you filled out in the last section ready. **For each ticket you have listed, you will need to go through the following steps:**

1. Find out what you owe for each ticket
2. Find out if ticket is eligible for a payment plan
3. Find out if the ticket needs to be brought back up before a judge in [traffic court](#) (we will walk you through this process in [the next section](#))
4. Confirm/update "Amount due" totals for each ticket on your [ticket grid](#).

FIND OUT WHAT YOU OWE:

If you owe money on past traffic court issues, you will need to speak to the [appropriate circuit court](#) for that ticket. If you have tickets in multiple court districts, you may need to speak to multiple different circuit courts.

The quickest way to find out about ticket amounts is to do an [online ticket search](#) which you can find links to on the next page. Be warned that not all tickets will be visible online and just because you can't find it online doesn't mean it is not still on your record.

We have included links on the next page for the City of Chicago/Cook County. If you live outside of this area, do a google search with the name of your city/county and "Online ticket search" to see if your area has an online database you can look through.

LOOK UP YOUR TICKET ONLINE

City of Chicago Parking, Red Light Camera, or Automated Speed Enforcement online ticket search: <https://pay.chicago.gov/workflows/tickets>

Clerk of Cook County Court Traffic Violation Tickets:

<http://www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org/CourtCaseSearch/TrafficSearch.aspx>

Please note: These online databases do not have everything listed. You may go to these databases and not see the ticket numbers the Secretary of State gave you. Just because you don't find them online doesn't mean they aren't still on your record. If you cannot find them online, you will need to call or go in person to the appropriate office to get information on your ticket.

Contacting the City of Chicago for Parking, Towing, Red Light or Automated Speed Enforcement tickets:

If you have a ticket from the City of Chicago, you can email John Paul Jael at the finance department who can tell you how much you owe.

John Paul Jael johnpaul.jael@cityofchicago.org

Please note: The Finance department cannot give you any guidance on taking tickets back to court or overturning tickets, but this is an easy way to get ticket totals and ask about payment plans through the City of Chicago.

Contacting Circuit Court to get totals on old traffic related ticket issues:

Check this list to get the location and contact information of [Circuit courts in Cook County and throughout Illinois](#).

Section 3 talks about addressing old tickets in traffic court. Even if you don't have to bring your ticket back up, [Section 3](#) can give you information on contacting the Circuit Courts.

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3. ADDRESS OLD UNRESOLVED TICKETS IN TRAFFIC COURT

DOES YOUR TICKET NEED TO BE BROUGHT BACK UP IN TRAFFIC COURT

Some tickets need to be brought back up before a judge to resolve. You can find out by [contacting the appropriate circuit court](#) for your ticket.

1. Contact the Circuit court to find out if you need to bring a ticket back up before a judge
2. Find out the process for bringing a ticket back up in traffic court
3. Attend traffic court to address old ticket
4. Write down all final ticket amounts due on this worksheet.

Calling Circuit Court: You can try [calling the circuit court](#) to get information about your ticket. Although calling may seem easier, we have found it is very difficult to get in touch with someone over the phone to get ticket information. Our experiences have mainly been in the First District of Cook County. If you want to try calling, reserve at least an hour to try and get through to someone. Our experiences included waiting for 15+ minutes on hold only to have the line disconnect. Be prepared to call back multiple times to get through to someone. **If you have tickets outside of Cook County, calling may work for you. If you have tickets within Cook County, we recommend you go in person.**

Going in Person to the Circuit Court: We suggest this as the best way to get ticket information. Although it is more difficult to make a trip and go in person, you have a much better chance speaking to someone who is knowledgeable and getting the correct information. Find the

Click here for a [list of circuit courts in Cook County](#) and the rest of Illinois

When you speak with someone: give them your driver's license number as well as your social security number.

- Get a list of each ticket you have on your record that needs to be addressed.
- Find out what the total amount you currently owe.
- Ask if any tickets need to be brought back up before a judge.
- Find out if any of your tickets are eligible for a payment plan.

MISSED COURT DATES ON OLD TICKETS

If you had a previous ticket and did not show up to court, you will probably have a ticket on your record with “court locator” numbers which looks like this: 12TRO123456. To get information on these tickets, call the appropriate court house and follow the steps for how to [get information on your old tickets](#) to find out what the total of your fines are.

These tickets will need to be brought back up before a judge. Follow the instructions for [bringing a ticket back up in traffic court](#).

The ticket fines for no-show court dates are usually set pretty high, anywhere around \$2k-\$3k but by bringing the ticket back up before a judge, you can vacate the ticket and get your ticket lowered to the range ~\$300-\$500.

See next page for how to bring up old tickets in traffic court.

**PLEASE NOTE: IN PERSON TRAFFIC COURT CLOSED DUE TO COVID-19
SEE [COVID-19 TRAFFIC COURT](#) UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.**

BRINGING AT TICKET BACK UP IN TRAFFIC COURT

It is important to find out if any of your tickets need to be brought back up before a judge in Traffic Court. It may be mandatory for you to do it. If you have a ticket where you did not show up for court, the city may have just applied large fines, which may be greatly reduced if you bring the ticket back up in court.

TRAFFIC COURT WALK IN APPOINTMENTS

For tickets with the First District Court of Cook County (City of Chicago) tickets can be brought back up before a judge on a walk-in basis at Daley Center Lower Level which is located at 50 W. Washington Monday-Friday 8:30-9:30. It costs \$40 per set of tickets. You can see a judge the same day.

For tickets outside of the First District Court of Cook County, contact the [appropriate court house](#) and ask if they offer walk-in appointments to deal with old tickets.

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

If you are working with any organizations to help you get your driver's license such as a work training program, it would be helpful to get a letter of recommendation from them stating your current need for a driver's license and vouching for your level of commitment to be a responsible driver in the future.

COVID-19 TRAFFIC COURT

Updated June 29, 2020. This is the most up to date information we have on the process. Policies are changing quickly during this time so we cannot guarantee accuracy of all these steps.

TRAFFIC COURT VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Traffic court is closed until July 6th. **When Traffic Court reopens after July 6th, all appointments will be held online via video conferencing** to ensure social distancing and safety procedures. To bring an old ticket back up before a judge, you will need to pay \$40 (per group of tickets) over the phone. Once the City has proof of payment they will reach out to you to schedule an appointment.

1. Email the city to **schedule appointment**
2. **Pay court fees over the phone**
3. **Ask about what technology you will need** for your appointment
4. **Make technological arrangements** for your appointment
5. **Be on time** for your appointment

SCHEDULE YOUR APPOINTMENT:

If you have a Traffic Court related issue which needs to be addressed, you will need to **schedule an appointment with the city by sending an email to trafficdivservices@cookcountyclerk.com**

In your email include: all ticket numbers you need to address in your appointment as well as your driver's license number. You can find your ticket number also known as a citation number in the top right hand corner of the traffic ticket and along the side of the ticket above a barcode. The first letter will be 'C' followed by 8 numeric digits.

PAY COURT FEES

You will be required to pay your court fees before the city will schedule you an appointment. The price to bring a ticket back up before a judge is **\$40 per set of tickets**. If you have more than one ticket from the same incident, these are considered to be a set and only require \$40 for the whole group. If you have two tickets from two separate incidents on different days, you may be able to address them both at the same time, but you would be required to pay \$40 for each incident.

You also **need a credit card to pay for your court fees over the phone**. If you don't already have a credit card or an atm card to use, get a prepaid credit card from the store for the right amount. You can get these cards from Walgreens, most dollar stores or other department stores.

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Here are the steps to pay court fees over the phone:

1. Have your ticket numbers on hand.
2. Obtain a credit card you can use to pay over the phone.
3. Call 1-888-497-8701 and give them your ticket numbers, the Circuit Court's Provider number: 22530, and the Circuit Court's Product ID number: 5753
4. Once payment is made, please email your confirmation to: trafficmotions@cookcountycourt.com, noting your case #.
5. Once payment is confirmed, the court will contact you by email with an appointment date.

MAKE TECHNOLOGICAL ARRANGEMENTS:

The court will run your appointment over [Zoom](#). You will need a computer or a smartphone with the Zoom app installed to attend the meeting. If you do not have either of these, see if a friend or family member can help you. You can also ask at the local library and see if they have any suggestions for how you can get access to the appropriate technology for your traffic court appearance or if you need help installing Zoom on your device.

BE ON TIME:

A lot can go wrong when doing video conferencing, so make sure to be ready and logged into your device at least 15 minutes before your court date to give you time to troubleshoot any technological issues you may have. Have all copies of tickets with you at the time of your traffic court appointment.

4. FIND OUT IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR A PAYMENT PLAN

Please note: This book is written with a focus on policies of City of Chicago/Cook County policy. We are uncertain about if there are payment plans offered in other areas throughout Illinois. **If you have tickets outside of the City of Chicago, you should inquire about possible payment plans with your local city office or circuit court.**

Now you know what issues are holding back your license and how much you owe for your tickets. It is now time to **find out if you can get on a payment plan. If you live in the City of Chicago, here is a guide to getting on a payment plan.**

If you are eligible for a payment plan, **the goal of this section is finding out what is the smallest amount of money you need to pay to get your license back.**

For example, if you owe \$3,000 in ticket debt and are eligible to get enrolled in a payment plan, you may only need to put \$1,000 down to be considered compliant. Once you make your down payment, you can move forward in the process of getting your driver's license and you can pay the \$2000 in monthly installments over the next couple of years after you have your license back. (You will still need to pay the monthly installments or your license could be suspended again if you don't keep up with the payments.)

DEBT RELIEF FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH SUSPENDED LICENSE (CITY OF CHICAGO)

The real talk on payment plans is that they are not very flexible for individuals with suspended licenses, however they are helpful if you owe a substantial amount which you cannot pay back in one time.

There are two options available for debt relief payment plans:

See the next page for ["In Person" Payment plan](#)

Click here for the [Fresh Start Chapter 7 Bankruptcy](#)

CITY OF CHICAGO "IN PERSON" PAYMENT PLANS

The City of Chicago offers a few [different types of payment plans](#) but the only option for individuals with a suspended license are the "in person" payment plans. To enroll, you need to pay a downpayment and agree to pay a monthly installments moving forward. There is a standard plan for anyone who has a suspended license. There is also a "hardship plan" which you can qualify for if you meet specific hardship conditions which are listed below.

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Standard In Person Payment Plan

Vehicle owners whose vehicles have been booted or whose drivers' licenses have been suspended:

- 50% down payment on total vehicle debt,
- Plus payment in full of any boot, tow, tamper and storage fees; and
- Future payments made in equal installments over a period of up to 12 months

Hardship In Person Payment Plan

Vehicle owners whose vehicles have been booted or whose drivers' licenses have been suspended:

- 25% down payment on total vehicle debt, or \$1000, whichever is lower,
- Plus payment in full of all boot, tow, tamper and storage fee debt, and
- Future payments may be made over a period of up to 36 months

Individuals that meet at least one of the following **qualifications are eligible for a hardship payment plan**:

- **Student** (currently attending college or high, trade or vocational school) with a valid student ID card
- **Senior citizen** (65 and older)
- **Active military** (including reservists and national guard)
- **Recently inactive military** (discharged from the military in the last 180 days)
- **Foreclosure** (received a notice of foreclosure, entered into a consent foreclosure, gave a deed in lieu of foreclosure, or had a judgment of foreclosure entered on primary residence within last three years)
- **Bankruptcy** (liability for fines and penalties remain after obtaining a bankruptcy discharge)
- **Claimed Earned Income Tax Credit** (on state or federal individual income tax return for the most recent tax year)
- **Participation in any of the following programs:**
 - Government Issued **Unemployment Compensation**
 - **Low income home energy assistance program (LIHEAP)**
 - **Federal Public Housing/ Section 8**
 - **Food Stamps (SNAP/LINK)**
 - **Medicaid or Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**
 - **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** program administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Program information available on-line at www.hhs.gov;
 - **Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)** administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Program information available on-line at www.usda.gov;

- **Worker's compensation income benefits.** Program information available on-line at www.iwcc.il.gov.

If you do not meet any of the following conditions, see if you can apply for SNAP benefits. It is relatively easy to apply. You can get more [information on SNAP benefits here](#). You can [Apply online for SNAP here](#).

FRESH START CHAPTER 7 BANKRUPTCY

The Fresh Start Chapter 7 Bankruptcy allows individuals who are so deeply in debt that it is not possible for them to pay their debts to file Bankruptcy and have any tickets/fines/fees older than three years forgiven. They are put on a payment plan for any tickets and debt less than three years old.

While this does sound good, an individual must still file bankruptcy to get this option. **Filing for bankruptcy is ALWAYS A LAST RESORT.** Here's why:

- It can cost around **\$1000+ in legal/layer fees** to file a Chapter 7 bankruptcy
- A federal court trustee is assigned to supervise the **sale of any of your personal property and assets that aren't exempt** (cars, work-related tools and basic household furnishings may be exempt).
- Chapter 7 bankruptcy **won't forgive court-ordered alimony and child support, taxes, and student loans.**
- Negative information can appear on your credit report for up to a decade and can make creditors decline extending you credit or to offer you higher interest rates and less favorable terms if they do decide to give you credit

To move forward with this option, you will need to contact a lawyer. For more information on the [Fresh Start Bankruptcy](#) visit the City of Chicago website: <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/newstartchicago/home/fresh-start-debt-relief-program.html>

Now you have a better understanding of what options are available. If you are eligible for a payment plan, this section will walk you through the application process.

Please note: **we will not give guidance on Fresh Start Chapter 7 Bankruptcy.** If you would like more information on this, you will need to contact a lawyer.

Read more about the [difference between Chapter 7 and Chapter 13 Bankruptcy](#) on ProPublica.

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CITY OF CHICAGO NEW START PAYMENT PLANS

(Not available for individuals with suspended licenses)

This past year, the City of Chicago rolled out new payment plans as part of their New Start Program which allows individuals to get on **payment plans for NEW tickets with down payments as low as \$25 and gives flexible low monthly payments**. These plans are also more flexible for hardship enrollment. If you make less than \$40K in annual salary, you are eligible.

If your license has been suspended, you will not be eligible for these payment plans.

It is important to note though, that **once you get your license back: you can and should use the NEW START program for all future tickets** to keep your license in good standing and keep it from being suspended again.

Visit the City webpage at: <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/newstartchicago/home.html>
And click on "NEW PAYMENT PLAN FOR TICKETS".

APPLY FOR A PAYMENT PLAN

1. Call the number assigned to your name (see grid on page _) and ask to apply for payment plan
2. Show proof of hardship if you can
-if no hardship-
Apply for standard payment plan
3. Find out Payment plan down payment amount
4. Get/save money for downpayment
5. Go to the loan office, pay downpayment and sign paperwork for a monthly payment agreement

1: Call number assigned to your name and ask to apply for a payment plan.

City of Chicago payment plans are run by third party debt collection firms. To apply, you must find the firm assigned to you and contact them to find out your down payment amount and terms of your payment plan.

To participate in Standard (In-Person) or Hardship Payment Plans, or for more information, call a number below based on the first letter of your last name or business name:

First Letter of Last Name	Please Call
A – H	866.391.3975
I – K	872.213.0138
L – T	312.604.7100
U – Z	773.265.2600

Expect to be on hold when you call, up to 30 minutes. Budget an hour to make this call.

When you call, **have your Social Security number and Driver's License number** ready. The firm will use these to do a search in their database to find out how much you owe. They will use this information to **give you a rough quote of what your down payment and monthly payments will be** so you can decide if you want to move forward.

If you qualify for a hardship plan, make sure to let them know so they give you quotes for that plan. Find out what they will accept as proof and how they want you to get it to them: via email, fax etc.

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If the quote sounds doable for you, you can tell them you want to move forward and they will start the application process for you.

2: Show proof of hardship

(If you are not eligible for a hardship plan, go to the next step.)

If you qualify for the hardship plan, you will need to provide the debt collection firm with proof. For example, if you are a SNAP/LINK recipient, you can take a screenshot of your online SNAP account and email it to them or fax a copy of your SNAP award letter.

[Check the list of hardship eligibility requirements](#) to see if you qualify and what you can use as proof of eligibility.

3. Find out Payment plan down payment and monthly payment amounts

During your first call, the firm may give you an initial quote. However, this is not guaranteed to be your final amount. They usually will take a day or two to do more research to make sure all of your ticket debt information is accurate before formally processing your payment plan application. To do this, it usually takes 1-2 business days.

Once they have completed all the research into your ticket debt, they will contact you by phone to give you an offer of terms and conditions which will include your down payment amount and your monthly payment amount and schedule.

Write the down payment amount here:

Write the monthly payment amount here:

4: Get/save money for downpayment

Now it is time to get the money together. Depending on how much you owe, your down payment may be in the hundreds or thousands of dollars.

If you have the money ready: you can move on to the final step of the process and go into the firm to pay down payment.

If you don't have the money ready: [Use Section 5: Create a financial plan](#) to help you save the money. Read on for more information.

It may not be possible for you to get the money together in just a few days. The downpayment for these plans can be a lot of money. If you have any previous [boot fees](#) that need to be paid up front with the downpayment, you might find that your down payment is more than the balance you owe.

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These firms will want to get you signed up as soon as possible to assure them of your payment and may tell you that you will have to “reapply” and go through the process of having your record checked again if you do not sign up right away. Do not let them stress you out. [Use Section 5: Create a financial plan](#) to help you get your money together and call back when you are ready.

Be prepared to budget 24-48 hours for them to redo your application. If it took a long time for you to save the money, and you got any tickets between the time of your first and second application, be aware that your down payment amount might go up.

5: Go to the loan office, pay downpayment and sign paperwork for a monthly payment agreement.

Call the loan office to make an appointment when you are ready to make your down payment. It will probably be necessary for you to go in person to sign the documents. (With Covid-19 firms may allow you to sign paperwork and email back to them. Make sure to ask about this).

Ask about what form of payment they require for your down payment. Most firms will not accept cash or personal checks. If you do not have a credit card, you can purchase prepaid credit cards at most drugstore, department store or dollar store locations.

Make sure you **ask any questions you have about your monthly loan agreement before you sign.** Confirm payment amount and the monthly date it is due. Ask about what your options are if you cannot make a payment on time and what will happen if you stop making payments.

Make your payment and sign your monthly payment agreement.

If you are all signed up, congratulations! You can move onto Section 7: Pay reinstatement fees.

5. CREATE FINANCIAL PLAY TO PAY MONEY

So at this point, you have figured out why your license has been suspended and how much you owe for past tickets, how much you will owe for any reinstatement fees with the Secretary of State, brought up any old tickets in traffic court and found out about any available payment plans. It is now time to create a financial plan on how you will get the money together to pay the least amount possible to get compliant.

Money Due:

Total Tickets Amount Due (add tickets from [your ticket grid](#)):

Total Ticket Amount from Traffic Court:

Total Ticket Debt (Add above two lines)

Creating a financial plan is a very unique thing for each person. This book cannot give individual advice but here are some resources (most of them free) to help you create your own plan.

Get help from an expert:

Check out the Illinois Department of Finance: [Tips for choosing a debt/credit counselor](#)

Free Counseling at [GreenPath Financial Wellness](#)

Get Support from the [National Foundation for Credit Counseling](#)

Online Budgeting software options to help you create a financial plan on your own:

[Trim](#): Free budget service, helps with negotiating your bills down.

[PocketSmith](#): Budgeting App helps with creating a budget calendar. Basic plan is free.

[Mint](#): Free Budget service with free credit score

[Charlie](#): Free Text based budget app

[Empower](#): Helps with budgeting and saving. Free for first 30 days, \$6 a month afterwards

[Credit Karma](#): Free credit scores and credit reports

[More options](#)

[List of budget spreadsheet templates](#)

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6. PAY TICKETS

Once you have your money together, it is now time to pay your tickets.

If you have a credit card and/or can purchase a prepaid credit card for the purpose of paying your tickets, you can pay online.

Pay Chicago Parking/Redlight/Automated tickets online:

<https://pay.chicago.gov/workflows/tickets>

Pay tickets to Circuit Court of Cook County:

<https://services.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org/TrafficTickets/>

If you live outside of Chicago/Cook County: you can try doing a google search for your city/county court to see if they have an online payment option.

To pay in person:

City of Chicago list of payment centers and services:

https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/fin/supp_info/revenue/Payment%20Options/payment_center.html

For traffic violations: you can also contact/visit the courthouse assigned to your tickets.

Visit our **list of [Circuit courts](#) in Cook County** at the end of this book.

Here is a list of **Circuit courts in all other Illinois counties:**

<http://19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us/1481/Illinois-Circuit-Courts>

7. REINSTATEMENT FEES

When your license is suspended, the DMV makes you pay admin fees to get your license back. You may have to pay more than one reinstatement fee and the amount of the fee(s) are determined by the reasons your driver's license was suspended.

IMPORTANT NOTE: DO NOT pay reinstatement fees until you are in compliance with all issues suspending your license. For example, if money you owe on past tickets is keeping you from getting your license, you should pay this money first. Paying your reinstatement fees before paying your tickets will not get your license back. You have to be in compliance first. **Paying reinstatement fees should be the last step in the process** of getting your license back.

A \$70, \$250 or \$500 reinstatement fee for a suspension or a revocation can be paid

By mail with a check, cashier's check or money order made payable to the Secretary of State with the affected driver's license number written on the front of the fee. Our mailing address is Secretary of State, Driver Services Department, 2701 S. Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois 62723.

Pay online. [Pay Driver's License Reinstatement Fees](#)

By phone: Suspension and revocation fees may be paid by telephone using a Visa, MasterCard or Discover credit card by calling 217-785-8619.

The quickest way is to pay online or over the phone with a credit card. Your reinstatement fees will be processed to the DMV within **48-72 hours**. Please note: credit card payments will be **charged a 2.35% processing fee**.

If you pay via **check/money order through the mail**, you will not have to pay the 2.35% credit card processing fee, however, it **will take approximately 2 weeks** for your reinstatement fees to process. Also, make sure the address you have on file with the Secretary of State is up to date so they can mail you a confirmation of your payment. You can [update your address](#) here.

Please note: **The Zero Tolerance Suspension, and the \$250 and \$500 DUI and Revocations may ONLY BE PAID BY MAIL** to the Springfield office. Send a check, cashier's check or money order made payable to the Secretary of State with the affected driver's license number written on the front of the fee. Our mailing address is Secretary of State, Driver Services Department, 2701 S. Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois 62723.

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REINSTATEMENT FEE AMOUNTS

1 Statutory Summary Suspension	\$250
2 or more Statutory Summary Suspensions	\$500
Any Revocation	\$500
Discretionary Suspension (resulting from court convictions or other sufficient evidence)	\$70
Failure to Appear Suspension	\$70
Family Responsibility Suspension	\$70
Mandatory Insurance Conviction Suspension	\$100
Other Revocation (except DUI)	\$500
Other Suspension (except Statutory Summary Suspension and Mandatory Insurance Conviction Suspension)	\$70
Parking/Tollway/Automated Traffic Suspension	\$70
Revocation for DUI or Statutory Summary Suspension -1st Revocation	\$500
Revocation for DUI or Statutory Summary Suspension -2nd or subsequent Suspension	\$500
Safety Responsibility Suspension (Uninsured Crash)	\$70
Statutory Summary Suspension -1st Suspension	\$250
Tollway Suspension	\$70
Unsatisfied Judgment Suspension	\$70
Zero Tolerance Suspension	\$70

8: REAPPLY FOR A NEW LICENSE

If you have resolved all your past suspension issues and paid your reinstatement fees, you are ready to get your license back! If your license has been suspended for longer than 1 year, you will need to reapply for a driver's license and take the written and driving test.

Please note: If the Secretary of State tells you that you need SR-22 insurance to get your license, make sure you pay for insurance 48 hours before you go to apply for your driver's license. [Check out the SR-22 section](#) for more information on what it is and how to get it.

To apply for a new driver's license: complete step 2 and step 3 in the [applying for a new driver's license](#) section.

DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE (DUI)

Please note: This guide will give basic information on the process of dealing with a DUI but will not go into too much detail. Dealing with a DUI is a time consuming and expensive process which you would benefit from having legal advice.

You will be charged with a DUI if you are caught driving under the influence of alcohol. You can also be charged with a DUI if you are caught driving under the influence of drugs, including medical marijuana and some prescription drugs if these drugs have impaired your driving skills. If you are intoxicated and fall asleep in the driver's seat of a vehicle while the keys are in or near the ignition, where the police might identify you as having the intention and ability to drive, you can also be charged with a DUI.

Dealing with a DUI is time consuming and expensive so be prepared. If you are convicted of a DUI, your driver's license and driving privileges will be revoked for a minimum of one year for the first offense, five years for a second offense committed within a 20-year period, 10 years for a third offense and lifetime revocation for a fourth or subsequent offense.

If this is your first offense, you will only need to [attend an informal hearing](#) at the DMV which can be done on a walk-in basis at a DMV. Check locations for informal hearing hours and services. If you have more than one DUI on your record, you will need to [schedule a formal hearing](#), which usually takes 6 months. Not all formal hearings for multiple DUIs end in having driver's privileges reinstated. You must give proof of rehabilitation and explain what changes you have made in your life which will make you a responsible driver.

FIRST TIME DUI

1. Go to the DMV and get a DUI checklist
2. Create a financial plan to pay for drug alcohol report/reinstatement fees. (\$500 for alcohol/drug report, \$500 for reinstatement fees)
3. Get a Drug/Alcohol evaluation done by a licensed organization
4. If necessary, attend a drug/alcohol treatment program
5. If necessary, get 6 letters of recommendation by friends/family
6. Attend an [informal hearing](#) at the DMV
7. Pay reinstatement fee
8. Once your mandatory time of suspension is over, apply for a driver's license

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FOR 2 OR MORE DUIS

1. Go to the DMV and get a DUI checklist
2. Create a financial plan to pay for drug alcohol report/reinstatement fees. (\$500 for alcohol/drug report, \$500 per reinstatement fee- you may have more than one)
3. Get a Drug/Alcohol evaluation done by a licensed organization
4. Attend a drug/alcohol treatment program
5. Schedule [a formal hearing](#) with the Secretary of State
6. Get 3 letters of recommendation from friends/family and 3 letters of recommendation from members from your AA or other treatment program
7. Write a letter of context to give reasons for your past DUIs and why you have changed (optional but highly recommended)
-If you are approved-
8. Attend scheduled formal hearing

-if you are approved for driver's license reinstatement after the hearing-

9. Pay reinstatement fees
10. Once your mandatory time of suspension is over, apply for a driver's license

For more information on DUIs read this [Guide to reinstatement](#) available on CyberDriveIllinois. Read here for the difference between [Suspended vs revoked](#) driver's license. Get more information and support for DUIS from [Illinois Legal Aid Online](#).

CHILD SUPPORT AND DRIVER'S LICENSE SUSPENSION

The Illinois Family Financial Responsibility act, also known as the Deadbeats Don't Drive Act (this is a garbage name) states that parents who fall more than three months behind in making court-ordered child-support payments could face the loss of his or her driving privileges. For more information on the [DDD Act](#) visit:

<https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/drivers/deadbeats.html>

Since the intent of the law is to obtain support, an individual may obtain a [restricted driving permit](#) to drive to work, to medical appointments or drug treatment for self or family. The individual must prove to the satisfaction of the court that no alternative means of transportation are reasonably available. No family financial responsibility driving permit may be issued for operation of a commercial motor vehicle.

To apply for a restricted driving permit, **contact an informal hearing officer for a consultation at the DMV** which will provide you with information about hearing requirements necessary to apply for driving privileges. **A consultation is done on a walk-in basis, no appointment necessary.** Please see the [informal hearing officer schedule and locations](#). For information on Restricted Driving Permits, please visit the [Hearing Information](#) section.

If your license has been suspended due to delinquent child support payments, the only way to become compliant and **get your Illinois driver's license fully reinstated is by paying the current support, paying all past support, and meeting health care obligations.**

For more information on your legal rights read these legal blog resources:

<https://www.illinoislegalaid.org/legal-information/family-financial-responsibility-law-and-relief-available>

<https://www.oflaherty-law.com/learn-about-law/can-your-drivers-license-be-suspended-for-not-paying-child-support-in-illinois>

INFORMAL HEARINGS AT THE SECRETARY OF STATE

The Illinois Secretary of State will sometimes suspend or [revoke](#) a person's license for a variety of reasons. This could be because of a DUI, unpaid parking tickets, unpaid [child support](#), or many other reasons. If you have a unique issue not covered by this book or are having a difficult time figuring out the process for reinstatement, you can have a consultation with an informal hearing officer to help give you information. If you have extenuating circumstances surrounding your suspension or revocation that you feel might be forgiven if explained, you can try an informal hearing in an attempt to reverse the suspension/revocation and gain a driver's license reinstatement.

An informal hearing is an in-person meeting between you and an informal hearing officer. It is an opportunity for you to try and get your driving privileges restored. You can hire a [lawyer](#) to come with you, but it is not required.

Informal hearings are done on a walk in basis at most [Secretary of State \(SOS\) locations](#). There is no appointment necessary. In the meeting, **be prepared to discuss and bring any paperwork you have on the following topics:**

- Why your license was suspended or revoked
- Your driving record
- Your criminal record
- Why you need your license back
- What you've done to improve your behavior
- Drug/alcohol use, abuse, and treatment (if related to the [suspension](#)/revocation)

The officer will take notes and send the information to the SOS. You will be sent a decision in the mail, usually within 60 days.

An informal hearing can result in a few outcomes:

- The best outcome is to get your full driving privileges back. This is called **reinstatement**.
- You could instead get a **Restricted Driving Permit** ([RDP](#)). This will allow you to drive only in certain situations, like going to work or to get treatment. You might also have to get a [Breath Alcohol Ignition Interlock Device \(BAIID\)](#) installed in your car.
- **You could be denied.** If so, you can go in for another hearing after 30 days have passed since your first hearing. There is no way to [appeal](#) the first decision.

Some tips about going to an informal hearing:

- Call the DMV to **confirm that an informal hearing officer will be there** when you are planning to go.
- Plan to **go early**. Most locations are first-come, first served
- **Bring paperwork to support your case**

Here is a list of DMVs which offer informal hearings throughout the state:

http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf_publications/dah_ih70.pdf

For more information on Informal hearings:

https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/administrative_hearings/hearinginform.html

<https://www.illinoislegalaid.org/legal-information/going-informal-hearing-license-suspension-or-revocation>

BOOT FEES

WHAT IS A BOOT

If you have unpaid ticket debt on your record, the city may put a boot on your car. A boot is a wheel clamp put on cars to prevent them from being able to be driven.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU GET BOOTED

To request a 24-hour tow extension, 15-day storage extension, or obtain the location of your vehicle, please call 312-744-7275.

REASON WHY YOU WERE BOOTED

1. 3 or more eligible tickets that are in final determination of liability OR
2. 2 eligible tickets that are in final determination and are more than one year past the date of issuance.

HOW TO REMOVE YOUR BOOT

1. Pay all outstanding tickets in final determination status and any associated fees in full (including a \$100 boot fee) OR
2. Enroll in a payment plan at one of the payment center locations. For a list of locations and hours of operation go to: [payment center locations](#)
3. For information about your payment plan options, please call 312-744-7275.

HOW TO CONTEST BOOT AND/OR IMPOUNDMENT

To contest the booting or impoundment of your vehicle, you must appear in person within 21 days of the date noted on the boot sticker at one of the following hearing locations:

1. 4445 North Pulaski Avenue – (Monday to Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.)
2. 2006 East 95th Street – (Monday to Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.)
3. 400 West Superior Street – (Monday to Friday 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. and Sat. 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.)

CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILURE TO PAY OR CONTEST

You must secure the release of the boot within 24 hours, or request a 24-hour extension, from the date and time noted on your boot sticker or your vehicle will be impounded. A tow fee of \$150 will be applied, plus storage fees of \$20 per day for the first 5 days and \$35 per day for each day thereafter for passenger vehicles. The pound will only store your vehicle for 21 days. To request a 24-hour tow extension, 15-day storage extension, or obtain the location of your vehicle, please call 312-744-7275.

ILLEGALLY REMOVING A BOOT YOURSELF

If you are caught removing a boot yourself, you most likely caused damage to the boot. You may risk having an arrest warrant issued based upon a criminal damage-to-state-supported-property charge.

If your license is suspended and you have a \$700 boot fee on your record, this is an illegal boot removal fee. **Illegal boot removal fees must be paid in full** and are not eligible for payment plans. If you are applying for a payment plan to pay your ticket debt, you will need to pay the \$700 boot fee in addition to any down payment before you can be enrolled in the payment plan.

COOK COUNTY CIRCUIT COURTS

1st District Traffic Court: Richard J. Daley Center

50 W. Washington St.
Chicago, IL 60602
(312) 603-2600

2nd District: Skokie Courthouse

5600 Old Orchard Road
Skokie, IL 60077
(847) 470-7200
(312) 603-6673 TTY

3rd District: Rolling Meadows Courthouse

2121 Euclid
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008
(847) 818-2287
(312) 603-6673 TTY

4th District: Maywood Courthouse

1500 Maybrook Drive
Maywood, IL 60153
(708) 865-6060
(312) 603-6673

5th District: Bridgeview Courthouse

10220 South 76th Avenue
Bridgeview, IL 60455
(708) 974-6288
(312) 603-6673 TTY

6th District: Markham Courthouse

16501 S. Kedzie Parkway
Markham, IL 60428
(708) 232-4170
(312) 603-6673 TTY

[Circuit Courts Outside of Cook County](#)

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FORMAL HEARINGS AT THE SECRETARY OF STATE

According to the Secretary of State: A formal hearing is required for a driver whose privileges have been suspended or revoked for an offense(s) involving a fatality or multiple DUI dispositions. A formal hearing request must be made in writing through U.S. mail. Faxes or email requests are not accepted. Upon mailing in your request, it can take 60-90 days to have your formal hearing scheduled. Upon completion of your formal hearing, you will be sent a decision in the mail, usually within 60-90 days.

A [Formal Hearing Request](#) must be accompanied by a non-refundable \$50 filing fee in the form of a check, money order or credit card payable to the Secretary of State. Cash is not accepted. Upon receipt of a Formal Hearing Request and the filing fee, a hearing will be scheduled and a Notice of Hearing will be mailed to the petitioner. If a request is received without the required fee, the request will be returned and a hearing will not be scheduled. Please provide the following information:

- Full name (include middle initial)
- Current address (include P.O. Box #, Apt. #, or Lot #)
- Telephone number (day and evening)
- Date of birth
- Illinois driver's license number or reference number (if available)
- Social Security number
- Year and state of last alcohol/drug-related arrest
- E-mail address (if available)

Formal hearings are available at the following facilities:

- Springfield – Howlett Bldg., Rm. 212, Springfield, IL 62756
- Chicago – 17 N. State St., Ste. 1200, Chicago, IL 60602
- Joliet – 54 N. Ottawa St., 4th Fl., Joliet, IL 60432
- Mt. Vernon – 218 S. 12th St., Mt. Vernon, IL 62864

For more information on formal hearings visit:

https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/administrative_hearings/hearings.html

RESTRICTED DRIVING PERMIT

According to the Illinois Secretary of State: **A Restricted Driving Permit (RDP) is a partial restoration of driving privileges, which allows a person to drive in certain areas and at certain times** for employment; support/recovery meetings; or to transport themselves, a family member or a child, elderly or disabled person living in his/her household for medical, day care or educational purposes when no other form of transportation is available.

The driver must prove a hardship exists if they have not reached their eligibility date and submit proof of employment; support/recovery group meetings; need for medical care; elder, disabled person or day care verification; or an educational verification form and class schedule.

If convicted and imprisoned for reckless homicide or aggravated DUI that was a proximate cause of a death, no relief may be given until 24 months after release from imprisonment. Drivers under age 21 convicted for DUI are not eligible for an RDP until one year from the effective date of revocation.

To apply for a restricted driving permit: **contact an [informal hearing officer](#) for a consultation at the DMV** which will provide you with information about hearing requirements necessary to apply for driving privileges. **A consultation is done on a walk-in basis, no appointment necessary.** Please see the [informal hearing officer schedule and locations](#). For information on Restricted Driving Permits, please visit the [Hearing Information](#) section.

Here is a pamphlet with more information on restricted Driver's license:

https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf_publications/dsd_dc88.pdf

SR-22 INSURANCE

WHAT IS SR-22 INSURANCE?

Despite the name, SR22 is not a type of insurance but a proof of financial responsibility. SR-22 is a form that has to be filed with the Secretary of State to show that you currently hold at least the minimum liability insurance required by the state.

Driver's who have been deemed "high risk" will usually need SR-22 to reinstate their driving privileges following an uninsured car accident or conviction of another traffic-related offense, such as a DUI, driving without insurance or driving without a license.

WHERE DO I GET SR-22

Here are two ways to get SR22 insurance.

Add SR-22 to your car insurance. If you already have car insurance, you might be able to add the SR-22 to your existing policy. Call your insurance company. Not all insurances offer SR-22 so make sure to ask if they offer this. If they do, your insurer can add it to your existing policy and will file the SR-22 document with the Secretary of State.

Purchase a new policy: If you don't have auto insurance and need to buy a policy, you'll want to let any prospective insurer know about the SR-22 up front. Many insurance companies don't offer SR-22s and you shouldn't waste time getting a quote if they're unable to help. You can google "SR-22 insurance Illinois" to get options.

Possible SR-22 Insurance Options:

- InsureOne Insurance Agency: (872) 228-9965
- Auto insurance agency: (773) 234-7722
- Insured ASAP Insurance Agency: (800) 641-7488
- Cheap SR22: (708) 233-4848

You can also go into a currency exchange and get SR-22 insurance pamphlets from them.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO GET SR-22 INSURANCE?

There is not a set cost for SR-22 insurance. The cost will depend on the insurance company and your past driving record. You will need to call to get quotes. On average, SR-22 usually costs between \$25-\$50 per month.

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HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO GET SR-22

Most insurers in Illinois offer **same-day SR-22 insurance**. Once you pay your insurance fee, the insurer will file your SR-22 with the Secretary of State. It can speed up the process to pay fees over the phone with a credit/debit card. Keep in mind, however, that due to the nature of the process, after the insurance company files the forms, it may take between **12 and 24 hours for the DMV to process the insurance forms**.

HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO HAVE SR-22

You will **have to maintain a SR22 for three years**. You **only have to file the SR22 form once**.

The proof of **insurance will stay active as long as you don't cancel your policy (or let it lapse)** during the three year term. If the insurer doesn't receive a monthly payment on time, the DMV will be notified and they will begin the process of revoking your driving privileges.

BEST PRACTICES FOR THE SR-22

If possible, **pay the whole year policy at once**. You may get a better rate and by not having monthly payments, you can avoid having a late payment affect your driving privileges.

Renew SR-22 annual policy 45 days before it is due, since it will give the insurer enough time to notify the DMV that your insurance is still in effect. If the insurer doesn't receive a renewal two weeks before the yearly expiration date, the DMV will be notified and they will begin the process of revoking your driving privileges.

ALTERNATIVE TO SR-22

Next to a SR-22 certificate, Illinois residents may also deposit \$55,000 in cash or securities with the State Treasury or file a real estate security bond valued at \$55,000 or more. This is not a realistic option for most people, so SR-22 is usually the best choice.