The new National Driver Licence Service (NDLS)
What is happening to the driving licence?

The way we manage driving licences in Ireland is about to change. From January 2013, the Road Safety Authority (RSA) will have responsibility for driving licences in Ireland and a National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) will deliver the service.

As part of this new system, the current paper driving licence and learner permits will begin to be replaced by credit card-sized, plastic licences in an EU-wide change to upgrade all driving licences. The aim of the NDLS is to deliver a secure, efficient, customer-focused service of the highest possible standard.

At present, learner permit and driving licence applications are handled by local authority Motor Taxation Offices and this will still be the case for much of 2013. The service will be transferred to the NDLS by September 2013. Until the transfer is complete, Motor Taxation Offices will still process all applications and the new-style licence will be produced and delivered by a specialist company. It is important to note, though, that even though Motor Taxation Offices will process the applications until September 2013, they will not be able to issue driving licences over the counter from January 2013.
Why is this happening on 19 January 2013?

Under EU law, Ireland will introduce the new-style licence by 19 January 2013. While some EU countries already have a plastic card licence format, they are not all the same - there are over 100 different styles of licence across EU countries. The new card being issued will be standardised across all EU member states.

In Ireland, the card will be issued to anyone applying for a new licence or renewing their licence and will cover both learner permits and driving licences. In Ireland, the longest period a licence lasts is ten years so it follows that every Irish licence holder will hold a new-style licence by January 2023.

What are the benefits of this new-style driving licence?

The new plastic card driving licence will have a number of benefits. It will be:

- safer because of high-level security features meaning theft and fraud are less likely;
- more recognisable because it will be a standard format throughout the EU states;
- more convenient to carry and less likely to be damaged because it is a neat size and made of plastic.

Also, the licence will be capable of having a microchip in it which will contain all the information relating to the licence. This will provide additional security and protection against fraud. The microchip will enable the licence to be read by special card readers which will be managed by the RSA and will be available to An Garda Síochána.
How will the changes be made?

The changes will be made in three phases:

**Phase 1:** This will start on 19 January 2013 when the current paper learner permit and driving licence will be replaced by the new EU-wide, standard plastic card licence.

**Phase 2:** The new licensing service, the National Driver Licence Service with its own branch network, will replace the Motor Tax Offices as the licensing body in September 2013. New applications or renewals will be made at one of the new front office outlets. A centralised processing office will also be in place to process applications and deal with customer queries.

**Phase 3:** Work will start on developing secure systems to allow for online applications and review of information. From January 2014, the chip on the card containing licence information will be activated. No information other than that agreed nationally with the Data Protection Commissioner and with the EU Commission can be put on the chip.

The new fees for licences / permits

**FROM 1 JANUARY 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Driving Licence / Learner Permits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Driving Licences and Renewals</td>
<td>€55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Year Licence (Age or Medical Grounds)</td>
<td>€35</td>
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<tr>
<td>One Year Licence (Medical Grounds)</td>
<td>€25</td>
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**Learner Permit**

| New Learner Permits and Renewals | €35 |

**FROM 12 JANUARY 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Driving Licence/Learner Permits</th>
<th>€35</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changes to Existing Licences/Permits e.g. New Category Added</td>
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I just got my driving licence renewed recently. Do I need to get a new one?

No. After 19 January 2013, only those who are applying for a learner permit or a driving licence or those whose licence has expired should apply for the new-style licence. All other licences issued before that date will be in the old, paper format but will still be valid until their expiry date.

Is there a new application process?

Yes. From January to September 2013, anyone applying for a learner permit or driving licence will do so through the local Motor Tax Office as before. However, because the plastic card is produced separately, it will not be possible to get your licence over the counter in the Motor Tax Office. It will posted out to you after the Motor Tax Office pass on your details.

How will this new system make a difference?

The new system will enable the National Driver Licence Service to provide you with an enhanced service. You will benefit from:

- a centralised driving licence production process;
- a driving licence or learner permit that is practical, durable, convenient and secure with enhanced security features;
- a licence that is easily recognisable in all EU states;
- an identity validation process in line with safety standards set by the State;
- flexible office opening hours; and
- access to online services from September 2013.
Can I sign up as an organ donor on the new-style licence?
Yes, the card will have a code giving this information.

Where can I get more information on the new service?
Further information about the new system is available on www.ndls.ie.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY DATES</th>
<th>WHAT WILL HAPPEN</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 January 2013</td>
<td>New-style driving licence introduced for drivers who apply to renew their licence or get a new licence or learner permit on or after this date</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2013</td>
<td>Final transfer of the licensing service from the Motor Taxation Offices to the National Driver Licence Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2014</td>
<td>Microchip on cards will be activated and work will commence on the development of online services</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

National Driver Licence Service
www.ndls.ie