

Frequently Asked Questions on NDLS Closure and the Extension of Validity of Driving Licences and Learner Permits

Q1. My driving licence/learner permit is due for renewal soon, as NDLS offices are closed how can I renew?

New regulations introduced by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport in April will extend the validity period of a learner permit/driving licence expiring from 1 March to 30 June 2020 by four months. e.g. if your learner permit or driving licence expired on 20 March 2020 it will be automatically extended until 20 July 2020.

Q2. My driving licence is valid for another five years, however my bus/truck categories are expiring, will the expiry date of those be extended?

New regulations introduced will extend the validity period of a learner permit/driving licence which expires from 1 March to the 30 June 2020 by four months. This means that all categories that expire on your driving licence/learner permit from the 1 March to 30 June 2020 will be automatically extended by four months.

Q3. Is it planned that a new licence/learner permit will issue covering the extension period?

No, the NDLS will not be issuing a driver licence/learner permit card for the period of the extension. The four month extension will be reflected on the electronic driver record on the National Vehicle Driver File (NVDF).

Q4. My driving licence/learner permit expired before 1 March 2020 and now the NDLS offices are closed, how do I renew?

You may currently be able to renew online at <https://ndls.rsa.ie> if not refer to Q28.

Q5. Do I need anything to avail of the NDLS online facility?

You will need a Public Services Card (PSC) and a verified MyGovID account, for more information on setting up a verified MyGovID see www.mygovid.ie

Q6. What category of people cannot apply online?

NDLS online is not currently available to anyone applying for a first full driving licence or first learner permit, also full driving licence renewal or a learner permit renewal **where**

- the expiry date of your driving licence or learner permit is less than 3 months from today
- you hold a truck or bus category on your driving licence
- you are 70 years of age or over
- you are applying for your 3rd or subsequent learner permit
- you have a medical condition which requires a medical report to obtain a driving licence or learner permit.

Q7. I have penalty points on my record and my driving licence/learner permit is about to expire, will my penalty points count down for that period as it states you must have a current licence for them to count down?

Yes, if your driving licence or learner permit expires from the 1 March to 30 June 2020 the validity period will be extended by four months therefore your penalty points will continue to count down during that time.

Q8. I am currently serving a penalty point disqualification and my driving licence/learner permit is about to expire, will it count down for that period as it states you must have a current licence for a penalty point disqualification to count down?

The validity period of all driving licences/learner permits that expire from 1 March to the 30 June 2020 has been extended by four months therefore your penalty point period of disqualification will continue to count down during that period. It is important to note that you remain disqualified from driving until the period of disqualification has expired.

Q9. My driving licence expired nearly ten years ago, and I can renew up to ten years after expiry without the need to sit a driving test, however, the ten years after expiry is up during the period the NDLS offices are closed. Will the extension period apply to me?

No, you may be able to renew online at <https://ndls.rsa.ie> if not refer to Q28.

Q10. My learner permit expired nearly five years ago, and I can renew up to five years after expiry without the need to sit a driver theory test, however, the five years after expiry is up during the period the NDLS offices are closed. Will the extension period apply to me?

No, you may be able to renew online at <https://ndls.rsa.ie> if not refer to Q28.

Q11. I have a disqualification that is about to expire, however my driving licence had expired during the period of disqualification and now the NDLS offices are closed, how do I renew?

You may be able to renew online at <https://ndls.rsa.ie> if not refer to Q28.

Q12. I am not currently eligible to renew online. Is there any other facility available to me?

The RSA continue to work on expanding the online facility to accommodate all driving licence and learner permit application types. When this facility becomes available we will update the website.

Q13. I made an application to NDLS prior to the offices closing, will my application be processed now that the offices are closed?

Yes, the NDLS will continue to process all applications received.

Q14. My driving licence/learner permit is being extended under the new rules – will my insurance company recognise this?

Insurance companies are private companies and the Government cannot give them directions on the terms of their policies. However, Insurance Ireland, the body representing the insurance industry, has indicated that it will recognise the extensions being provided. You should however contact your insurer or broker for further details.

Q15. If I am stopped by the gardai and show an expired driving licence/learner permit, can they charge me with an offence of driving without a driving licence/permit?

The Gardai are being advised of the change in legislation in relation to the four month extension. The driver record, the National Vehicle Driver File will reflect the change in expiry date.

Q16. Can I drive a truck for commercial use and travel across the EU with the expired licence?

Ireland will be advising the EU Commission of the decision in relation to the extension of the validity of driver licences in the coming days. It is expected that other EU countries will recognise a driving licence whose period of validity has expired up to the end of the extension period. It should be noted that various other EU countries are also taking measures around the extension of validity periods.

Q17. I'm over 70 years of age and need to apply for a licence before 31 July 2020, will I need to submit a medical report?

A17. Up to 31 July 2020 persons over 70 years of age can (under certain circumstance) apply to renew a licence without providing a medical report providing they do not have an identified or [specified illness](#). The driving licence will be issued for a period of 3 years.

Q18. Can I renew my driving licence/learner permit without attending a NDLS centre?

Yes, If you are renewing a driving licence or learner permit without any other change in your personal details, you are under 70 years and you do not have a truck or bus category on your driving licence/learner permit, you may be able to apply online at www.ndls.rsa.ie

Q19. Will I need to submit a medical report after 31 July 2020 if I have declared I do not have a medical condition on my application, and I am age 70 and over?

The rule that a person aged 70 and over does not need a medical (under certain circumstances) has been introduced as a temporary measure on foot of the Covid-19 pandemic. After 31 July 2020 it is expected that all persons aged 70 and over will again have to provide a medical report, however this will be kept under review. For the latest information please go to www.ndls.ie

Q20. I passed a driver theory test nearly two years ago but did not make an application yet for a learner permit. It states on the driver theory test certificate that it is valid for two years. However, the two year period expires now and the NDLS centre is closed so that I cannot make an application for a learner permit. What can I do?

New regulations introduced by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport in April will extend the validity period of a driver theory test certificates that expires from 1 March to 30 June 2020 by four months. This means if your theory test certificate expired on or after 1 March 2020 and up to and including 30 June 2020 the expiry date will be automatically extended by four months.

Q21. I passed a driving test nearly two years ago but did not make an application yet for a driving licence. It states on the driving test cert of competency that it is valid for two years. However, the two year period expires now and the NDLS centre is closed so that I cannot make an application for a driving licence. What can I do?

New regulations introduced by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport in April will extend the validity period of a certificate of competency that expires from 1 March to 30 June 2020 by four months. This means if your cert expired on or after 1 March 2020 and up

to and including 30 June 2020 the expiry date will be automatically extended by four months.

Q22. I completed IBT progressive access but did not make an application yet for a driving licence to add the category. It states on the IBT certificate that it is valid for two years. However, the two year period expires now and the NDLS centre is closed so that I cannot make an application to add the category to the driving licence. What can I do?

New regulations introduced by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport in April will extend the validity period of a certificate that expires from 1 March to 30 June 2020 by four months. This means if your IBT cert expired on or after 1 March 2020 and up to and including 30 June 2020 the expiry date will be automatically extended by four months.

Q23. My driving licence/learner permit is lost/stolen how can I apply for a replacement licence/permit now that the NDLS offices are closed?

You are currently not eligible to apply for a replacement licence/permit online. Refer to Q28.

Q24. I am coming to/returning to Ireland to work in medical services with a licence from a non-EU country. Will I be able to drive in Ireland on my national licence?

Under the International Road Traffic Convention 1949 (Geneva Convention), if your country is a participating state, you may drive in Ireland on your national licence for up to a year on a visitor basis.

Q25. I am driving in Ireland on a non-Irish driving licence which is due for renewal. I cannot renew my licence at home at this time. Can I continue to drive in Ireland?

If it is an EU licence and has been extended by your national licensing authority, then it is a valid licence and you can drive on it. Ireland does not have the authority to extend other EU licences.

For non-EU licences, people can drive for up to one year on their national licence on a visitor basis providing their country is a participating state to the International Road Traffic Convention 1949 (Geneva Convention). If the year is about to expire the right to drive will also expire.

Q26. I am driving in Ireland using an International Driving Permit. Does this remain valid during the COVID 19 crisis?

The validity of your International Driving Permit (IDP) is not affected by the current Covid-19 situation. The IDP is not a licence, it is a statement in internationally agreed form of your entitlement to drive under your own national laws. IDPs issued by Ireland are valid for one year. IDPs issued by other countries may have a different period of validity.

Q27. If I hold a learner permit, will rules be relaxed during the COVID outbreak so that I can drive unaccompanied?

No. It is important to clarify that a learner permit is not a licence, but a permit to allow a person to drive while learning. The purpose of the driving test is to set out the minimum level of knowledge, skill and competency that a learner must demonstrate in order to become a fully licenced driver. Until a learner can meet this standard and pass this test, they are not safe to take to our roads without appropriate supervision. Studies have repeatedly shown that unaccompanied learner drivers are markedly more likely to be involved in fatal collisions. For that reason, there can be no exceptions to the current laws in force around learner drivers. An unaccompanied learner driver who is stopped by An Garda Síochána may face penalty points, a fixed charge, seizure of the vehicle and possible prosecution.

Road safety remains paramount, and even more so during current circumstances. As of the 17th of April 2020, there have been 50 fatalities on Irish roads, four more than for the same period in 2019. There are serious concerns about the additional pressure road crashes place on first responders and emergency department health care workers who need to focus on dealing with the current COVID-19 pandemic. It is therefore vital that road safety measures are there to protect learner drivers remain in place.

The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the RSA recognise the difficulty some individuals may have in making alternative arrangements; however, it is preferable to putting him or her at a risk. It is also worth noting that some people have suggested a relaxation of the learner rules for medical staff, but the risk to safety may be more acute for medical staff under severe pressure, given the added risks of driver fatigue.

Q28. The information I'm looking for is not provided here, where can I get further information?

You should be able to get all the relevant information on www.ndls.ie or you can also email licensingqueries@rsa.ie