SSN Card Information

Social security cards are issued by the Social Security Administration. To apply for one:

- call 1-800-772-1213, or
- go to your local Social Security Office, or
- visit SSA's website at www.ssa.gov

The social security card application includes:

- Instructions for completing the application.
- An acceptable documents list to prove your identity.
- Information about replacing a social security card.
- Name change information.
Why Collect an SSN?

The California Vehicle Code (VC) requires the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to collect your Social Security Number (SSN). (VC §§1653.5[a][b], 12800[a], 12801)

Federal law also allows any state to use a person’s SSN for the purpose of establishing his/her identification. (United States Code §§405[c][i][ii-1], 405[c][iii])

SSN Verification

DMV electronically verifies your SSN, name, and birth date with the Social Security Administration (SSA) while you are in the DMV office. This process adds to the accuracy, reliability, and integrity of DMV’s database.

If the information you give DMV does not match SSA’s data base, you will be asked to provide your correct SSN, name, or birth date or correct the information on either DMV’s or SSA’s data base so both data bases match.

Application Requirements

You may not start a noncommercial Class A, B, or C license application or an ID card application without an SSN.

Exception: If you are legally present in the U.S., but ineligible for an SSN, you are exempt from SSN requirements. However, you must still provide an acceptable BD/LP document(s) for any future DL/ID card application or provide a valid SSN.

You may not start a Commercial Class A, B, or C application until DMV visually verifies your SSN.

NOTE: The SSN is electronically verified with SSA while you are in the DMV office for all DL/ID card transactions if it has not already been verified.

Verification Documents

DMV will only accept the following documents when visual verification of your SSN is required:

- An un laminated Social Security Card
- A Medicare card
- A United States Armed Forces ID card:
  - Active-DD Form 2
  - Retired-DD Form 2
  - Reserve-DD Form 2
  - Dependents-DD Form 1173
- Military separation document-DD Form 214 (original copy)

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

What If I’m Not Eligible For An SSN?

All customers applying for an original DL/ID card must provide evidence of legal presence in the United States as authorized under federal law. In some cases, a person can be in the United States legally but not eligible for an SSN.

Once your eligibility status is verified, DMV will complete your application.

What If I Refuse to Disclose My SSN?

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

SSN Confidentiality

Your SSN is confidential and will not appear on any document requested by the public which DMV is authorized to release. However, your SSN will be released to the authorized state agencies specified in VC §1653.5(c)(1).

Your SSN will not appear on your driver license (DL) or identification (ID) card and it is not encoded in the magnetic stripe on the back of the DL/ID card.
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