

Questions for Illinois Secretary of State Liaison May 2026 Meeting

1. We continue to hear reports of applicants in approved auto-extension periods due to timely filed pending requests for extension of nonimmigrant status being given licenses valid for only 90 days or being told they must switch to a NVDL. Please confirm this is incorrect and let us know of anything applicants may do to lessen the chances of this happening and to ensure they get a non-NVDL license valid for the duration of their auto-extension period. **Employees are aware and applicants should get regular license. They are also aware of EAD auto-extensions for people who filed pre-10/30/2025.**
2. Please confirm that facilities no longer issue actual hard licenses on the same day as an appointment but will always provide a temporary paper license valid for 90 days while the hard license is mailed. Please also confirm that when an applicant is only eligible for a 90-day temporary license to begin with they are informed of this fact, are told that no hard license will be mailed to them, and are told that they will have to return to renew their license at the end of the 90-day period. **It is correct that facilities do not issue hard licenses anymore but only temporary paper ones to every applicant. Applicants eligible for more than a 90-day license will get a temporary paper license with a photo and their hard license will be mailed to them. If their temporary is lost, applicants may seek a duplicate and there is a phone number on the temporary license they can call if they don't get the hard license before the temporary expires. For people only eligible for a 90-day temporary, the temporary license **will not** have a photo unlike the temporary licenses issued to people as stop-gaps while they wait for the hard license to be mailed. They will also be told that the license is only valid for 90 days and they will have to come back to renew after 90 days. So before assuming your client was only given a 90-day temporary license, check the temporary license they were given. If it has a photo that means the longer validity hard license is still coming by mail.**
3. We also continue to hear reports of applicants having issues getting a NVDL after they lose status or while waiting for an extension of status to be approved when they are not entitled to an auto-extension. Please let us know of anything applicants can do to lessen the chances of this happening. **They have trained staff on this and also have trained them to review the applicant's full file to see if the applicant has already submitted documents showing 12 months residency. Also applicants have to wait until their status has already expired before applying for a NVDL so please keep this in mind. They need a licensed friend or family member to drive them to the facility or take public transportation, a cab, or a ride share as they will be briefly without a license.**
4. We have heard reports of LPRs with pending I-751s or I-90s being told that their I-751 and I-90 receipts presented in conjunction with their expired green cards are not acceptable proof of status even when they are within the extension period stated in the receipt, and that they have to wait for their actual new green card to renew their license.

What training are you doing to ensure your employees are aware that these receipts extend the validity of a green card and are the only proof of status a LPR with a pending I-751 or I-90 may have and what can applicants in this situation do to avoid having this problem? They have discussed this frequently at immigration town hall meetings they hold with staff. They also distributed a memo about I-797Cs for I-90 applicants and how they extend the validity of the green card. But keep in mind staff must run a SAVE inquiry on these applicants to ensure they are LPRs. IL SOS is training their employees to not turn people away before verifying the applicant can provide all necessary documents. Applicants who have problems can speak to supervisor. There is a supervisor counter at larger facilities and applicants can ask the supervisor to make sure they have checked all memos and recent developments. The supervisors have phone numbers to the training department.

5. What are the different terms and acronyms for the various licenses available? NVDL is former non-status TVDL. VSDL is the former status TVDL. And of course they still have REAL IDs, standard licenses, REAL ID CDLs, standard CDLs, and non-domicile CDLs
6. Any updates on your response to the March 2026 final rule restricting non-domiciled CDL issuance? What is your current policy on issuing new non-domiciled CDLs? These are still paused and this is tied to new final rule and also based on FMSCA's audit finding so IL SOS is under prohibition on issuing non-domicile CDLs even to those groups approved for these in the March 2026 final rule until IL SOS completes the FMSCA audit process. FMSCA identified 29 records out of 150 that the FMCSA asserts were incorrect. FMSCA identified 11 individuals that had an EAD auto extension and FMSCA still won't back off their position this license was wrongly issued. As a result of the audit, IL SOS has downgraded 7 licenses to non-CDLs.
7. Are there shorter lines and appointment wait times now for REAL IDs? Are some places harder to get appointments than others? Any tips for getting an appointment? How much longer will they have the super center and what are the lines like there? Lines and appointment wait times have decreased significantly now that it has been a year since REAL IDs became required. But Lombard, Aurora, and Naperville are still busier than other facilities. Now appointments are available for several hours after opening rather than 10 minutes but it's still best to go online at 7am to have the best chance to get an appointment. The Super Center in the Loop will be open until at least the end of the year. The Super Center was processing 1300 REAL IDs a day. Now they process 500 a day. Fridays are the busiest. Lunchtime is also busier. But some people wait as few as 20 minutes at the Super Center now.
8. Any updates on digital IDs? We understand it is available on iPhones now. Any timeline for androids? Can it be shown to police officers in Illinois if pulled over for a traffic violation? These are available on iPhones. No timeline for when they will be available on android phones. IL SOS is in discussion with Samsung and Google about this. Digital IDs

cannot be shown to law enforcement if pulled over. You can use it at TSA checkpoints and some bars/clubs that have appropriate readers.

9. Are you still granting one-year renewals of licenses to U adjustment applicants even though the I-485 receipts no longer say employment authorization is extended for one year? **Yes, IL SOS still grants both standard licenses and REAL IDs to this group.**
10. Remind us, what facilities issue VSDLs? **All facilities issue VSDLs. All facilities can issue all licenses except CDLs, but some facilities can't administer road tests or motorcycle tests if you need one. CDLs are only available at specific facilities.**

Remember the residency requirement for the NVDL means proof the applicant lives in Illinois and nothing more.

Please also remember that IL SOS has no pull with respect to issuing non-domicile CDLs so there is no point in trying to advocate for this. LPRs who still have non-domicile CDLs (because they never updated their status with IL SOS) should come in and get their CDL changed to a standard or REAL ID CDL.