

# How Foster Youth Can Get Their Texas Birth Certificate, Texas Identification (ID) Card, and Texas Driver's License

## Step 1: Know Your Rights About Identification Documents

- a. If you are in the Texas foster care system, you have rights about getting your identification documents. You are considered in foster care if the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) has managing conservatorship over you. DFPS is the same thing as CPS, which stands for Child Protective Services.
- b. Before you turn 16, your DFPS caseworker **must** get you your certified birth certificate, your Social Security card, and a Texas Identification (ID) Card. These must be originals, not copies!
- c. If you were not born in the United States, you also need the legal document that shows your immigration status or your Certificate of Citizenship.
- d. Your foster care placement should keep these documents in a safe place for you.
  1. You should have access to them whenever you need them.
  2. Only carry your Texas ID Card or Driver's License with you securely in your wallet. It should not be carried loosely around in a bag.
  3. Only take your birth certificate or Social Security card out from the safe place when you need to show them for paperwork at a new job or places where you must show them for official purposes. Be sure to put them back in the safe place once you have finished using them.
  4. Always remember to ask to take your documents with you when you leave a placement permanently. Sometimes the person who takes you to a new placement doesn't get them. If they are left behind, ask for them to be brought to you. If you don't get them back, contact the [Texas Foster Care Ombudsman](#).
- e. There are laws that make it easier for a foster youth to get their Texas birth certificate and Texas ID Card and Texas Driver's License. This document has information about how you can get them if DFPS has not gotten them for you.
  1. You must be in foster care or extended foster care or supervised independent living to be covered by these laws. If you are not in foster care, you might be covered by special laws for homeless youth. See [TexasFosterYouth.org](#) for more information.

## Step 2: Get a DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification

- a. Ask your caseworker to complete and give you the DFPS [Form 2042, Youth or Young Adult in Foster Care Residency Verification for a Driver License or State ID Fee Waiver](#) (DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification).
- b. **If you are under 18**, also ask your caseworker to complete the Texas Driver License or Identification Card Application form. The instructions in the forms have information and links for them.
  1. If you are under age 17 and 10 months, they should complete the [DL-14B Texas Driver License or Identification Card Application \(Minor\)](#). They must sign it before a notary public if they are approving you to get a driver's license or learner's permit/license. If it is only for an ID, it does not need to be notarized.
  2. If you are 17 years and 10 months old or older, they should complete the [DL-14A - Texas Driver License or Identification Card Application \(Adult\)](#). They must sign it

before a notary public if they are approving you to get a driver's license or learner's permit/license. If it is only for an ID, it does not need to be notarized.

3. If you are over 18, you do not need anyone's permission to apply for a driver's license, so you do not need the caseworker to complete a Texas Driver License or Identification Card Application.
  4. You should know that all foster youth have a right to get an ID. But when you are under 18, you can only get a driver's license if your parent or person with legal authority consents (says you can). If you are in foster care, your caseworker is the person who consents.
- c. Decide with your caseworker about what address to list on your Texas Driver License or Identification Card Application form. Your caseworker should list on the [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#) a mailing address, which is their name and office address, and a current address, which is your placement address.
1. If you are in a placement that is intended to be permanent, such as with a relative or a foster home you have lived in for several years, you can use your current address as the mailing address on the application form.
  2. If you have been moved a lot or plan to move, you should use the mailing address of your caseworker because every time you move you will have to tell the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and get a new ID card with your new address. But if a foster youth uses the address of a caseworker, they do not have to update it while they are in foster care.
  3. If you are using the caseworker's address, be sure to list "c/o" followed by the caseworker's name and Texas Department of Family Protective Services in the mailing address on the application. For example: if your name is Jane Doe and your caseworker is Juan Garcia, when you put the address where the ID should be sent, it should look like this:  

**Jane Doe**  
**c/o Juan Garcia**  
Texas Department of Family and Protective Services  
Street Address  
City, TX Zip Code
- d. If you ask your caseworker twice for the forms and they don't get them to you, contact:
1. The [Texas Foster Care Ombudsman](#) for help if you are under 18.
  2. The [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Office of Consumer Relations](#) for help if you are over 18.

If you contact them and still don't get the forms or have other problems about getting your ID, you can contact the Texas Foster Youth Justice Project at 1-877-313-3688 or [info@texasfosteryouth.org](mailto:info@texasfosteryouth.org) for guidance and possible legal assistance from a FREE lawyer.

### **Step 3: Get Your Birth Certificate – This will only work if you were born in Texas!**

- a. DFPS is supposed to deliver your original birth certificate to you before you turn 16. If you have not received it or you no longer have it and your caseworker has not helped you get a new original birth certificate, you can get one on your own if you were born in Texas.

- b. The [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#) prepared by your caseworker lets you get your birth certificate without a parent or guardian signature (needed if you are under 18) and you won't have to pay for the birth certificate. However, you will still need to provide documents that show you are the person listed on the birth certificate. Have a caring, older adult help you figure out what you need to take with you. **Texas Vital Statistics has a helpful website with information:** <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/vs/reqproc/Birth-Certificate-for-Foster-or-Homeless-Youth.aspx#youth>.
1. If you don't have a [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#), but if you or the caring adult that goes with you has other official documents from DFPS or the court that show you are in foster care, the birth certificate office may be willing to accept that document as proof you are in foster care.
- c. Gather needed documents to show who you are. [Texas Vital Statistics](#) has a long list of what you can use. **Remember, all documents must be originals, not photocopies!** If you have a Primary Acceptable Document, it is easy. Primary documents are:
1. Driver's License from a U.S. State
  2. Federal or State ID Card
  3. Military ID Card
  4. U.S. Passport
- If you have a Primary Acceptable Document, you are ready to go get your birth certificate.
- d. If you don't have a Primary Acceptable Document, you must have:
1. One Secondary Acceptable ID. The type of thing youth might have as a Secondary Acceptable ID are:
    - a. Current School or Work ID
    - b. Social Security Card - Must be Signed
    - c. Medicaid Card
    - d. Health Insurance Card
  2. You will also need two supporting documents. These can include:
    - a. Official School Records
    - b. Library Card
    - c. Social Security Letter
    - d. Recent Medical Record or Bill
    - e. Recent Paycheck Stub
    - f. Recent Cell Phone Bill with Current Address
    - g. Public Benefits Letters or Applications (Examples: SNAP (Food Stamps) letter, Medicaid letter, TANF letter)
    - h. Voter Registration Card (You must be 17 and 10 months old to register to vote)
    - i. Bank Account Statement
    - j. Lease Agreement or Recent Rent Receipt
    - k. Religious Record with Signature of Religious Official (Example: Certificate of Baptism)
- e. Find out where you can go to get your birth certificate. You can find a list of places at [dshs.texas.gov/vs/local.aspx](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/vs/local.aspx). Some counties, cities and districts in Texas can issue your birth certificate no matter where you were born in Texas. If you were not born in the county where

- you live, be sure to select the **Local Birth Certificate Issuers** so you can find a place near where you live that will have your birth certificate.
- f. Take your documents and the completed [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#) to your local birth certificate issuer office. Having a caring, older adult go with you is also a good idea. You don't need parental consent, but they can help you talk to the people at the office and assist if there are any problems.
  - g. Give the office your documents and completed [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#). **Because you have the [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#), you should not be charged a fee for the birth certificate and don't need a parent to sign to apply for it.**
  - h. If there are problems, tell them to check the Texas Vital Statistics [website about Birth Certificates for Foster or Homeless Youth](#). If there are still problems, ask to speak to a supervisor and ask them to call the State Vital Statistics office. **If you are still denied, ask them to write down why you were denied and write down the name of the person you talked to and the date.**
  - i. If you think you are wrongly denied your birth certificate, you can contact the Texas Foster Youth Justice Project at 877-313-3688 or [info@texasfosteryouth.org](mailto:info@texasfosteryouth.org) for guidance and possible legal assistance from a lawyer.

#### Step 4: Get Your Texas ID

- a. Gather the documents you need. **Remember, all documents must be originals, not photocopies!** When you are a foster youth in regular or extended foster care and have a [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#), you need the following documents to get your Texas ID from DPS (the Department of Public Safety).
  1. [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#), completed and signed by your caseworker.
  2. Certified Birth Certificate from Texas or another U.S. state. DPS considers this a **secondary identity document**.
  3. If you were not born in the United States you will need proof that you are a U.S. citizen or have *lawful presence*. Documents that you can show for this include:
    - a. U.S. Citizenship Certificate or Certificate of Naturalization
    - b. U.S. Passport
    - c. Consular Report of Birth Abroad Issued by U.S. Department of State original or certified copy
    - d. Lawful Permanent Resident Card (Green Card)
    - e. Other unexpired Immigration document that shows you have lawful presence in the United States. Contact the Texas Foster Youth Justice Project at 1-877-313-3688 or [info@texasfosteryouth.org](mailto:info@texasfosteryouth.org) for help figuring out if you have a document that shows that or what you need to get.
  4. Social Security Card, IRS W-2 form or 1099 form (tax forms that your employer gives you in January), or paycheck stub with your name and your Social Security number on it to prove your Social Security number.

5. At least two **supporting identity documents** to show your identity, but three is better in case DPS rejects one of the documents. You must have originals, **not photocopies**. DPS has a long list of documents you can use listed [here](#). Some of the ones you are most likely to have are:
    - a. Social Security Card (If you have this, it works as both a document to prove your Social Security number and support your identity)
    - b. School ID
    - c. School Report Card or Transcript
    - d. Immunization Records
    - e. Medicaid Card
    - f. Hospital Issued Birth Record
    - g. IRS W-2 Form or 1099 Form (tax forms that your employer gives you in January) (If you have this, then it works as both a document to prove your Social Security number and support your identity.)
    - h. Voter Registration Card (You can register to vote at age 17 and 10 months.)
    - i. Selective Service Card (Males 18 or older who have completed registration)
  6. You will not need to bring documents to show your Texas Residency because you have the [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#) your caseworker signed.
  7. If you are under 18 bring the Texas Driver License or Identification Card Application form your caseworker prepared for you. If your caseworker has not given you the Application, you will need to complete the form at the DPS office and sign it in front of the DPS employee. Texas law allows those under 18 to get their Texas ID without adult authorization AND the [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#) prepared by your caseworker also allows you to get it by yourself.
- b. If you are over 18, decide what address to list on your identification card application form, the [DL-14A - Texas Driver License or Identification Card Application](#) (Adult Texas Driver License or Identification Card Application). Your caseworker should list on the [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#) a **mailing address**, which is their name and office address, and a **current address**, which is your placement address.
1. If you are in a placement that is intended to be permanent, such as with a relative or a foster home you have lived in for several years, you can use your current address as the mailing address on the application form.
  2. If you have been moved a lot or plan to move, you should use the mailing address of your caseworker because every time you move you will have to tell DPS and get a new ID card with your new address. But if a foster youth uses the address of a caseworker, they do not have to update it while they are in foster care.
    - i. If you are using the caseworker's address, be sure to list "c/o" followed by the caseworker's name and Texas Department of Family Protective Services in the mailing address on the application. For example: if your

name is Jane Doe and your caseworker is Juan Garcia, when you put the address where the ID should be sent, it should look like this:

**Jane Doe**

**c/o Juan Garcia**

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

Street Address

City, TX Zip Code

- c. If your caseworker gave you a signed [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#), you do not have to pay the fee for the ID.
- d. Find a DPS office at [dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense/](https://dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense/).
- e. Go to the DPS office with a caring older adult; you will need them with you to help explain that you are in foster care and that there are laws that make it simpler for you to get your ID card. Print out and take with you or have ready on your phone a copy of the [DPS Foster Youth ID Card Fact Sheet](#). You can also find this under [Identification Documents](#) on [TexasFosterYouth.org](https://TexasFosterYouth.org).
- f. If there are problems, show them the [DPS Foster Youth ID Card Fact Sheet](#), the information about the laws on [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#), and this document. If there are still problems, ask to speak to a supervisor. **If you are still denied, ask them to write down why you were denied and write down the name of the person you talked to and the date.**
- g. If you think you were wrongly denied your Texas ID Card, you can contact the Texas Foster Youth Justice Project at 1-877-313-3688 or [info@texasfosteryouth.org](mailto:info@texasfosteryouth.org) for free guidance and possible legal assistance from a lawyer.

## Step 5: Get Your Texas Driver's License/Learner's Permit

- a. If you have a [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#), you will need the same identity documents you needed to get your Texas ID if you want to get a driver's license or learner's permit from DPS (Department of Public Safety). **Remember, all documents must be originals, not photocopies!** You need the following documents.
  1. [DFPS 2042 Form Foster Care Residency Verification](#), completed and signed by your caseworker.
  2. Certified Birth Certificate from Texas or another U.S. state.
  3. If you were not born in the United States you will need proof that you are a U.S. citizen or have *lawful presence* which could be:
    - a. U.S. Citizenship Certificate or Certificate of Naturalization
    - b. U.S. Passport
    - c. Consular Report of Birth Abroad Issued by U.S. Department of State original or certified copy
    - d. Lawful Permanent Resident Card (Green Card)
    - e. Other unexpired immigration document that shows you have lawful presence in the United States. Contact the Texas Foster Youth Justice

Project at 1-877-313-3688 or [info@texasfosteryouth.org](mailto:info@texasfosteryouth.org) for help figuring out if you have a document that shows that or what you need to get.

4. Social Security Card, IRS W-2 form or 1099 form (tax forms that your employer gives you in January), or paycheck stub with your name and your Social Security number on it to prove your Social Security number.
5. At least two supporting identity documents to show your identity, but three is better in case DPS rejects one of the documents. You must have originals, **not photocopies**. DPS has a long list of documents you can use listed [here](#). Some of the ones you are most likely to have are:
  - a. Social Security Card (If you have this, then it works as both a document to prove your Social Security number and support your identity)
  - b. School ID
  - c. School Report Card or Transcript
  - d. Immunization Records
  - e. Medicaid Card
  - f. Hospital Issued Birth Record
  - g. IRS W-2 form or 1099 form (tax forms that your employer gives you in January) (If you have this than it works as both a document to prove your Social Security number and support your identity.)
  - h. Voter Registration Card (You can register to vote at age 17 and 10 months.)
  - i. Selective Service Card (Males 18 or older who have completed registration)
6. You will not need to bring documents to show your Texas Residency because you have the [DFPS 2042 Form Foster Care Residency Verification](#).
  - b. If you are under 18, you need to have a completed Texas Driver License or Identification Card Application form (see Step 2.b.) that your caseworker has signed before a notary public. If your caseworker goes with you to DPS, they can sign it in front of the DPS employee.
  - c. If you are over 18, decide what address to list on your license application form, the [DL-14A - Texas Driver License or Identification Card Application](#) (Adult Texas Driver License or Identification Card Application). Your caseworker should have listed on the [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#) a mailing address, which is their name and office address, and a current address, which is your placement address.
    1. If you are in a placement that is intended to be permanent, such as with a relative or a foster home you have lived in for several years, you can use your current address as the mailing address on the application form.
    2. If you have been moved a lot or plan to move, you should use the mailing address of your caseworker because every time you move you will have to tell DPS and get a new ID card with your new address. But if a foster youth uses the address of a caseworker, they do not have to update it while they are in foster care.
      - a. If you are using the caseworker's address, be sure to list "c/o" followed by the caseworker's name and Texas Department of Family Protective Services in the mailing address on the application. For example: if your name is Jane Doe and



your caseworker is Juan Garcia, when you put the address where the ID should be sent, it should look like this:

**Jane Doe**

**c/o Juan Garcia**

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

Street Address

City, TX Zip Code

- d. Go to the DPS office with a caring older adult; you will need them with you to help explain that you are in foster care and that there are laws that make it simpler for you to get your Driver's License. Print out and take with you or have ready on your phone a copy of the [DPS Foster Youth Driver License Fact Sheet](#). You can also find it under [Identification Documents](#) on [TexasFosterYouth.org](#).
- e. If you have the [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#), you do not have to pay the fee for the license.
- f. There are many other requirements for a driver's license. Visit [dps.texas.gov/ApplyforLicense.htm](#) for more information. If you are under 18, you must also visit [dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense/teenDriver.htm](#). Have a caring, older adult help you figure out what you will need to do to get the license.
- g. If there are problems, show them the [DPS Foster Youth Driver License Fact Sheet](#), the information about the laws on [DFPS Form 2042 Foster Care Residency Verification](#), and this document. If there are still problems, ask to speak to a supervisor. **If you are still denied, ask them to write down why you were denied and write down the name of the person you talked to and the date.**
- h. If you think you were wrongly denied your license, you can contact the Texas Foster Youth Justice Project at 1-877-313-3688 or [info@texasfosteryouth.org](mailto:info@texasfosteryouth.org) for free guidance and possible legal assistance from a lawyer.

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