



The REAL ID Act, passed by Congress in 2005, establishes minimum security standards for state-issued driver's licenses and identification cards. These standards are designed to make it more difficult for fraudulent IDs to be used, especially for boarding domestic flights and entering certain federal facilities.

Key Details about REAL ID:

1. **What is a REAL ID?** A REAL ID is a state-issued driver's license or identification card that meets federal security standards. It has a gold or black star (or another approved marking) in the upper right corner to indicate compliance.
2. **When does it take effect?**
 - The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has set various deadlines for compliance over the years. As of now, the enforcement date is **May 7, 2025**.
 - After this date, travelers aged 18 and older will need a REAL ID-compliant identification card to board domestic flights or access federal facilities, such as military bases and some federal buildings.
3. **Who is affected?**
 - U.S. citizens and residents who use driver's licenses or state-issued ID cards for identification.
 - Individuals without a REAL ID will need to present another form of TSA-approved identification, such as a U.S. passport, passport card, or military ID.
4. **How to get a REAL ID?**
 - Visit your state's Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).
 - Provide documents proving your identity (e.g., a birth certificate or passport), Social Security number, and two proofs of state residency (e.g., utility bills or lease agreements).
 - Check your state DMV's specific requirements, as they may vary slightly.
5. **Travel and REAL ID:**
 - **Domestic Flights:** A REAL ID-compliant license or alternative approved ID is required for domestic air travel starting May 7, 2025.
 - **International Travel:** A REAL ID is **not** valid for international travel; a valid passport is still required.

Tips for Travelers:

- If your current ID is not REAL ID-compliant, consider applying well before the deadline to avoid last-minute rushes.
- Ensure your passport is valid if you plan on using it as an alternative form of ID.
- If you are unsure about your ID's compliance, check for the REAL ID star or contact your state DMV.



An **alternative approved ID** is any form of identification accepted by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for domestic air travel and by federal facilities for access. If you don't have a REAL ID-compliant driver's license or identification card, here are some common alternatives you can use:

TSA-Approved Alternative IDs:

1. **U.S. Passport or Passport Card**
 - Valid for domestic and international travel.
2. **DHS Trusted Traveler Cards**
 - Includes Global Entry, NEXUS, and SENTRI cards.
3. **U.S. Military ID**
 - Includes active duty, retiree, and dependent IDs.
4. **Permanent Resident Card (Green Card)**
 - Issued by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).
5. **Foreign Passport**
 - Must include a valid visa or other appropriate documentation if applicable.
6. **Border Crossing Card**
 - For citizens of Mexico authorized to enter the U.S. for specific purposes.
7. **State-Issued Enhanced Driver's License (EDL)**
 - Available in certain states (e.g., Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Vermont, and Washington). EDLs meet federal travel requirements and can also be used for border crossings by land or sea to Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean.
8. **Federally Recognized Tribal Identification Card**
 - Issued by a tribal government and recognized by the federal government.
9. **HSPD-12 PIV Card**
 - Personal Identity Verification card for federal employees and contractors.

For the most up-to-date list of TSA-approved IDs, travelers can visit the [TSA website](#).

If you're unsure whether your ID is acceptable, feel free to ask, and I can help clarify!

