

One Senior Place: Even if you don't drive anymore, you should still renew your license or ID card



Brenda Lyle | Special to FLORIDA TODAY

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Q: I Don't Drive Anymore. Do I Really Need an ID?

A: Life is busy and complicated. With all the big things to deal with, sometimes the small stuff can fall through the cracks.

What happens when you discover your driver's license or ID has expired? No big deal, right?

Think again.

Previous three One Senior Place columns:

- **Generational divide:** Connecting with grandkids is hard, but there are ways to get their attention
- **It's OK to rest:** Being a caregiver to elderly parent is taxing; take care of yourself, too
- **Bah humbug!** I don't feel very grateful this holiday season. What can I do?

Florida 'Real' ID

The Federal REAL ID Act of 2005 (effective nationwide since 2008) changed the standards for the issuance of driver licenses and ID cards.

In Florida, a treasured “gold star” in the upper right-hand corner of your ID indicates you have met these standards.

Importantly, by May of 2023, you must have an ID or driver's license with a gold star to board federally regulated aircraft.

Without the gold star, a second valid form of ID will be required.

Obtaining real ID

The Department of Motor Vehicles requires you appear in PERSON to get your

Real ID for the first time.

This can be problematic if your previous ID expired.

I frequently get calls from homebound seniors or disabled people who cannot appear in person to renew an expired ID.

Unfortunately, Florida does not have a program that accommodates the homebound.

However, Florida allows you to renew a class E license up to 18 months prior to the expiration date!

So you can renew online — as long as you are already REAL ID compliant.

More hurdles...

If you let your driver's license expire and do not renew within one year from the expiration date, you will have to take the written and vision portion of the driver's exam.

If you are changing to an ID card instead of a driver's license, you still must appear in person the FIRST time you get an ID.

Again, homebound seniors need to renew online BEFORE expiration to avoid these obstacles.

Make yourself a note to do this, at least six months prior to the expiration of your ID.

I don't drive anymore. Why do I need an ID?

Apart from boarding an airplane, there are many other situations that call for

a valid ID.

What about an appointment with a new doctor — or at your polling station when voting?

I frequently get calls from seniors who are doing estate planning and need their legal documents notarized. Notaries Public will always ask for a valid ID.

The bottom line?

Avoid the headache and do NOT let your driver's license or ID expire. For additional guidance and resources for seniors — all under one roof, contact One Senior Place in Viera or Greater Orlando.

One Senior Place is a marketplace for resources and provider of information, advice, care and on-site services for seniors and their families. Questions for this column are answered by professionals in nursing, social work, care management and in-home care. Send questions to AskOSP@OneSeniorPlace.com, call 321-751-6771 or visit One Senior Place, The Experts in Aging.

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