

Driver's Licenses ^[1]

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by [William S. Powell](#) ^[2], 2006



North Carolina driver's license issued 1969. Image from the North Carolina Historic Sites.

^[3]Driver's licenses became mandatory in North Carolina with the passage of the [Uniform Driver's License Act](#) ^[4], introduced in the [General Assembly](#) ^[5] in January 1935 by Senator Carroll W. Weathers after a thousand deaths had occurred on state roads. The act was ratified on 28 Feb. 1935. Applicants were required to be at least 16 years old and to pay a fee of \$1.00. Initially, no test or examination was required; a license was issued on the word of the applicant that he or she was an experienced and careful driver. The program was administered by the [Department of Revenue](#) ^[6] through its newly created Division of Highway Safety. It was not until 1 Jan. 1948 that examinations for a license were required, but those already holding a license and having a safe record were licensed without an examination. Youth in modern North Carolina learn to drive while holding graded licenses that allow them greater driving freedom as they gain experience.

Additional Resources:

"Driver License." North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles. <http://www.ncdot.gov/dmv/driver/> ^[7]

ryanteaguebeckwith. "A brief history of the N.C. driver's license." *Under the Dome* (blog). NewsObserver.com. June 13, 2008. http://projects.newsobserver.com/under_the_dome/a_brief_history_of_the_n_c_drivers_license#storylink=cpy ^[8] (November 1, 2012).

"An Act to Provide for the Licensing of Motor Vehicle Operators and Chauffeurs Upon the Public Highways and to Make Uniform the Law Relating Thereto, the Enforcement Thereof, and to Provide for its Operation." *Public laws and resolutions passed by the General Assembly at its session of 1935*. Charlotte: Observer Printing House, 1935. p.34-46. 1935. <http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u/?p249901coll22.240307> ^[4] (November 1, 2012).

Image Credits:

"License, Transportation, Accession #: [S.HS.2007.53.15](#) ^[3]." 1969. North Carolina Historic Sites.

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[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[16]

1 January 2006 | Powell, William S.

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- [1] <https://ncpedia.org/drivers-licenses>
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- [3] <http://collections.ncdcr.gov/RediscoveryProficioPublicSearch/ShowItem.aspx?7023+>
- [4] <http://digital.ncdcr.gov/u?/p249901coll22,240307>
- [5] <https://ncpedia.org/general-assembly>
- [6] <http://www.dor.state.nc.us>
- [7] <http://www.ncdot.gov/dmv/driver/>
- [8] http://projects.newsobserver.com/under_the_dome/a_brief_history_of_the_n_c_drivers_license#storylink=cpy
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