

GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSING (GDL) EXEMPTION PROGRAM

CHANGES to the GDL Exemption program since the 2014 Guidelines:

- Due to improved forensic capabilities at SIU, clients from the **Democratic Republic of Congo, Lebanon, Mauritius, Morocco, Philippines, Rwanda, Trinidad and Tobago, and the US Virgin Islands** are **no longer required** to submit supplementary verification documents for their application. They may still need a certified translation, however.
- **Clients from Hong Kong and Saudi Arabia** will have specific verification requirements, together with **Fiji**, because they do not always list an Issue date, only an Expiry date.
- **All GDL exemption clients** submitting an Initial Application must now include a clear **black and white copy of the relevant parts of their driver's licence** as part of the application. If the client submits a translation or other document that already includes an acceptable copy of the licence, then that is sufficient for SIU's purposes.

What is GDL Exemption?

Alberta has implemented a Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Program, intended to ensure that new drivers gradually develop the skills and experience they need to handle the complex task of driving. The primary purpose for the GDL Exemption Program is to recognize **new Albertan's** with previous driving experience from their home jurisdiction and credit them for that experience in the Alberta Registry system. This allows these individuals to be exempted from the one year Class 7 Learner period and potentially be exempted from the two year Class 5 GDL period of the GDL Program (depending upon years of experience credited) and thus qualify for either a Basic or Advanced road test sooner. It is **not** intended to exempt them from the requirement to undergo a road test. The mechanism behind GDL Exemption is document authentication and verification.

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) authenticates and approves all driving licences and documents for GDL Exemption by means of a thorough examination process, using a broad range of techniques and advanced forensic applications. These examinations significantly increase the likelihood of fraudulent or altered documents being detected. **Only those documents that can be forensically authenticated or verified will be approved by SIU.**

Some documents submitted for GDL Exemption lack adequate security features necessary for authentication by forensic examination alone. In these cases, additional documentation is required to support the authenticity of the document. SIU has developed guidelines for clients from certain jurisdictions whose documents may require verification from their national authority before approval may be granted.

Who is eligible for GDL Exemption?

Reciprocal Jurisdictions

The following jurisdictions have reciprocal exchange agreements with Alberta, and as such, the GDL Exemption Program **DOES NOT** apply:

- **Australia**
- **Austria**
- **Belgium**
- **France**
- **Germany**
- **Isle of Man**
- **Japan**
- **Northern Ireland (note: The Republic of Ireland is NOT reciprocal)**
- **Republic of Korea**
- **Switzerland**
- **Taiwan**
- **United Kingdom**
- **United States**
- **All Canadian Provinces and territories**

All other jurisdictions worldwide are considered Non-Reciprocal.

It should be noted that the reciprocity agreement **does not** extend to Learners Class licences. If you hold a Learner's class licence from a reciprocal jurisdiction, you may apply for GDL Exemption in order to reduce the time needed as an Alberta Learner before you are eligible to challenge the Basic Road Test (BRT).

Non-Reciprocal Jurisdictions

GDL Exemption may be available to any **resident** of Alberta with driving experience from a non-reciprocal jurisdiction obtained *prior* to establishing their Alberta residency.

Temporary Residents

If you are a Temporary Foreign Worker on a Work Permit, you are eligible for GDL Exemption. The only exceptions are Seasonal Agricultural workers, as described below. Your out of country driver's licence must be surrendered at the time you obtain either a Class 7 Alberta driver's licence or an Identification (ID) card.

Seasonal Agricultural Workers

If you are a Temporary Foreign Worker in Alberta **specifically** on the Seasonal Agricultural Work Program (SAWP) you are allowed to drive on your out of country driver's licence for the duration of your Work Permit, usually less than 1 year. In these situations, the GDL Exemption Program **does not** apply to you. You **must** carry a copy of your Work Permit with your licence, and if the licence is not in English you **must** also carry either a certified translation or an International Driver's Permit.

Students

If you are in Alberta on a valid Study Permit, you are allowed to drive on your out of country driver's licence for the duration of your Permit. You are also allowed to hold an Alberta ID card at the same time if you wish. You **must** carry a copy of your Study Permit with your licence (if the licence is not in English you **must** also carry either a certified translation or an International Driver's Permit) as well as a copy of your registered school courses. You may choose to obtain an Alberta driver's licence at some point. If so, it is important that you contact SIU as it may be possible to have the driving experience gained while holding your Alberta ID card credited to your driver record.

Visitors

If you are in Alberta on a valid Visitors Visa, you are allowed to drive on your out of country driver's licence for the duration of your Visitor's Visa. In these situations, the GDL Exemption Program **does not** apply to you. You **must** carry a copy of your Visa with your licence, and if the licence is not in English you **must** also carry either a certified translation or an International Driver's Permit. There are some exceptions whereby you may be eligible to obtain an Alberta Operator's licence, such as missionaries, military personnel, or spouses. Please consult with a registry agent for more specifics.

Refugee Claimants

If you are in Alberta under a **pending** or **denied** refugee protection claim, you **do not** qualify for GDL Exemption, nor are you eligible for an Alberta driver's licence or ID card, regardless of whether you have a Work Permit issued by the federal government.

It has been verified by federal authorities that government identity documents (Refugee Claimant Form and temporary foreign Work Permit) may be provided to refugee claimants without verification of their identity. These Work Permits are most often issued in conjunction with a claim in order to enable you to obtain employment, thus relieving you of the necessity for social assistance while you await the resolution of your claim. The Work Permit does **not** confer official residency status upon you, therefore you are ineligible to obtain any Alberta identity document (such as an Operator's licence or ID Card) until you receive official status within Canada. The Work Permit specifically states "DOES NOT CONFER TEMPORARY RESIDENT STATUS" under the remarks section.

Because of changes in Motor Vehicle policy, registry agents will **not** be able to issue knowledge tests, road test permits, Driver's licences or ID cards until you can provide either of the following documents:

- a copy of the written "**Notice of Decision**" from the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada indicating Convention Refugee status has been granted
- OR**
- a copy of written notice from Citizen and Immigration Canada indicating you have received a "**Positive First Decision**" (sometimes also known as "**Approval in Principle**") and can begin your application for Permanent Residence.

If the “Notice of Decision” or “Positive First Decision” documents are in French, you must present a translation of the contents of the document into English in order to eliminate risk of confusion regarding the intent of the documents. The translation must be original and must contain the following:

- The name, contact information and signature of the individual that completed the translation.
and
- The name of the organization or the professional designation that the individual is affiliated with.

This Motor Vehicle policy also applies if you are requesting an **Operator Exchange** from any reciprocal jurisdiction or a **Renewal** for an existing Alberta licence or an ID card. You must be able to provide proof that your claim has been approved before an exchange or renewal can take place.

GDL Exemption Application Checklist

If you want to apply for the **Alberta Graduated Driver Licencing (GDL) Exemption Program**, it is a good idea to take a look at the checklist below to maximize the chances that your documentation will be in order and be approved in a timely manner. You may request a copy of this checklist from a registry office clerk.

This checklist does NOT guarantee an approval for your GDL Exemption application.

It will only assist you in avoiding some of the common causes of an application being denied by SIU. It is possible that your application might fall outside these easily identifiable circumstances.

After the proper forensic examination, SIU will make the final determination on whether your documentation is sufficient to proceed with the exemption process.

ALL applications for GDL Exemption should include:

- ALL driver's licences, expired or valid, in your possession.** —as per Section 13(1) of the *Alberta Traffic Safety Act - Operator Licensing and Vehicle Control Regulation*.
- Black and White photocopy of the front and back of all driver's licences.** Or, if your licence is in booklet form, copy any relevant pages. Please ensure the copies are clear and legible, and that you have made duplicate copies for your own records as you may need them for insurance purposes.
- Official Application for GDL Exemption form (provided by the registry office at time of service).** It is your responsibility to ensure that you have read and understood the Client Declaration section on the form prior to initialing and signing it.

****You may also be in possession of an International Driver's Permit (IDP), sometimes incorrectly referred as an *International Driver's licence*.**

- ALL International Driver's Permits, expired or valid in your possession.**
If you have obtained an IDP online, you must submit **both** the card style IDP as well as the paper booklet counterpart IDP.

****You may be required to submit additional documents if any of the following apply to you:**

- No Issue date on your driver's licence, only an Expiry date**
Obtain an original confirmation letter outlining your complete driving history from your country's Licensing Authority. No photocopies, faxes or scanned copies will be accepted.
- Driver's licence or confirmation documents are not in English**
Obtain a translation of your documents by an approved, certified translator. An International Driving Permit will **not** serve as a translation (but still must be surrendered). The original translation should be submitted with the application, not a copy.
- No photograph or date of birth on your driver's licence**
Present your *original* passport or Permanent Resident card so the registry agent can make a copy.
- Name discrepancy between the name on your driver's licence and the name on your other identification documents you will present to Alberta Registries to confirm your identity.**
Present your *original* identity documents so the registry agent can make a copy. This copy will enable SIU to reconcile the name on your driver's licence with the name that will be entered for you in the Motor Vehicle database.
- Calendar date discrepancy** If your driver's licence includes dates that are **not** in the Gregorian calendar—the commonly accepted western calendar—include a certified translation of your licence or document that converts the dates into the Gregorian calendar.

How does the GDL Exemption process work?

There are several standard steps to the process of applying for and receiving approval for GDL Exemption:

1. **You must be able to confirm the following at the registry office:**

- **Your legal entitlement to be in Canada.**

Note: If you are in Alberta under a [Refugee Protection claim](#), and your claim has not yet been approved by either the Refugee Board of Canada or Citizenship and Immigration Canada, you technically do NOT have official residency status yet. As such, your application will be denied until you have received a positive outcome to your claim.

- **Your identity.** (If there are any discrepancies between the names on your driving documents and other identity documents, be prepared to provide the means to account for those discrepancies, for example your marriage licence, passport, or a legal name change document.)
 - **That you are an Alberta resident.** For more information on documents supporting your Alberta residency, please contact your nearest registry office.
2. You must **obtain your Alberta Class 7 Learner’s Licence** by passing the Class 7 Knowledge test as well as undergoing **vision screening**.
3. At the time you have successfully obtained your Class 7 Learners Licence, **make your application for GDL Exemption** by completing an official GDL Exemption Application form and submitting all necessary documentation. This includes:
- all original driver’s licence(s) in your possession, even any expired driver’s licences—as per Section 13(1) of the *Alberta Traffic Safety Act - Operator Licensing and Vehicle Control Regulation* (see comment box below)
 - a black and white copy of your licence, front and back or relevant pages
 - all International Driving Permit(s) in your possession
 - translations of your driver’s licence and documents into English (if necessary)
 - any other certification documentation supporting your driving history or clarifying your identity (if necessary)

Note: Your out of country licence will **NOT** be returned to you!

Section 13(1) of the *Alberta Traffic Safety Act - Operator Licensing and Vehicle Control Regulation*, “An applicant for an operator’s licence who holds a subsisting driver’s licence, permit or other document issued by a jurisdiction outside of Alberta shall surrender it to the Registrar before being issued an operator’s licence”.

****It is vital that you understand the declaration on the GDL Application form before you sign it, especially in regards to the original and authentic nature of the documents, as well as the fact that copies will NOT be provided at a later date. You should confirm to the registry agent that you have made copies of all your documents (both licences and any supplementary documentation) to keep for your own records before you surrender the originals. ****

4. The registry agent is to **forward your GDL Exemption application to SIU** the same day for approval. This approval process can take up to ten days but may be completed sooner. You will **not** be contacted by SIU regarding the outcome of your application.
5. **You should contact any registry office within a week to ten days** after initial submission to find out if your GDL Exemption application has been approved.
 - **If approved**, your driving history will have been updated reflecting your driving experience from your home jurisdiction. Depending on how much prior driving experience you have had, you will be able to make an appointment to challenge either the Alberta Basic Road Test (BRT) or the Alberta Advanced Road Test (ART).
 - **If denied**, no update will be made to your driving record. Instead, SIU will place a note on your motor vehicle file called an “Alert” which will explain the reason why your application was denied, and if applicable, what steps you may take for your application to be reconsidered. You may request a copy of this Alert be provided to you.

Minimum Acceptance Standards

There is vast variation in the modernity and quality of security features found on driving licences and driving documents worldwide. Many licences and documents do not meet our minimum acceptance standards and as such they may require secondary verification from an official body such as a Licencing or Transportation Office, an Embassy or a High Commission. Under the regular GDL Exemption process, SIU would evaluate your GDL Exemption application, and if the application is denied you would then be expected to obtain the necessary documentation for re-consideration of your application.

Over the span of the GDL Exemption program, SIU has identified a few jurisdictions that consistently require secondary verification of driving history using a specific process. For these specific jurisdictions, SIU has attempted to minimize inconvenience by giving you the opportunity to obtain your necessary verification documentation **prior** to making your application for GDL Exemption. This change is designed to reduce the amount of time you must be without a driver's licence.

Under this process, drivers holding driving documents from the following jurisdictions are **not to make their applications for GDL Exemption until after necessary verification requirements have been obtained.**

Please note that this is **NOT** a complete listing of all jurisdictions that may require secondary verification:

- [Fiji](#)
- [Hong Kong](#)
- [Kenya](#)
- [Saudi Arabia](#)

The following jurisdictions do **not** have a specific GDL Exemption verification process available to them, but they are included in this Guideline in that they can be problematic to process:

- [Afghanistan](#)
- [India](#)
- [Iran](#)
- [Iraq](#)
- [Libya](#)
- [Nigeria](#)
- [Pakistan](#)
- [South Sudan](#)
- [Somalia and Somaliland](#)

Fiji

For Clients submitting licensing documentation from the Republic of Fiji:

Driver's licences from Fiji do not list a Date First Licenced, or an Issue date. As such, all driver's Licences from the Republic of Fiji presented for GDL Exemption **MUST** be accompanied by original confirmation of licensing history obtained through the Land Transport Authority (LTA) of Fiji. If they do not already have this documentation, please advise them to visit the Land Transport Authority website to arrange for a driver's licence record search to receive confirmation of your licensing history:

<http://www.lta.com.fj/>

After the LTA confirmation letter has been received, the registry clerk will submit the following documents to their respective SIU office for approval:

- The client's **original Fiji driver's Licence;**
- A black and white **photocopy** of both sides of the original driver's licence;
- The client's **original confirmation document from the LTA;**
- A completed **GDL Exemption form.**

Please ensure the client is aware of the fact that copies will NOT be provided at a later date. They should confirm to you that they have made copies of all their documents before they surrender them, both Licences and any supplementary documentation. If they have not, please provide these copies to them.

Hong Kong

For Clients submitting licensing documentation from Hong Kong:

Driver's licences from Hong Kong do not list a Date First Licenced, or an Issue date. As such, all driver's Licences from Hong Kong presented for GDL Exemption **MUST** be accompanied by an original *Certificate of Driving Licence Particulars* obtained through the Transport department of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative region. If they do not already have this documentation, please advise them to visit the Transport department website to arrange for the certificate to be obtained:

[http://www.td.gov.hk/filemanager/common/td320\(1.2013\)_leaflet_english.pdf](http://www.td.gov.hk/filemanager/common/td320(1.2013)_leaflet_english.pdf)

After the Certificate of Driving Licence Particulars has been received, the registry clerk will submit the following documents to their respective SIU office for approval:

- The client's **original Hong Kong driver's Licence;**
- A black and white **photocopy** of both sides of the original driver's licence;
- The client's **original Certificate of Driving Licence Particulars;**
- A copy of the client's **photograph page of their passport**
- A completed **GDL Exemption form.**

Please ensure the client is aware of the fact that copies will NOT be provided at a later date. They should confirm to you that they have made copies of all their documents before they surrender them, both Licences and any supplementary documentation. If they have not, please provide these copies to them.

Kenya

For Clients submitting licensing documentation from Kenya:

All driver's licences from Kenya presented for GDL Exemption **MUST** be accompanied by original endorsement documentation obtained through the Kenya High Commission located in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Please note that the driver's licence **must** be currently valid; if they are expired the High Commission will reject the request for verification. If clients do not already have this documentation, please inform them of the following necessary steps:

Step 1.

The client must submit the following to the Kenya High Commission:

- Original VALID Kenyan driver's licence**
- A photocopy of the client's original Kenyan licence;**
- Copy of Kenyan Identity Card OR valid Kenyan passport**
- A letter of request for the Verification of the Kenyan driver's licence;**
- \$20.00 CDN money order** (cash and personal cheques not accepted) payable to the Kenya High Commission;
- Two (2) Canada Post Xpresspost prepaid envelopes** – one for sending the package to the High Commission and a second, self-addressed one to include in the package. The High Commission will use this to return the documents to the client. This style of envelope is all that will be accepted by the High Commission. These envelopes are more secure and allow the client to track receipt of the documents. **The client** is responsible for obtaining these envelopes.

***Note: It is recommended that the client contact the High Commission directly to confirm driver licence verification requirements, as requirements are frequently subject to change and we are not always informed in a timely manner.**

The client must send the above information package in an Xpresspost envelope to:

Kenya High Commission
415 Laurier Avenue East
Ottawa, ON
K1N 6R4

There is further information on the High Commission website at:
<http://www.kenyahighcommission.ca>

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(Kenyan requirements continued...)

Step 2.

After the High Commission endorsement has been received, the registry clerk will submit the following to their respective SIU office for approval:

- The client's **original valid Kenyan driver's licence;**
- A black and white **photocopy** of interior of the original driver's licence;
- The client's **Original endorsement documents;**
- A completed **GDL Exemption form.**

Please ensure the client is aware of the fact that copies will NOT be provided at a later date. They should confirm to you that they have made copies of all their documents before they surrender them, both Licences and any supplementary documentation. If they have not, please provide these copies to them.

Saudi Arabia

For Clients submitting licensing documentation from Saudi Arabia:

Some older credit card-style Driver's licences from Saudi Arabia do not list a Date First Licenced, or an Issue date. As such, special care must be taken to examine the accompanying English translation to determine whether this is the case.

If the driver's licence does NOT contain an Issue date, only an Expiry date, a complete driver report from the Saudi Arabia Ministry of Interior is necessary. Please instruct the client to query the Saudi Arabia Ministry of Interior website here:
<https://www.moi.gov.sa/wps/portal/Home/Home>

There are various services under the Traffic section, including Driving Licence Information. In order to access the eServices portal on the website, however, the client will have to first register as a user.

After the driver report has been received, the registry clerk will submit the following documents to their respective SIU office for approval:

- The client's **original Saudi Arabia driver's Licence;**
- A black and white **photocopy** of both sides of the original driver's licence;
- An original **English translation** of the driver's licence
- The client's **original driver report** from the Ministry of Interior (if necessary);
- An original **English translation** of the driver report
- A completed **GDL Exemption form.**

Please ensure the client is aware of the fact that copies will NOT be provided at a later date. They should confirm to you that they have made copies of all their documents before they surrender them, both Licences and any supplementary documentation. If they have not, please provide these copies to them.

Additional Jurisdictions

The following jurisdictions do not have a specific GDL Exemption verification process available to them, but they are included in this Guideline because they are unusual and can be problematic to process. **The Unverified Document Protocol** may be used to process these applications, at SIU's discretion.

[Registry Clerks are encouraged to refer to MV Policy 3.10.04 for further details.](#)

Afghanistan

For Clients submitting licensing documentation from Afghanistan:

The driver's licence from Afghanistan cannot be verifiably authenticated, nor is there reliable verification process available. From past experience in dealing with the Afghan Embassy in Ottawa, the licences sent there for verification have taken up to 6 months to be verified, and sometimes have never returned to our office at all. There is a newer protocol for driver's licence verification outlined in the Embassy website; however, this protocol is yet untested by our office.

As a general rule, SIU will use the **Unverifiable Document Protocol** for these licences instead. Following this protocol, you will be evaluated on whether or not you are considered to be an experienced driver. According to Alberta Transportation, an experienced driver is 25 years of age or older, AND has two or more years of experience driving a motor vehicle.

- If you are **BOTH 25 years of age or older AND you have two or more years of driving experience** at the time of application for GDL Exemption, you may complete and pass the following:
 - Basic Road Test (BRT)
 - OR**
 - Advanced Road Test (ART). If you wish to challenge the ART you must **first** complete the Alberta Transportation 25 hour Class 5 Driver's Education Course or Insurance Reduction Training Course (Code U). The original notice of course completion must be submitted to a registry office and then forwarded to SIU in order for the ART approval to be processed.

If desired, you may skip the BRT in favour of taking the Driver Education Course first and then proceed directly to challenge the ART.

- If you are **EITHER under 25 years of age OR have less than two years of driving experience** at the time of application for GDL Exemption, you may complete and pass the following:
 - BRT only, regardless of number of years of driving experience. You will **NOT** be eligible to take the ART till the requisite two years are complete, even if you turn 25 at any time during the two year GDL period.

****IMPORTANT: Please ensure you have made copies of ALL documents for your records before you submit them to the registry for GDL Exemption. Copies will NOT be provided at a later date. ****

India

For clients submitting licensing documentation from India:

Endorsement documentation obtained through the Consulate General of India is **NO LONGER** available. In the case of older paper-based licences, it is encouraged that driver's licences from India presented for GDL Exemption be accompanied by an original Regional Transport Office (RTO) letter.

An RTO letter is an **OPTIONAL** document that allows SIU to better determine if the client can be considered to be an experienced driver or not, especially if the information on the driver's licence is unclear or does not reflect the original DFL.

The forensic examination of the driving licence will result in two possible outcomes:

- **Authenticated:** All clients who provide confirmation of previous driving experience—and SIU can authenticate the documents—will receive full credit for their driving experience as per our standard GDL Exemption process.
- **Not Authenticated:** Clients who provide confirmation of previous driving experience and SIU cannot authenticate the documents will be processed using the **Unverifiable Document Protocol**. They will be evaluated on whether or not they are considered to be an experienced driver. According to Alberta Transportation, an experienced driver is 25 years of age or older, and has two or more years of driving experience with a motor vehicle.
 - If the client is **BOTH 25 years of age or older AND has two or more years of driving experience** at the time of application, they may complete and pass the following:
 - Basic Road Test (BRT)
 - OR**
 - Advanced Road Test (ART). If they wish to challenge the ART they must first complete the Alberta Transportation 25 hour Class 5 Drivers Education Course (Code U). The original notice of course completion must be submitted to a registry office and then forwarded to SIU in order for the ART approval to be processed.

If desired, they may skip the BRT in favour of taking the Driver Education Course first and then proceeding directly to challenge the ART.
 - If the client is **EITHER under 25 years of age OR has less than two years of driving experience** at the time of application, they may complete and pass the following:
 - Basic Road Test (BRT) only, regardless of number of years of driving experience. They will NOT be eligible to take the ART till the requisite two years are complete, even if they turn 25 at any time during the two year GDL period.

Please ensure the client is aware of the fact that copies will NOT be provided at a later date. They should confirm to you that they have made copies of all their documents before they surrender them, both Licences and any supplementary documentation. If they have not, please provide these copies to them.

Iran

For Clients submitting licensing documentation from Iran:

Currently there are **three** driver's licence styles from Iran in circulation:

- The newest and most recent issue is a **credit-card style Iranian licence**. It has sufficient security features that SIU can accept it with just an English translation.
- The **newer-style paper Iranian licence** with the barcode on the front and gold seal stamped over the digital photo also has sufficient security features that SIU can accept it with just an English translation.
- **It is ONLY the older-style paper Iranian licence that needs the Ministry of Foreign Affairs endorsement seal on the translation.** These licences have a paper photograph glued to the licence and are lacking the bar code and gold seal on the front. When this style of driver's licence is submitted to SIU without proper endorsement by the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we have to evaluate the application on a case-by-case basis. **As the Iranian Embassy in Ottawa has been closed until further notice, it is no longer possible to obtain a verification document through that route.** SIU may, at our discretion, process the application using the **Unverifiable Document** protocol.

Under this protocol, the client will be evaluated on whether or not they are considered to be an experienced driver. According to Alberta Transportation, an experienced driver is 25 years of age or older, AND has two or more years of experience driving a motor vehicle.

- If the client is **BOTH 25 years of age or older AND has two or more years of driving experience** at the time of application, they may complete and pass the following:
 - Basic Road Test (BRT)
 - OR**
 - Advanced Road Test (ART). If they wish to challenge the ART they must first complete the Alberta Transportation 25 hour Class 5 Drivers Education Course (Code U). The original notice of course completion must be submitted to a registry office and then forwarded to SIU in order for the ART approval to be processed.

If desired, they may skip the BRT in favour of taking the Driver Education Course first and then proceeding directly to challenge the ART.

- If the client is **EITHER under 25 years of age OR has less than two years of driving experience** at the time of application, they may complete and pass the following:
 - BRT only, regardless of number of years of driving experience. They will NOT be eligible to take the ART till the requisite two years are complete, even if they turn 25 at any time during the two year GDL period.

Please ensure the client is aware of the fact that copies will NOT be provided at a later date. They should confirm to you that they have made copies of all their documents before they surrender them, both Licences and any supplementary documentation. If they have not, please provide these copies to them.

Iraq

For clients submitting licensing documentation from Iraq:

A confirmation letter endorsed by DFAIT and the Embassy of Iraq is **no longer required**

Clients submitting the **current format credit-card style driver's licence from Iraq** will only require an English translation as these licences possess sufficient security features that allow SIU to grant a 'date first licenced'.

All other older-style paper driver's licences from Iraq will be processed using the **Unverifiable Document Protocol** instead.

Following this protocol, the client will be evaluated on whether or not they are considered to be an experienced driver. According to Alberta Transportation, an experienced driver is 25 years of age or older, AND has two or more years of experience driving a motor vehicle.

- If they are **BOTH 25 years of age or older AND they have two or more years of driving experience** at the time of application for GDL Exemption, they may complete and pass the following:
 - Basic Road Test (BRT)
 - OR**
 - Advanced Road Test (ART). If they wish to challenge the ART they must **first** complete the Alberta Transportation 25 hour Class 5 Drivers Education Course (Code U). The original notice of course completion must be submitted to a registry office and then forwarded to SIU in order for the ART approval to be processed.

If desired, they may skip the BRT in favour of taking the Driver Education Course first and then proceed directly to challenge the ART.
- If the client is **EITHER under 25 years of age OR has less than two years of driving experience** at the time of application, they may complete and pass the following:
 - BRT only, regardless of number of years of driving experience. They will **NOT** be eligible to take the ART till the requisite two years are complete, even if they turn 25 at any time during the two year GDL period.

Please ensure the client is aware of the fact that copies will NOT be provided at a later date. They should confirm to you that they have made copies of all their documents before they surrender them, both Licences and any supplementary documentation. If they have not, please provide these copies to them.

Libya

For clients submitting licensing documentation from Libya:

A confirmation letter from the Embassy of Libya is **no longer required**. All licences from Libya will be processed using the **Unverifiable Document Protocol** instead.

Following this protocol, the client will be evaluated on whether or not they are considered to be an experienced driver. According to Alberta Transportation, an experienced driver is 25 years of age or older, AND has two or more years of experience driving a motor vehicle.

- If they are **BOTH 25 years of age or older AND they have two or more years of driving experience** at the time of application for GDL Exemption, they may complete and pass the following:
 - Basic Road Test (BRT)
 - OR**
 - Advanced Road Test (ART). If they wish to challenge the ART they must **first** complete the Alberta Transportation 25 hour Class 5 Drivers Education Course (Code U). The original notice of course completion must be submitted to a registry office and then forwarded to SIU in order for the ART approval to be processed.

If desired, they may skip the BRT in favour of taking the Driver Education Course first and then proceed directly to challenge the ART.

- If they are **EITHER under 25 years of age OR have less than two years of driving experience** at the time of application for GDL Exemption, they may complete and pass the following:
 - BRT only, regardless of number of years of driving experience. They will **NOT** be eligible to take the ART till the requisite two years are complete, even if they turn 25 at any time during the two year GDL period.

Please ensure the client is aware of the fact that copies will NOT be provided at a later date. They should confirm to you that they have made copies of all their documents before they surrender them, both Licences and any supplementary documentation. If they have not, please provide these copies to them.

Nigeria:

For clients submitting licensing documentation from Nigeria:

A letter of confirmation from the Nigeria High Commission is **no longer required**. Applications containing Nigerian driver's licences will be evaluated solely on the merits and authenticity of the driving document submitted.

The forensic examination of the driving licence will result in two possible outcomes:

- **Authenticated:** All clients who provide confirmation of previous driving experience—and SIU can authenticate the documents—will receive full credit for their driving experience as per our standard GDL Exemption process.
- **Not Authenticated:** Clients who provide confirmation of previous driving experience and SIU cannot authenticate the documents will be processed using the **Unverifiable Document** protocol. They will be evaluated on whether or not they are considered to be an experienced driver. According to Alberta Transportation, an experienced driver is 25 years of age or older, and has two or more years of driving experience with a motor vehicle.
 - If the client is **BOTH 25 years of age or older AND has two or more years of driving experience** at the time of application, they may complete and pass the following:
 - Basic Road Test (BRT)
 - OR**
 - Advanced Road Test (ART). If they wish to challenge the ART they must first complete the Alberta Transportation 25 hour Class 5 Drivers Education Course (Code U). The original notice of course completion must be submitted to a registry office and then forwarded to SIU in order for the ART approval to be processed.

If desired, they may skip the BRT in favour of taking the Driver Education Course first and then proceeding directly to challenge the ART.
 - If the client is **EITHER under 25 years of age OR has less than two years of driving experience** at the time of application, they may complete and pass the following:
 - BRT only, regardless of number of years of driving experience. They will NOT be eligible to take the ART till the requisite two years are complete, even if they turn 25 at any time during the two year GDL period.

Please ensure the client is aware of the fact that copies will NOT be provided at a later date. They should confirm to you that they have made copies of all their documents before they surrender them, both Licences and any supplementary documentation. If they have not, please provide these copies to them.

Pakistan:

For clients submitting licensing documentation from Pakistan:

A letter of confirmation from the Consulate General of Pakistan is **no longer required**. Applications containing Pakistani driver's licences will be evaluated solely on the merits and authenticity of the driving document submitted.

The client may elect to submit an original District Transport Office (DTO) letter. **The DTO letter is an OPTIONAL document** that allows SIU to better determine if the client can be considered to be an experienced driver or not, especially if the information on the driver's licence is unclear.

The forensic examination of the driving licence will result in two possible outcomes:

- **Authenticated:** All clients who provide confirmation of previous driving experience—and SIU can authenticate the documents—will receive full credit for their driving experience as per our standard GDL Exemption process.
- **Not Authenticated:** Clients who provide confirmation of previous driving experience and SIU cannot authenticate the documents will be processed using the **Unverifiable Document** protocol. They will be evaluated on whether or not they are considered to be an experienced driver. According to Alberta Transportation, an experienced driver is 25 years of age or older, and has two or more years of driving experience with a motor vehicle.
 - If the client is **BOTH 25 years of age or older AND has two or more years of driving experience** at the time of application, they may complete and pass the following:
 - Basic Road Test (BRT)
 - OR**
 - Advanced Road Test (ART). If they wish to challenge the ART they must first complete the Alberta Transportation 25 hour Class 5 Drivers Education Course (Code U). The original notice of course completion must be submitted to a registry office and then forwarded to SIU in order for the ART approval to be processed.

If desired, they may skip the BRT in favour of taking the Driver Education Course first and then proceeding directly to challenge the ART.
 - If the client is **EITHER under 25 years of age OR has less than two years of driving experience** at the time of application, they may complete and pass the following:
 - BRT only, regardless of number of years of driving experience. They will **NOT** be eligible to take the ART till the requisite two years are complete, even if they turn 25 at any time during the two year GDL period.

Please ensure the client is aware of the fact that copies will NOT be provided at a later date. They should confirm to you that they have made copies of all their documents before they surrender them, both Licences and any supplementary documentation. If they have not, please provide these copies to them.

South Sudan:

For clients submitting licensing documentation from South Sudan:

The jurisdiction of Sudan has divided into Sudan and South Sudan. A letter of certification from the Sudan Embassy in Ottawa **is no longer required**. Currently, there is no supplementary verification avenue available for South Sudan. Applications containing South Sudan driver's licences will be evaluated solely on the merits and authenticity of the driving document submitted.

The forensic examination of the South Sudan driving licence will result in two possible outcomes:

- **Authenticated:** All clients who provide confirmation of previous driving experience—and SIU can authenticate the documents—will receive full credit for their driving experience as per our standard GDL Exemption process.
- **Not Authenticated:** Clients who provide confirmation of previous driving experience and SIU cannot authenticate the documents will be processed using the **Unverifiable Document** protocol. They will be evaluated on whether or not they are considered to be an experienced driver. According to Alberta Transportation, an experienced driver is 25 years of age or older, and has two or more years of driving experience with a motor vehicle.
 - If the client is **BOTH 25 years of age or older AND has two or more years of driving experience** at the time of application, they may complete and pass the following:
 - Basic Road Test (BRT)
 - OR**
 - Advanced Road Test (ART). If they wish to challenge the ART they must first complete the Alberta Transportation 25 hour Class 5 Drivers Education Course (Code U). The original notice of course completion must be submitted to a registry office and then forwarded to SIU in order for the ART approval to be processed.

If desired, they may skip the BRT in favour of taking the Driver Education Course first and then proceeding directly to challenge the ART.
 - If the client is **EITHER under 25 years of age OR has less than two years of driving experience** at the time of application, they may complete and pass the following:
 - BRT only, regardless of number of years of driving experience. They will NOT be eligible to take the ART till the requisite two years are complete, even if they turn 25 at any time during the two year GDL period.

Please ensure the client is aware of the fact that copies will NOT be provided at a later date. They should confirm to you that they have made copies of all their documents before they surrender them, both Licences and any supplementary documentation. If they have not, please provide these copies to them.

Somalia and Somaliland

For Clients submitting licensing documentation from Somalia and Somaliland:

Driving documents from Somalia and Somaliland are especially problematic due to years of civil war and unrecognized government between 1991 and 2012. The Federal Republic of Somalia was established in 2012 and is internationally recognized as Somalia's official central government.

The new **Federal Republic of Somalia** has recently begun issuing a new driver's licence through the Ministry of Transportation. Clients submitting this **current format credit-card style driver's licence from the Federal Republic of Somalia** will **not** require any further verification documentation as these licences possess sufficient security features that allow SIU to grant a 'date first licenced'.



Many older Somalia and Somaliland driver's licences are outright fabrications, however, completely unverifiable by any recognized governing body, and thus cannot be approved for GDL Exemption. **These applications will automatically be denied by SIU.** The Unverifiable Document protocol will **not** be used.

On a case by case basis, SIU may, after this initial denial, allow the client the option to complete the 25 hour Class 5 Alberta Transportation Driver Education Course. After completion the client may submit the original Notice of Course Completion to a Registry Office in order to be approved for access to the Basic Road Test **ONLY**. They will be expected to complete the full two years as a GDL Class 5 driver before being allowed to challenge the Advanced Road Test.

Please ensure the client is aware of the fact that copies will NOT be provided at a later date. They should confirm to you that they have made copies of all their documents before they surrender them, both Licences and any supplementary documentation. If they have not, please provide these copies to them.

GDL FAQ:**1-How can I check if my GDL Exemption application has been approved?**

Any Registry Office is able to check your Alberta Motor Vehicle file to see if you have been approved for GDL exemption. If approved, your file will show that you have been credited with your out of country driving experience. **You will NOT be contacted by SIU upon receiving approval. Instead, you are responsible to contact a registry office yourself.**

2-How long will it take for my GDL exemption application to be approved?

Officially, your GDL exemption application should be processed within 10 days of SIU receiving your documents. These 10 days includes mail delivery between the registry and the SIU office, administrative processing and forensic examination of all the relevant documents. It is possible to have an application processed and completed in less time than a week, however, if the registry sends the applications to SIU in a timely manner.

3-Why is my application denied?

The reason the application is denied should be clearly indicated on an alert on your Alberta Motor Vehicle file. You may request that the registry agent give you a printout of this alert for clarification. In most circumstances, the alert will indicate what action you need to take or further documentation you need to provide in order for your application to be reconsidered.

4-Are French translations ok?

No. Because GDL Exemption is a Provincial program, not a Federal program, we are not obligated to follow federal bilingual mandates. Motor Vehicle policy mandates that all translations must be in English.

5-Can I use an International Driver's Permit as a translation?

No. Motor Vehicle Policy does not permit the use of an International Driving Permit (IDP), sometimes also incorrectly referred to as an *International Driving Licence*, as a translation document for the purposes of GDL Exemption. These IDP documents are not issued by a government authority, and thus cannot be authenticated. The information contained therein is limited to showing, in various languages, what type of vehicle you are entitled to drive on your licence. An IDP does **not** provide proper word by word translation of your driving licence and is therefore **not accepted for approval for GDL exemption**. All translations **must** be completed and certified either by a translation company or by an approved translator as per Motor Vehicle guidelines. You can check with a registry office to obtain a list of approved translators.

6-My International Driving Licence says I can drive with it for up to a year; why do I have to submit it to a registry?

An International Driving Permit (IDP), sometimes also incorrectly referred to as an *International Driving Licence*, is **not** a driver's licence. It is a very limited translation (in various languages) identifying what class of vehicle you can operate with your out of country driver's licence, usually for a one year period. The IDP should

only be carried by persons driving here under a **Visitor or Study Permit** whose out of country driver's licence is not in English. It is worthless unless it is paired with the driver's licence it was issued in relation to.

Alberta Motor Vehicle Policy states that you must surrender your IDP along with the driving licence and/or driving documents. Once your Class 7 AB DL has been obtained and you have made your application for GDL exemption, you may **not** continue to drive on your IDP while you wait for your application to be approved. **No one is allowed to drive on an IDP alone.**

7-My driver's licence is lost, can I still make an application for GDL exemption?

Yes, provisionally. You must be able to produce all of the following documents:

- An original document confirming driver history from the licensing authority of your home jurisdiction;
- A police report/Affidavit of Loss that was made at the time of the loss, whether the licence was lost or stolen;
- A Statutory Declaration made to a registry agent outlining the circumstances of the loss.

8-My driver's licence is expired; can I still make an application for GDL exemption?

Yes, provisionally. If the licence has been expired for **no more than one year** we will process it as a regular GDL exemption application. If it has been expired for longer than that, we will deny the application with a request that you contact SIU with an explanation and an account of your driver history. We will consider your explanation and determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether you would still qualify for GDL exemption. If your licence has been expired for more than three years it will NOT be accepted for GDL Exemption.

9-Why do I have to surrender my driver's licence? Will I get it back if I leave Alberta?

In Alberta, it is against the law to be in possession of more than one subsisting driver's licence, as per Section 13(1) of the *Alberta Traffic Safety Act (TSA) - Operator Licensing and Vehicle Control Regulation (OLVCR)*. If you are a resident of Alberta and will be driving in the province, then the only driver's licence you may hold is the Alberta one.

This does not apply to people here under Visitor Permit, or on a Study Permit. They are allowed to drive on their out of country driver's licence for as long as their Permits are valid. If you are a person on a Study Permit and wish to apply for an AB licence then you **MUST** surrender your out of country driver's licence. You will not get your licence or documents back once you have surrendered them, even if you subsequently leave the province. On the GDL exemption form, the declarations specifically state: "*I declare that I do not hold any other driver's licence(s) including a driver's licence from any other jurisdiction or Country*" and "*...I understand that the document(s) that I have surrendered will not be returned...*" By initialing and signing the GDL Exemption form you are agreeing to abide by all statements within that declaration.

10-Can I get copies of my documents?

No. It is vital that you make copies of all your documents **PRIOR** to surrendering them at the registry office. One of the declarations on the GDL exemption form specifically states "*...copies will NOT be later provided.*" By signing the GDL Exemption form you are agreeing to abide by all statements within that declaration.

11- I cannot verify my driving history through my home licensing office or my Embassy; can I still apply for GDL exemption?

Yes, provisionally. The goal of the GDL Exemption program is to give eligible clients credit for driving experience gained in a non-reciprocal jurisdiction in order to waive the time requirement of the Graduated Driver Licensing program here in Alberta. In order to do so, SIU must first either forensically authenticate the driving licence, or verify the driver's information through the means of a confirmation letter from an official licensing authority or your home jurisdiction's embassy, high commission, etc.

For some jurisdictions, including Afghanistan, India, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Sudan, and Somalia, there may be exceptional difficulties in being able to either authenticate or verify the driving history. SIU approaches these instances on a case-by-case basis and actively works with you when possible.

In some of the above cases, we may be able to process the GDL Exemption application using an alternate policy Alberta Transportation created to deal with unverifiable driving documents. This protocol mirrors criterion taken from Insurance reduction rates and involves assessing if you can be considered an experienced driver based on your age (25 years of age or older) and total years of purported driving experience (2 or more years).

12-I have made a claim for Refugee protection. Can I apply for GDL Exemption?

If you are in Alberta under a pending (unresolved) or denied [refugee protection claim](#), you are **ineligible** to obtain an Alberta identity document; either a Class 8 ID card or an Operator's Licence. You must be able to satisfy 3 criteria before you will be eligible:

- You have legal status within Canada
- Your identity has been verified
- You are an Alberta resident

Until you have received approval of your refugee claim from **either** the Refugee Board of Canada **or** Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), the criteria of verified identity and legal status within Canada are still in question. The issuance of a Work Permit by CIC is **NOT** an indication that you have legal status within Canada. The Work Permit should specify "Does not confer status" as a notation. CIC issues these Work Permits to enable you to find employment while you await the outcome of your claim.

13-I'm not ready to take the Knowledge test for my Learner's licence. Can I obtain an ID card instead?

Yes, you can obtain an Alberta ID card instead of a Learner's licence. However, you must still surrender your out of country driver's licence(s) to Alberta Registries (except if you are here in Alberta under a Study Permit or Visitor Permit). In addition, you are no longer considered to be a Driver and thus your accumulation of driving experience is immediately put on hold. You cannot accumulate days as a Driver if you are not driving!

Contact Information:

For SIU North (Edmonton region):

- General Phone line: 780-441-2000
- Toll free: 1-866-301-6205

For SIU South (Calgary region):

- General Phone line: 403-297-4144
- Toll free: 1-866-303-4996
- Contact Centre: 780-401-4080