

NEW DRIVERS

HOW TO OBTAIN A LEARNER'S PERMIT

ERNIE BERTOTHY: Welcome to DMV Infocast, an audio production of the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles. This is Ernie Bertothy, Infocast Editor.

With us today is **Mike Generis** of the DMV's Branch Operations Division. And he's here today to talk to us about obtaining your learner's permit.

ERNIE BERTOTHY: Mike, thank you very much for joining us today. And Connecticut state law requires that any 16 or 17-year-old that would like to obtain a Connecticut driver's license must first obtain a learner's permit to obtain the license. And let's start right from the top. An individual turns 16 and would like to begin that process. What do you recommend that that individual do first?

MIKE GENERIS: Well, thank you for having me, Ernie. It's a pleasure to be here. The individual should first obtain the necessary parental consent from your parent or your legal guardian. A parent or legal guardian must give his consent in order for you to start the process of obtaining your learner's permit and your license.

ERNIE: So once the individual gets parental consent, what's the next step?

MIKE: Well, once you get the thumbs up from mom or dad or your legal guardian, we strongly suggest that you study the Connecticut Driver's Manual. Our Connecticut Driver's Manual happens to be online for viewing. So we encourage you to go to our website and view our Connecticut Driver's Manual and study it.

ERNIE: So studying will help you prepare for the knowledge test that you will have to take, which we'll talk about in a second. But before you take the knowledge test, you must do some paperwork at one of our offices, Mike. Can you just walk through the process of what an individual should do once they're ready to take the test?

MIKE: Sure. I'd be happy to, Ernie. That's correct. The initial start of this process is to study, to prepare yourself for the knowledge test, but there is going to be documentation that

you're going to be required to present to us. Basically, we need you to submit to us a certified birth certificate or a valid passport. Those two -- one of those two identifications is required. Photocopies of these documents are not acceptable. You also will be required to provide us with an additional form of identification. And again, our website has a listing of what our acceptable identifications are. So we encourage you to visit our website and view that information.

You will also need to provide us with proof of resident address. That is mainly -- for 16 or 17-year-olds, we find that, you know, they bring in a postmarked letter. You know, it's something that's been mailed to their home address. It has to be dated within 90 days, the postmark, and it's also important to note that we do not accept post office box as proof of residence. So it has to be your actual home resident address.

And again, your parent or legal guardian will have to provide you with consent, or provide us you with consent. So they may want to come with you to the office. The learner's permit test is \$18.

ERNIE: Okay. So now all the paperwork is done. And up next is the test. And it's a two-part test, isn't it, Mike?

MIKE: It is. And it's important to know that when you come down to our offices that you arrive no later than an hour before closing. This way we'll have enough time to process your paperwork and set you up for the test, and actually issue the learner's permit. So again, it's important to arrive no later than an hour before closing.

ERNIE: It should be noted also that this can be done at any DMV full service branch office. And you can get a list of all these full service branch offices and directions to these offices on our website.

Let's talk about the vision test, Mike. Obviously, if you're coming to take the vision test, you should want to have your contacts or your glasses with you, obviously.

MIKE: Absolutely, Ernie. That's a great point. You will -- part of the process of getting a learner's permit in addition to the knowledge test is we will have you take a vision test.

And so, you know, as you mentioned, if you wear eye glasses or contacts, you will need to bring them with you.

ERNIE: And the other part, obviously, is the knowledge test. Can you talk a little bit about the knowledge test because obviously, that's probably one of the big things that most people were thinking about coming into the office. Can you talk about the test?

MIKE: Absolutely. The knowledge test is a 10-question written test. You can only get two wrong. So again, we encourage you to study the Connecticut Driver's Manual. But if you happen to fail, it's not the end of the world. We will allow you to come back the next business day to retake the test. You will be required to basically present your documents all over again and start the process over again.

ERNIE: Okay. But on the other hand, let's think positive. What happens next if they pass the test?

MIKE: Well, that's the best scenario that we like to see. If you pass your learner's permit test, a DMV employee will issue your learner's permit and will also provide you with guidelines for its use. Just a couple of key points, you must carry your learner's permit with you at all times while driving with a qualified instructor.

Another point is, not all states recognize our learner's permits. So if you plan on driving out of state or practicing with someone out of state, you may want to check with that state first to find out if our learner's permit is acceptable there.

ERNIE: Okay. And for more information on the restrictions on a learner's permit, you can check out our website.

And, well, Mike, thank you very much for joining us today and walking us through the process of obtaining your learner's permit.

MIKE: Thank you, Ernie.

ERNIE BERTOTHY: And thank you everyone for listening. Once again, this is Ernie Bertothy, Infocast Editor for the State of Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles.