

GETTING AN ID

It's important to have some sort of identification. You need an ID to open a bank account, get on an airplane, etc. If the police stop you for any reason, they can ask to see your ID. If you don't have one on you, they can bring you down to the police station – even if you haven't done anything wrong.

The most common form of ID is a driver's license. You can also use a green card, or other documents issued by the U.S. government. If you don't have any of those, consider these two options:

State ID

You can get a state ID card from the Department of Motor Vehicles (also known as the "DMV") – the same people who issue drivers' licenses. They generally need to see the same documents. In California, that means they need a social security number, proof of your birth date, and proof that you are a legal resident. (*Note: Some other states have fewer requirements.*) There is no age limit, and you don't have to take any driving-related tests.

Call the Department of Motor Vehicles office closest to you to make an appointment. You can't get a state ID over the internet or through the mail.

Matricula Consular – an option for undocumented people (and legal residents too)

Mexico, and a number of other countries, provide "matriculas consular" to their people living in the United States. This section will talk about Mexico as an example. The details are similar for other countries that have the matricula.

To get a Mexican matricula, you do not show that you have immigration papers; you only need to show that you were born in Mexico and now live here. To prove you are Mexican, you can bring documents like a birth or

baptismal certificate, or a Mexican passport (it can be expired). To prove you live here, you can bring things like a student ID or a paycheck from a local company. Lastly, you need to pay \$28.

Call the consulate from your home country closest to where you live to check on the details of what you need.

Not every bank, police department, etc. recognize a matricula as a valid ID. However, many do. In some states (but not California), you can use a matricula to get a driver's license.

