



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OFFICE OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
WWW.STATE.GOV/OFM

The Diplomatic Beat

A LAW ENFORCEMENT GUIDE TO
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S
DIPLOMATIC MOTOR VEHICLE
PROGRAM AND THE HANDLING OF
INCIDENTS INVOLVING FOREIGN
MISSION PERSONNEL IN THE U.S.



DIPLOMATIC MOTOR VEHICLES PROGRAM

Introduction

The U.S. Department of State's Office of Foreign Missions (OFM) administers a variety of programs in the United States to serve the foreign diplomatic community.*

OFM's most visible program is the Diplomatic Motor Vehicle program, which includes the registration of all diplomatic vehicles - whether official or personal - in the United States, as well as the issuance of U.S. Department of State diplomatic license plates and driver's licenses.

Administered in accordance with U.S. laws and international law and treaties, OFM's Diplomatic Motor Vehicle program seeks to protect the U.S. public from abuses of privileges and immunities enjoyed by the diplomatic community. This nationwide program:

- *Verifies, via the initial registration and annual renewal of diplomatic vehicles, that all vehicles registered to diplomatic personnel maintain federally mandated high levels of liability insurance.*
- *Ensures that members of the diplomatic community who operate motor vehicles in the United States are issued Department of State (DOS) driver's licenses.*
- *Manages a robust enforcement program which handles motor vehicle incidents involving diplomats nationwide, issues the DOS driver's licenses to support the enforcement program*

and provides outreach to law enforcement personnel on the handling of such incidents.

- *Maintains and monitors driving records for each diplomatic licensee to ensure unsafe drivers are removed from the road.*

This brochure offers a brief overview of three key aspects of the Diplomatic Motor Vehicle program:

- ***Diplomatic License Plates and Motor Vehicle Registration***
- ***Diplomatic Driver's Licenses***
- ***Diplomatic Motor Vehicle Enforcement***

For more information about the Diplomatic Motor Vehicle program or diplomatic privileges and immunities in general, contact one of the OFM or Diplomatic Security offices listed in the "Contact Information" section, or visit OFM's website at www.state.gov/ofm. Also see U.S. Department of State publication "Diplomatic and Consular Immunity: Guidance for Law Enforcement and Judicial Authorities" at <https://www.state.gov/information-for-law-enforcement>.

For all incidents involving claims of diplomatic immunity, please immediately contact the U.S. Department of State at the number on the reverse side of the credential presented (ID card or Driver's license) (M-F 8am-5pm EST) or the Diplomatic Security Command Center at (571) 345-3146 or toll-free at (866) 217-2089 (24/7) to verify immunity. Please send copies of all reports/citations by fax to (202) 895-3646 or via email to OFMDMVEenforcement@state.gov.

**The terms "diplomat" and "diplomatic community" are used in this pamphlet for the sake of brevity, but refer not only to diplomats, but also to consular personnel, administrative and technical staff, and members of international organizations and other foreign missions, as well as their recognized family members.*

Diplomatic License Plates and Motor Vehicle Registrations

All vehicles owned or operated by members of the diplomatic community must be registered with the Diplomatic Motor Vehicle Office. The initial registration and annual renewal process serves to ensure that diplomats maintain federally mandated high levels of liability insurance due to the civil immunity they may enjoy.

Vehicles registered with OFM must display U.S. Department of State-issued license plates at their front and rear. A decal indicating the month and year of the registration's expiration must be affixed to the rear license plate of each vehicle.

Department of State license plates are U.S. Government property. Please report lost or stolen plates to OFM's Diplomatic Motor Vehicle Office immediately.

Vehicles bearing Department of State license plates:

- **Must be covered by liability insurance;**
- **Are not generally subject to inspection;**
- **May not be sold or exported without approval of OFM.**

DIPLOMATIC MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION CARD

PLATE NO. DB80001		MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION				DECAL NO. 020010000
VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NO. ABCTD62V81000009		YEAR 2001	MAKE RDL	MODEL SIC	STYLE LM	
DIPLOMAT, ADAM M. 3507 INTERNATIONAL PL NW WASHINGTON, DC 20008						
REG. DATE 09/30/2001	EXP. DATE 09/30/2002	CO-OWNER(S) N/A				REG. FEE \$
TITLE FOR THIS VEHICLE HELD AT THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE						

Diplomatic Driver's Licenses

OFM's Diplomatic Motor Vehicle Office is the sole driver's-licensing authority for diplomats assigned to the United States and their dependents. Members of the diplomatic community may use their foreign driver's license for only 30 days after their arrival in the United States. After that time, the individual must be licensed by the U.S. Department of State in order to lawfully operate a motor vehicle in this country.

Through the Diplomatic Motor Vehicle Office, OFM ensures that members of the foreign missions community and their families are issued U.S. Department of State driver's licenses. It also monitors driving records to ensure that drivers within the diplomatic community are operating safely.

OFM's issuance of U.S. Department of State driver's licenses supports its Enforcement Program described in the "Diplomatic Motor Vehicle Enforcement Program" section.

OFM will issue a Department of State driver's license only if an applicant has demonstrated the requisite skills necessary to safely operate a motor vehicle. Applicants prove these skills either through testing at the Department of Motor Vehicles in the jurisdiction in which they reside or through possession of a valid foreign driver's license that was issued under standards deemed by OFM to be on par with typical U.S. licensing standards (verified by OFM's ongoing worldwide survey of licensing standards). All licensees must pass initial and renewal vision exams.

Note: Law enforcement personnel may verify U.S. Department of State driver's licenses and vehicle registrations through the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) (state code/ORI is "US").

Diplomatic Motor Vehicle Enforcement Program and Handling Incidents

OFM works to ensure that diplomatic benefits, privileges, and immunities are properly exercised in accordance with U.S. and international laws. Although diplomats may enjoy various privileges and immunities, such individuals are nevertheless obliged under international treaties to respect local law. Any driver, regardless of diplomatic immunity, may be stopped and cited for a traffic offense. The U.S. Department of State routinely informs the diplomatic community that the operation of a motor vehicle in the United States is a privilege that may be withdrawn in cases of abuse.

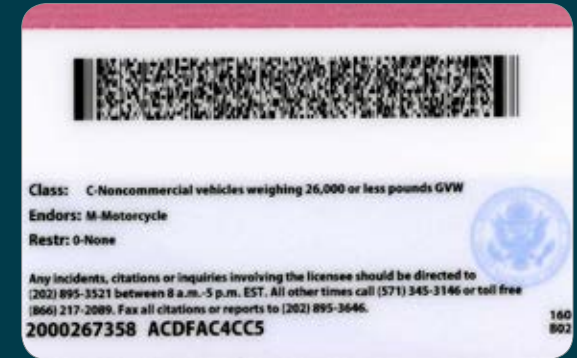
The U.S. Department of State will NOT intervene with local jurisdictions to contest traffic citations, nor does it have the authority to dismiss such violations or cancel their associated fines. When OFM's Diplomatic Motor Vehicle Office receives a copy of a report or citation from law enforcement issued to a diplomat, OFM will notify the alleged offender's diplomatic mission and consult with that mission on the appropriate means of resolving the case.

Failure to properly address a violation may have significant consequences for diplomats, including loss of driving privileges, court-ordered fines, or the issuance of an arrest warrant (without prior notice to the Department of State) for failure to appear in court. OFM may also take steps to address offenses where appropriate, such as imposing demerit points on Department of State-issued licenses, suspending or revoking a license, or requesting an individual's departure from the United States.

DIPLOMATIC DRIVER'S LICENSES



front



back

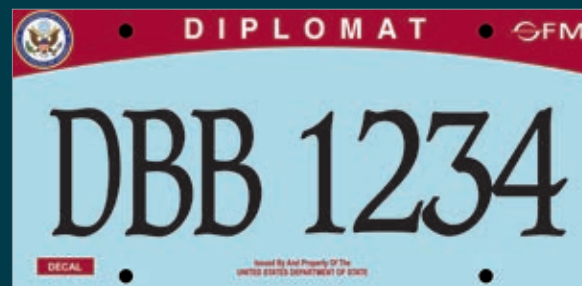
Other options include:



Above: Diplomatic driver's licenses are laser-engraved on a light blue background with a red banner at the top. They feature a Kinegram with ocean and mountain scenes embedded above the driver's photo, and an image of the Lincoln Memorial.

A detailed guide to the security features is available to law enforcement by contacting ofmdmvenforcement@state.gov.

DIPLOMATIC LICENSE PLATES



Above: Diplomatic license plates have black embossed lettering on a pale blue background with a red banner at the top. They come in a variety of alphanumeric patterns and display the U.S. Department of State Seal and the OFM logo.



At the first indication or assertion that an individual may have diplomatic immunity (e.g. diplomatic plates), law enforcement is requested to contact the Department of State at the number located on the back of the credential, to verify the individual's status and any privileges and immunities he/she may enjoy.

CONTACT INFORMATION

OFFICE OF FOREIGN MISSIONS DIPLOMATIC MOTOR VEHICLE OFFICE

3507 International Place, NW
Washington, DC 20522
(202) 895-3500 (General Inquiries)
(202) 895-3521 (Law Enforcement)
OFMDMVInfo@state.gov

SEND REPORTS/CITATIONS TO:

Fax: (202) 895-3646
Email: OFMDMVENforcement@state.gov

www.state.gov/ofm/dmv

CHICAGO REGIONAL OFFICE

77 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 2122
Chicago, IL 60604-1503
Phone: (312) 353-5762
OFMCGCustomerService@state.gov

HOUSTON REGIONAL OFFICE

8701 S. Gessner Rd., Suite 906
Houston, TX 77074
Phone: (713) 272-2865
OFMHOCustomerService@state.gov

LOS ANGELES REGIONAL OFFICE

10940 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1550
Los Angeles, CA 90024
Phone: (310) 235-6292
OFMLACustomerService@state.gov

MIAMI REGIONAL OFFICE

95 Merrick Way, Ste. 505
Coral Gables, FL 33134
Phone: (305) 442-4943
OFMMICustomerService@state.gov

NEW YORK REGIONAL OFFICE

799 United Nations Plaza, 8th fl.
New York, NY 10017
Phone: (646) 282-2825
OFMNYCustomerService@state.gov

SAN FRANCISCO REGIONAL OFFICE

235 Pine Street, Suite 1600
San Francisco, CA 94104
Phone: (415) 744-2910
OFMSFCustomerService@state.gov

DIPLOMATIC SECURITY
(Monday - Friday 8am-5pm)
(202) 895-3600

DIPLOMATIC SECURITY
COMMAND CENTER (24/7)
(866) 217-2089

CHICAGO FIELD OFFICE

230 South Dearborn St. Ste. 2318
Chicago, IL 60604
Phone: (312) 353-6163
Fax: (312) 886-7895

BOSTON FIELD OFFICE

10 Causeway St., Ste. 1001
Boston, MA 02222
Phone: (617) 565-8200
Fax: (617) 565-8222

LOS ANGELES FIELD OFFICE

255 Temple St., Ste. 1273
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Phone: (213) 894-3290
Fax: (213) 894-0914

HOUSTON FIELD OFFICE

1919 Smith St., Ste. 2100
Houston, TX 77002
Phone: (713) 654-0401
Fax: (281) 228-5670

NEW YORK FIELD OFFICE

2 Executive Drive, Ste. 300
Ft. Lee, N.J. 07024
Phone: (201) 346-8100
Fax: (201) 944-5106

MIAMI FIELD OFFICE

1645 Biscayne Blvd., Ste. 310
Miami, FL 33132
Phone: (305) 810-5850
Fax: (305) 810-5816

WASHINGTON FIELD OFFICE

2222 Gallows Rd., Ste 300
Dunn Loring, VA 22027
Phone: (571) 226-9303
Fax: (571) 226-9382

SAN FRANCISCO FIELD OFFICE

235 Pine Street, Suite 900
San Francisco, CA 94104
Phone: (415) 705-1176
Fax: (415) 705-1187