How to Apply for a Driving License in Poland: The Ultimate Step-by-Step Guide

Protecting a driving license (Prawo Jazdy) in Poland is a substantial milestone. Whether someone is a Polish resident or an expat making Poland their permanent home, holding a legitimate driving license unlocks unprecedented liberty and benefit. Nevertheless, browsing the bureaucratic landscape of Polish workplaces can feel overwhelming initially glimpse.

This extensive guide breaks down the whole process of how to request a driving license in Poland, ensuring a smooth and problem-free journey from the initial medical check to sitting behind the wheel.

1. Prerequisites Before You Start

Before enrolling in a driving school, applicants should meet specific legal and physical requirements set by Polish law.

- **Age Requirements:** The minimum age depends upon the car category. For a basic vehicle (Category B), the candidate should be at least 18 years old.
- **Residency Status:** Foreigners must prove legal residency in Poland for a minimum of 185 days each year. This is typically validated through a house card (*karta pobytu*), a Polish visa, or EU registration certificates.
- **Medical Fitness:** Every applicant must pass a medical evaluation to ensure they are physically and psychologically fit to drive.

2. Step-by-Step Guide to Getting a Polish Driving License

The journey to obtaining a Polish driving license follows a structured sequence of occasions.

Action 1: Obtain a PKK Number (Profil Kandydata na Kierowcu)

The **PKK** (Driver Candidate Profile) is a special electronic identification number generated by the local federal government office. Without a PKK, no driving school will accept an applicant.

To get a PKK, one should visit the regional district office (*Starostwo Powiatowe*), city hall (*Urząd Miasta*), or district borough workplace (*Urząd Dzielnicy* in Warsaw) and submit the following files:

- A completed application (available at the workplace or online).
- A medical certificate confirming no contraindications to driving.
- One current picture (3.5 cm x 4.5 cm).
- Evidence of identity (Passport or ID card) and residency status (Residence card/Visa).
- A translation of foreign documents (if appropriate).

Step 2: Enroll in a Driving School (*Ośrodek Szkolenia Kierowców* - OSK)

Once the PKK number is provided, the candidate can choose a driving school. In Poland, Category B training typically consists of:

- **Theoretical training:** At least 30 hours of class or online lectures covering traffic rules, road indications, and very first aid.
- **Practical training:** At least 30 hours behind the wheel with a certified instructor.

Idea for Expats: While a lot of driving schools perform courses in Polish, a growing number of schools in significant cities like Warsaw, Kraków, and Wrocław use theoretical and practical lessons in English.

Action 3: Pass the Internal Exams

Upon finishing the school's curriculum, trainees should pass internal theoretical and useful tests. Successfully passing these tests grants a graduation certificate from the OSK, which updates the prospect's PKK profile in the system.

Step 4: Pass the State Exams at WORD (*Wojewódzki Ośrodek Ruchu Drogowego*)

The last hurdle includes passing the official state assessments handled by WORD. This is divided into 2 parts:

1. **Theoretical Exam:** A computer-based test including 32 multiple-choice concerns concerning traffic regulations. Prospects need to score at least 68 out of 74 indicate pass.
2. **Practical Exam:** Conducted in 2 stages-- first, car checks and maneuvers on a closed course (e.g., hill start, reverse parking), followed by driving in real metropolitan traffic conditions under the inspector's supervision.

Step 5: Collect the Driving License

Once both state exams are effectively passed, the WORD updates the system. The candidate needs to return to the regional office kartaxpresspoland where the PKK was provided, pay the issuance fee, and send evidence of payment. The physical license card is typically all set within 9 to 14 working days.

Cost Breakdown of Getting a License in Poland

Budgeting for a driving license needs preparing for several fixed and variable costs. The table below describes the estimated expenses associated with obtaining a Category B driving license in Poland.

Expenditure Item Description Approximate Cost (PLN) Approximate Cost (EUR) **Medical Examination** Needed physician's see and certificate 200 PLN ~ EUR45 **Passport Photos** 1 set of standard biometric photos 30 - 50 PLN ~ EUR7 - EUR11 **Driving Course (OSK)** 30h theory + 30h practical training 2,500 - 4,000 PLN ~ EUR570 - EUR900 **State Theory Exam (WORD)** Official computer-based examination charge 50 PLN ~ EUR11 **State Practical Exam (WORD)** Official driving test fee 200 PLN ~ EUR45 **License Issuance Fee** Plastic card production cost 100.50 PLN ~ EUR23 **Overall Estimated Cost Complete Process 3,030 - 4,600 PLN ~ EUR680 - EUR1,035**

Keep in mind: Prices may differ depending on the city, inflation, and whether the candidate requires extra driving lessons.

Exchanging a Foreign Driving License in Poland

For individuals who currently hold a driving license provided outside of Poland, the procedure may be much easier. Depending on the providing nation, a full retake of examinations may not be essential.

- **EU/EEA Licenses:** Drivers with a license provided by an EU or EEA member state can drive in Poland legally until their license ends. However, they can voluntarily exchange it for a Polish license without taking any examinations.

- **Non-EU Licenses (Vienna Convention signatories):** Drivers from nations that signed the 1968 Vienna Convention on Road Traffic can usually exchange their license for a Polish one after showing residency, sending translations, and paying the relevant charges, without requiring to pass state tests.
- **Other Countries:** Drivers from countries outside the Vienna Convention must normally pass the theoretical state test (*Teoria*) and sometimes complete an official treatment before a Polish license is given.

Essential Checklist for the Application Day

To guarantee a smooth check out to the local office (*Urząd*), candidates ought to prepare the following list:

- Valid passport or home card (*karta pobytu*).
- The PKK number provided by the workplace.
- Completed application kind for releasing a driving license.
- Medical certificate verifying physical fitness to drive.
- One current picture (3.5 x 4.5 cm).
- Verification of state exam passes (issued by WORD).
- Receipt of payment for the driving license card (approx. 100.50 PLN).

Final Thoughts

Getting a driving license in Poland needs patience, time, and financial investment, however the step-by-step system is transparent and efficient. By preparing the medical documents early, securing a PKK number, and picking a trusted driving school, future motorists can effectively browse the process and hit the open Polish roadways with confidence.