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

Securing a driving license (Prawo Jazdy) in Poland is a significant turning point. Whether somebody is a Polish resident or an expat making Poland their permanent home, holding a valid driving license unlocks extraordinary freedom and benefit. However, navigating the administrative landscape of Polish offices can feel frustrating at first glimpse.

This extensive guide breaks down the entire procedure of how to obtain a driving license in Poland, ensuring a smooth and hassle-free journey from the initial medical check to sitting behind the wheel.

1. Prerequisites Before You Start

Before enrolling in a driving school, applicants must fulfill particular legal and physical requirements set by Polish law.

- **Age Requirements:** The minimum age depends on the lorry category. For a standard car (Category B), the applicant needs to be at least 18 years old.
- **Residency Status:** Foreigners must show legal residency in Poland for a minimum of 185 days per year. This is usually confirmed through a home card (*karta pobytu*), a Polish visa, or EU registration certificates.
- **Medical Fitness:** Every applicant must pass a medical evaluation to guarantee they are physically and psychologically in shape to drive.

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

The journey to getting a Polish driving license follows a structured sequence **prawo jazdy bez egzaminu** of events.

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

The **PKK** (Driver Candidate Profile) is a distinct electronic recognition number generated by the regional government workplace. Without a PKK, no driving school will accept a candidate.

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

- A completed application (readily available at the office or online).
- A medical certificate confirming no contraindications to driving.
- One recent photograph (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 relevant).

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

Once the PKK number is provided, the applicant can select a driving school. In Poland, Category B training normally includes:

- **Theoretical training:** At least 30 hours of classroom or online lectures covering traffic guidelines, road indications, and first help.
- **Practical training:** At least 30 hours behind the wheel with a qualified instructor.

Idea for Expats: While the majority of driving schools conduct courses in Polish, a growing variety of schools in major cities like Warsaw, Kraków, and Wrocław provide theoretical and practical lessons in English.

Step 3: Pass the Internal Exams

Upon finishing the school's curriculum, students need to pass internal theoretical and practical tests. Effectively 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 involves passing the official state evaluations managed by WORD. This is split into two parts:

1. **Theoretical Exam:** A computer-based test featuring 32 multiple-choice questions concerning traffic policies. Prospects must score a minimum of 68 out of 74 points to pass.
2. **Practical Exam:** Conducted in two stages-- initially, vehicle checks and maneuvers on a closed course (e.g., hill start, reverse parking), followed by driving in real city traffic conditions under the examiner's supervision.

Step 5: Collect the Driving License

Once both state tests are effectively passed, the WORD updates the system. The candidate needs to return to the local workplace where the PKK was provided, pay the issuance cost, and submit evidence of payment. The physical license card is generally ready within 9 to 14 working days.

Cost Breakdown of Getting a License in Poland

Budgeting for a driving license needs expecting a number of repaired and variable costs. The table below outlines the approximated costs related to acquiring a Category B driving license in Poland.

Expenditure Item Description Approximate Cost (PLN) Approximate Cost (EUR) **Medical Examination** Required physician's go to and certificate 200 PLN ~ EUR45 **Passport Photos** 1 set of standard biometric images 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 exam fee 50 PLN ~ EUR11 **State Practical Exam (WORD)** Official driving test charge 200 PLN ~ EUR45 **License Issuance Fee** Plastic card production cost 100.50 PLN ~ EUR23 **Overall Estimated Cost Total Process 3,030 - 4,600 PLN ~ EUR680 - EUR1,035**

Note: Prices may differ depending on the city, inflation, and whether the candidate needs extra driving lessons.

Exchanging a Foreign Driving License in Poland

For individuals who currently hold a driving license released outside of Poland, the procedure may be much simpler. Depending upon the issuing country, a full retake of tests might not be required.

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

tests.

- **Non-EU Licenses (Vienna Convention signatories):** Drivers from nations that signed the 1968 Vienna Convention on Road Traffic can normally exchange their license for a Polish one after proving residency, submitting translations, and paying the relevant charges, without requiring to pass state examinations.
- **Other Countries:** Drivers from countries outside the Vienna Convention need to typically pass the theoretical state test (*Teoria*) and often complete a formal procedure before a Polish license is approved.

Necessary Checklist for the Application Day

To ensure a smooth check out to the local office (*Urząd*), candidates need to prepare the following checklist:

- Valid passport or house card (*karta pobytu*).
- The PKK number supplied by the workplace.
- Completed application for issuing a driving license.
- Medical certificate verifying fitness to drive.
- One recent picture (3.5 x 4.5 cm).
- Confirmation of state test passes (provided by WORD).
- Receipt of payment for the driving license card (approx. 100.50 PLN).

Last Thoughts

Using for a driving license in Poland requires 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 selecting a respectable driving school, future chauffeurs can effectively navigate the procedure and hit the open Polish roads with confidence.