

Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements  
Response to FAQs  
Prepared March 29, 2007 by Chief Investigator Richard Crays

**Question: What is the S.A.V.E. process and how does it work?**

1. Proof of Lawful Presence must be established at the time a person applies for a Colorado license or ID card, per Colorado Revised Statutes 42-2-107 (1) (b) I.
2. For Aliens (Immigrant and Non-immigrant), proof of lawful presence is established using an Alien number or an I-94 Arrival document number. The Alien number or I-94 Arrival document is verified electronically with a liaison database called the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (S.A.V.E.) database. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) supports the S.A.V.E. database on the other side.
3. When an applicant presents their documents to the Driver's License official for renewal or new issue of a Colorado document, DMV personnel enter the number from the immigration paperwork into the S.A.V.E. system for the initial request for verification. Approximately 75% of all applicants requesting this initial verification are cleared immediately and issued a Colorado document.
4. There are many factors that can contribute to the remaining 25% of applicants not being immediately verified and having to be referred to one of eight DMV S.A.V.E. processing sites for additional verification :
  - a. Recent entry into the country and the I-94 not transferred to a USCIS office for data entry
  - b. Change in status or school and the change has not been entered by USCIS
  - c. Data entry error by Customs or USCIS
  - d. Applications for status or renewal not processed by USCIS; i.e., filing errors, insufficient funds, incomplete applications).
5. At the S.A.V.E. processing sites, the applicant is required to submit copies of the immigration documents, thereby allowing the S.A.V.E. personnel to compare them with the originals and to the applicant submitting them. The technician enters the data from the documents into the appropriate field(s) and electronically sends that to S.A.V.E. This electronic submission is requesting U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service locate the supporting information in their main database and update the S.A.V.E. database.
6. When the S.A.V.E. database has been updated, the Division of Motor Vehicles is notified electronically and, if the documents were verified, a letter is sent to the applicant advising them to return to the original DMV office and complete the process in obtaining their Colorado document.
7. If the information is not verified, or if USCIS records show the Alien/I-94 numbers are expired or invalid, a letter is sent to the applicant advising them to make an appointment with USCIS at 4730 Paris Street in Denver to resolve the matter.
8. Assuming the matter is resolved in favor of the applicant, USCIS will fax or email a form over to Motor Vehicle Investigations and the customer's record will be updated to show the current expiration date of their immigration status, and a Colorado document may be issued.

## **SAVE customer**

In 2005, the Federal government enacted the REAL ID Act. As part of this Federal law, states must verify lawful residency in that state before any state identification card or driver's license can be issued. Colorado law also requires any person issued a driver's license or ID card to show proof of lawful presence.

On August 1, 2006, Colorado began using the System Alien Verification for Entitlements process to verify all immigration documents presented by applicants.

The process is as follows:

Every person asking for a Colorado ID or driver's license must show lawful presence in the U.S. This is done by showing documents from the list found on our web site at: [http://www.revenue.state.co.us/mv\\_dir/wrap.asp?incl=faqdrli/faqdrli1](http://www.revenue.state.co.us/mv_dir/wrap.asp?incl=faqdrli/faqdrli1)

At the Driver's License office, the official will examine any documents presented to them and enter either the I-94 or Alien Identification Number on those documents into the SAVE system for verification approximately 80% of those initially entered into the system clear immediately and we proceed with the process in the standard way.

Approximately 20% of those people who are entered into the system do not immediately clear. Those people must then go to the Pierce Street office of the Division of Motor Vehicles so that the Investigations Unit can complete a more in-depth review of the documents and correspond directly with the Bureau of Customs and Immigration Service (BCIS) regarding the validity of the person's status. There are plans for the opening of satellite SAVE stations throughout the state, but no specific date has been determined for these offices.

This process can take from 3 days to 9 weeks, depending on what research is necessary on the part of the BCIS. The State completes our part of the review in approximately 30 minutes and the remaining time of the projected processing period is that time necessary for BCIS to review databases, examine documents, enter the thousands of I-94 documents are generated everyday at all the airports and other ports of entry to the United States.

The average time to process an individual's review is 3 weeks.

To reduce the likelihood of being without a valid license, renewing early, well before the expiration date on the card, is recommended.

We regret any inconvenience this law or process cause, but this process is the only current means of assuring that documents are only issued to lawfully present residents of the U.S.

For an appointment with Immigration: <http://infopass.uscis.gov/>