

LAW No. 10591

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA

REFORM OF ARTICLES 51, SUBSECTION (b), 91, AND 147, SUBSECTION (g), OF LAW No. 9078, LAW ON TRAFFIC ON PUBLIC LAND ROADS AND ROAD SAFETY OF OCTOBER 4, 2012, TO HOMOLOGATE DRIVER'S LICENSES ISSUED ABROAD AND TO AVOID FINES FOR NOT CARRYING THEM PHYSICALLY

SOLE ARTICLE

Articles 51, subsection (b), 91, and 147, subsection (g), of Law No. 9078, Law on Traffic on Public Land Roads and Road Safety of October 4, 2012, are hereby amended to read as follows:

Article 51 — General Prohibitions for Public Transportation Drivers

In addition to those established in this law, drivers of vehicles intended for public transportation service are prohibited from the following:

(...)

b) Driving with an expired or suspended driver's license.

(...)

Article 91 — Homologation of Driver's Licenses Issued Abroad

The homologation of foreign driver's licenses shall be governed by the following provisions:

a) Drivers who hold a driver's license issued abroad and who are in the country under any of the stay subcategories provided for in Law No. 8764, General Immigration and Foreigners Law of August 19, 2009, or who are in transit, are authorized to drive the same type of vehicle permitted by that license for a period identical to that authorized for their legal stay in the national territory.

Presentation of the license in physical format may not be required when the person presents it in digital format, if it is issued that way by their country of origin or residence.

During this period, drivers holding a license equivalent to Costa Rican license type B■1 or higher may drive, on non■primary roads, bimotor vehicles and internal■combustion motorcycles with engine displacement not exceeding 125 cubic centimeters; where electric or hybrid motors are used, maximum power may not exceed 11 kilowatts. Under the same terms, driving tricycle and quadricycle motorcycles with engine displacement not exceeding 500 cubic centimeters is also authorized.

These drivers shall be subject to the same regulations as drivers holding a Costa Rican driver's license.

b) Drivers holding a foreign driver's license who have approved immigration status in Costa Rica or who have filed an application to obtain legal immigration status may drive provided that they obtain a Costa Rican driver's license, without requiring a minimum uninterrupted period of stay in the country, after complying with the following requirements:

i. The license to be homologated must be valid.

ii. Compliance with the requirements of this law for the class and type of license to be homologated, except for the obligation to attend the basic road education course and to take the practical driving exam.

iii. Proof of legal stay in the country or proof that such status is in process, under current immigration legislation.

c) For the homologation of licenses of foreign persons who seek to work as professional drivers of paid passenger transport or heavy cargo transport, in addition to complying with subsection (b), items (i), (ii), and (iii), the following shall apply:

i. For drivers with licenses equivalent to type B and class C, experience may be homologated according to the license to be validated.

ii. In addition to the requirements of Articles 85 and 86 of this law, first-time applicants for a B or class C license may have their prior experience homologated based on the equivalent foreign license they hold.

Likewise, foreign persons whose immigration status under national legislation is considered regular—because they have a pending application for a change of immigration category or an extension whose final resolution is still pending before the General Directorate of Immigration and Foreigners—are authorized to drive.

Article 147 — Category E Fine

A fine of twenty thousand colones (₡20,000) shall be imposed, without prejudice to related sanctions, on anyone who engages in the following conduct:

(...)

g) The owner of a vehicle placed into circulation without the documents required by Article 4 of this law, or the driver who does not have the corresponding driver's license, which shall not be required to be carried physically, as the traffic officer may verify its existence by other means.

(...)

This law shall take effect upon its publication.

Issued at the Presidency of the Republic, San José, on the fifth day of November, two thousand twenty-four.

ENACT AND PUBLISH.