



CAL FIRE - Office of the State Fire Marshal Fire Engineering & Investigations

ID Card Photo Requirements

For license and Certification Applications



Photos that do not meet these requirements will result in application rejection until an acceptable replacement is uploaded.



Background

Solid white or light-colored wall. No other people or objects.



Lighting

Well-lit, with no shadows on your face.



Framing

Clear, front-facing headshot with eyes open. End at the shoulders leave minimal space above and beside your head.



Attire

Wear a shirt. No hats, hard hats, or sunglasses.



Glasses

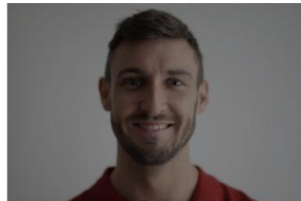
Prescription lenses must not cause glare or hide eyes.

Religious head coverings are permitted if your face remains clearly visible.

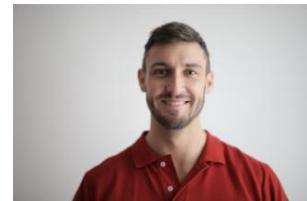
Common Reasons for Rejection



✗ Blurry



✗ Too Dark



✗ Uncropped Photo



✗ Busy Background



✗ Side Profile



✗ Sunglasses

Before You Submit

- 1 Use an original photo.** No photos of printed pictures, computer screens, driver's licenses, passports, or existing badges. No Screenshots.
- 2 Keep it upright.** Sideways or upside-down photos are not accepted.
- 3 Upload PNG, JPG, or JPEG.** Cellphone photos are acceptable when saved in one of these formats.
- 4 Open the uploaded file in your application.** Confirm it displays correctly and meets every requirement.

Accepted File Types: PNG - JPG - JPEG

ID Card Photo Instructions

Use this guide with the ID Card Photo Requirements infographic when preparing a photo for your new license or certification card. A cellphone photo is acceptable if it meets the requirements below.

Photos that do not meet the requirements will result in application rejection until an acceptable replacement is uploaded.

How to take and upload your photo

1 Prepare the background and lighting

Stand in front of a solid white or light-colored wall. You must be the only person in the photo, with no objects in the background. Choose a well-lit area and adjust your position or lighting until there are no shadows on your face. Avoid a bright window behind you.

2 Check your clothing and glasses

Wear a shirt. Remove hats, hard hats, and sunglasses. Religious head coverings may remain if your face is clearly visible. Prescription glasses are permitted, but the lenses must not create glare or hide your eyes. Adjust the lighting or camera position if you see reflections.

3 Position the camera and take the photo

Hold the camera at eye level, or ask someone to take the photo. Face the camera directly with your eyes open. Keep the camera steady and check that your face is in focus. Retake the photo if it is blurry, dark, shadowed, or taken from the side.

4 Crop and orient the image

Show your entire head and end the photo at your shoulders. Leave only minimal space above your head and beside your face. Do not cut off the top of your head or leave a large portion of your body in the frame. Rotate the photo so it is upright. Crop and rotate the original image rather than taking a screenshot.

5 Save in an accepted format

Save the image as PNG, JPG, or JPEG. Use the original digital photo, not a photograph of another picture, a computer screen, a driver's license, a passport, or an existing badge. Screenshots are not acceptable.

6 Upload and verify

Upload the photo to your application. Then open the uploaded file from within the application. Confirm that it can be viewed, appears upright, and meets every requirement. Check the uploaded copy even if the photo looked correct on your device.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need a professional or passport photo?

No. You may use a cellphone. The photo must meet the FEI background, lighting, framing, attire, orientation, and file-format requirements.

How much of my head and body should be visible?

Include your full head and crop the image to end at your shoulders. Leave minimal space above and beside your head. An uncropped photo with excessive empty space or a large portion of your body is not acceptable.

Can someone else take the photo for me?

Yes. This can help keep the camera steady and at eye level. Only you may appear in the photo, and the background must be free of people and objects.

Can I wear glasses or a head covering?

Prescription glasses are allowed if there is no glare and your eyes remain visible. Sunglasses, hats, and hard hats are not allowed. Religious head coverings are permitted if your face is clearly visible. You must wear a shirt.

Can I use a photo of my existing identification?

No. Do not submit a photograph of a driver's license, passport, badge, printed photograph, or computer screen. Use the original digital photo. Screenshots are also not acceptable.

My phone saved the image as HEIC or HEIF. What should I do?

Export or convert the original image to PNG, JPG, or JPEG using your device's photo or image software. Simply changing the filename extension does not convert the image. Open the converted file to confirm that it displays correctly before uploading it.

Can I upload a PDF?

No. The accepted photo formats are PNG, JPG, and JPEG. A photo placed in a PDF or Word document does not meet the file-format requirement.

Can I crop or rotate my photo?

Yes. Crop it to meet the headshot requirements and rotate it upright. If the face remains blurry, dark, shadowed, or turned to the side, retake the photo instead of relying on cropping to correct it.

What if my uploaded photo is sideways or will not open?

Rotate and save the original image upright, or export it again in an accepted format. Upload the corrected file and reopen it within the application. If the problem continues, contact your program analyst using the contact information provided with your application.

What happens if my photo is rejected?

Follow the photo instruction link provided by your program analyst and correct your submission to meet the listed requirements. Upload your replacement photo, then open the file in your application to confirm it displays correctly before resubmitting.