



News Release

Feb. 14, 2013
For immediate release

Florida Implements New Requirement for Canadian Drivers *International Driver's Permits now required for Canadians driving in Florida*

OTTAWA – The Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) advises Canadians that the state of Florida has passed into law a requirement for all non U.S residents, including all Canadians, to carry a valid International Driver's Permit (IDP) when driving their own vehicle or a rental vehicle in Florida.

State officials say the law was passed so that Florida law enforcement officials would not be faced with license documents in languages they could not read, but the law captures drivers from all countries, including Canada. The law now requires both a valid licence from the home country or province, and an IDP.

CAA has obtained the following official comment from the state of Florida regarding this change:

Effective January 1, 2013, section 322.04, Florida Statutes were amended to require foreign visitors who drive in Florida to obtain an International Driving Permit in addition to their valid home country driver license.

"The intent of the change in Florida law regarding the International Driving Permit was to aid law enforcement in Florida when interacting with drivers holding a license in a foreign language. The Department of Highway Safety will seek to clarify the law in the upcoming Legislative session, which begins next month, to make it clear that a license already written in English would be acceptable. Until the law is clarified, drivers should obtain an IDP," said Kirsten Olsen-Doolan, Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles spokesperson. International Driving Permits should be obtained before arriving in the U.S. Individuals should contact their home country agency for assistance

CAA will be requesting that Florida officials follow through and amend this law for all Canadians. Millions of Canadians have driven in Florida for decades without incidents related to the lack of an international driving permit.

In the meantime, however, CAA believes that given the law as it stands today, Canadians planning on driving in Florida should consider acquiring an International Driver's Permit. An IDP is a special document which allows motorists to drive internationally, when accompanied by a valid driver's license from their country. CAA is the only organization in Canada authorized to issue an International Driving Permit. For more information on IDPs, visit www.caa.ca/travel-documents/idp/.

CAA is a federation of nine clubs providing more than 5.6 million Members with exceptional emergency roadside service, complete automotive and travel services, member savings and comprehensive insurance services. CAA also advocates on issues of concern to its members, including road safety, the environment, mobility, infrastructure and consumer protection.

For further information, please contact:

Ian Jack
Director of Communications and Government Relations
Office: 613-247-0117 ext. 2007
Cell: 613-863-2590
ijack@national.caa.ca

Kristine Simpson
Manager, Public Affairs
Office: 613-247-0117 ext. 2006
Cell: 613-796-9404
ksimpson@national.caa.ca

Regional contacts:

Karen Stanley
CAA Atlantic
(506) 649-6290
Kstanley@atlantic.caa.ca

Korey Kennedy
CAA North Eastern Ontario
(613) 721-3283
kkennedy@caaneo.on.ca

Sophie Gagnon
CAA-Québec
(418) 624-2424, ext. 2324
sogagnon@caaquebec.com

Chris Rechner
Alberta Motor Association
(780) 430-5679
Chris.Rechner@ama.ab.ca

Silvana Aceto
CAA South Central Ontario
(905) 771-3194
saceto@caasco.ca

Liz Peters
CAA Manitoba
(204) 262-6039
lizp@caamanitoba.com

Nièla Melanio
British Columbia Automobile
Association
(604) 268-5342
Niela.Melanio@bcaa.com

Meredith Maxwell
CAA Niagara
(905) 322-2015
mmaxwell@caaniagara.ca

Christine M. Niemczyk
CAA Saskatchewan
(306) 779-6635, ext. 0963.
Christine.Niemczyk@caask.ca