



CHAPTER 20
ARTICLE 2 - UNIFORM DRIVER'S LICENSE ACT

N.C.G.S. § 20-35.

Penalties for violating Article; defense to driving without a license.

SOURCE General Statutes of North Carolina, as published by the General Assembly	LAST AMENDMENT IN THIS TEXT S.L. 2021-89, s. 2(a) — eighth act in the lineage	RETRIEVED 21 September 2026, 01:25 UTC	SOURCE FINGERPRINT c2331f465983ee8494b97c8b - aea1be9bfd520c205a6f2201 - 9b4700068d20fa71
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§ 20-35(a) Penalty. - Except as otherwise provided in subsection (a1) or (a2) of this section, a violation of this Article is a Class 2 misdemeanor unless a statute in the Article sets a different punishment for the violation. If a statute in this Article sets a different punishment for a violation of the Article, the different punishment applies.

§ 20-35(a1) The following offenses are Class 3 misdemeanors:

- (1) Failure to obtain a license before driving a motor vehicle, in violation of G.S. 20-7(a).
- (2) Failure to comply with license restrictions, in violation of G.S. 20-7(e).
- (3) Permitting a motor vehicle owned by the person to be operated by an unlicensed person, in violation of G.S. 20-34.

§ 20-35(a2) A person who does any of the following is responsible for an infraction:

INFRACTION

- (1) Fails to carry a valid license while driving a motor vehicle, in violation of G.S. 20-7(a).
- (2) Operates a motor vehicle with an expired license, in violation of G.S. 20-7(f).
- (3) Fails to notify the Division of an address change for a drivers license within 60 days after the change occurs, in violation of G.S. 20-7.1.

§ 20-35(b) Repealed by Session Laws 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 761, s. 4.

§ 20-35(c)

Defenses. - A person may not be found responsible for failing to carry a regular drivers license if, when tried for that offense, the person produces in court a regular drivers license issued to the person that was valid when the person was charged with the offense. A person may not be found responsible for driving a motor vehicle with an expired drivers license if, when tried for that offense, the person shows all the following:

- (1) That, at the time of the offense, the person had an expired license.
- (2) The person renewed the expired license within 30 days after it expired and now has a drivers license.
- (3) The person could not have been charged with driving without a license if the person had the renewed license when charged with the offense.

§ 20-35(d)

Defense for Deployed Member of the Armed Forces of the United States. - A person may not be found responsible for driving a motor vehicle with an expired drivers license if, when tried for that offense, the person provides verifiable written proof of deployment and establishes the following:

- (1) The person was deployed as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States when the drivers license expired.
- (2) The person obtained a renewed drivers license within 30 days after returning from deployment.

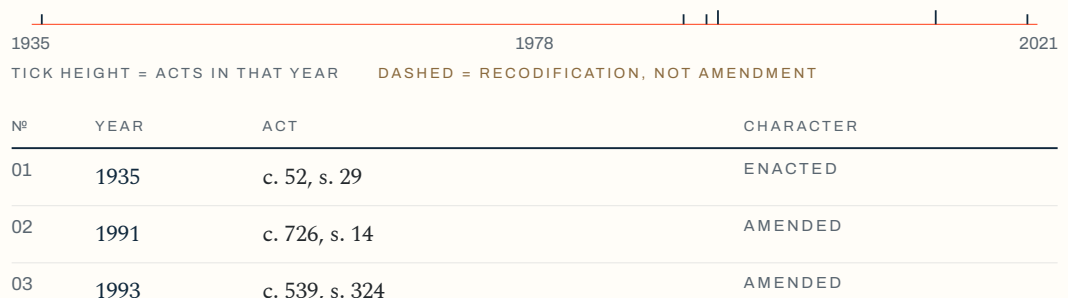
END OF SECTION TEXT

APPARATUS FOLLOWS — DERIVED, NOT ENACTED

APPARATUS I
8 ACTS

Amendment lineage

The State prints this history as a single parenthetical at the foot of the section. It is reproduced verbatim in the colophon and unpacked below in order of enactment.



04	1994	Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c)	AMENDED
05	1994	1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 761, s. 4	AMENDED
06	2013	S.L. 2013-360, s. 18B.14(g)	AMENDED
07	2013	S.L. 2013-385, s. 4	AMENDED
08	2021	S.L. 2021-89, s. 2(a)	AMENDED

APPARATUS II
5 AUTHORITIES

Authorities referenced

Every G.S. cross-reference appearing in the text of this section, in order of first appearance. Nothing is characterized; the operative language is quoted from the section itself.

REFERENCE	APPEARS IN	OPERATIVE LANGUAGE IN THIS SECTION
G.S. 20-7(a)	(a1)(1)	"a motor vehicle, in violation of"
G.S. 20-7(e)	(a1)(2)	"with license restrictions, in violation of"
G.S. 20-34	(a1)(3)	"an unlicensed person, in violation of"
G.S. 20-7(f)	(a2)(2)	"an expired license, in violation of"
G.S. 20-7.1	(a2)(3)	"the change occurs, in violation of"

APPARATUS III

Citation

FULL SECTION
N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-35 (2021).

PINPOINT
N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-35(a) (2021).

Pinpoint keys are set in the left margin of the text rather than line numbers: subsection designators are stable across editions and paper sizes, line numbers are not.

COLOPHON

Provenance

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HISTORY PARENTHETICAL, AS PRINTED BY THE STATE

(1935, c. 52, s. 29; 1991, c. 726, s. 14; 1993, c. 539, s. 324; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 761, s. 4; 2013-360, s. 18B.14(g); 2013-385, s. 4; 2021-89, s. 2(a).)

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