

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5800

As Passed House - Amended:

February 28, 2024

Title: An act relating to improving access to department of licensing issued documents by clarifying the application requirements for a minor, modifying the requirements for at-cost identicards, and studying the feasibility of reduced-fee identicards.

Brief Description: Improving access to department of licensing issued documents by clarifying the application requirements for a minor, modifying the requirements for at-cost identicards, and studying the feasibility of reduced-fee identicards.

Sponsors: Senators Wilson, C., Torres, Billig, Kuderer, Mullet, Nobles and Shewmake; by request of Department of Licensing.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/14/24, 2/21/24 [DPA].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/28/24, 95-0.

Brief Summary of Bill (As Amended by House)

- Adds the term "responsible adult" to the types of adults who can sign the application for an intermediate driver's license, or driver's license or motorcycle endorsement for a person under 18 years of age.
- Modifies eligibility criteria for at-cost identicards for applicants receiving public assistance grants.
- Directs the Department of Licensing to conduct a study on the feasibility of offering reduced-fee identicards.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Fey, Chair; Donaghy, Vice Chair; Paul, Vice Chair; Timmons, Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Hutchins, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Low, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Robertson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Berry, Bronoske, Chapman, Cortes, Dent, Doglio, Duerr, Entenman, Goehner, Griffey, Hackney, Klicker, Mena, Nance, Orcutt, Ramel, Ramos, Schmidt, Volz and Walsh.

Staff: Michael Hirsch (786-7195).

Background:

Intermediate Driver's License.

An intermediate driver's license is a type of driver's license issued to individuals under 18 years of age which authorizes the license holder to drive a motor vehicle subject to certain restrictions until the license holder reaches the age of 18.

An applicant for an intermediate license must: (1) be at least 16 years of age; (2) have possessed a valid instruction permit for at least six months; (3) have passed a driver's licensing exam; (4) have passed an approved driver's education course; and (5) present certification by a parent, guardian, or employer to the Department of Licensing (DOL) stating that the applicant has had at least 50 hours of driving experience, 10 of which were at night.

For a person to obtain a driver's license or motorcycle endorsement while under 18 years of age, the individual must have an application signed by a parent or guardian with custody of the minor. If the person under 18 years of age does not have a father, mother, or guardian, then the application can be signed by the minor's employer.

Identicards.

Identicards are issued by the DOL as an alternate form of identification. Identicards are not a license to operate a motor vehicle. The fee for a standard identicard is \$72 and expires on the eighth anniversary of the applicant's birth date after issuance.

The DOL issues an at-cost identicard, based on the production costs, rather than the usual \$72 fee for an eight-year identicard, if the applicant is:

- a recipient of public assistance grants, excluding the Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC Program), and has a written referral from either the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) or the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF);
- under 25 years of age and does not have a permanent residence address; or
- either scheduled to be released or was recently released from a juvenile state institution or juvenile facility.

Summary of Amended Bill:

Intermediate Driver's License.

A responsible adult is added to the types of persons who can sign the application for an intermediate driver's license. A responsible adult is defined as a person specifically authorized by the DOL who is over 21 years of age and:

- has a familial, kinship, or caretaker relationship to a minor;
- directly provides support to a minor as an educational, medical, legal, social service, or State of Washington licensed mental health professional; or
- is an employee of a government entity who provides support to a minor in a professional capacity.

The requirements for the adult signature for the application of a person under 18 years of age for a driver's license or a motorcycle endorsement are adjusted by adding the term "responsible adult" to the list of adults who can sign the application and removing the requirement that a parent or guardian with custody of the minor be the adult signatory if available.

Identicards.

The requirement that a recipient of public assistance grants applying for an at-cost identicard receive written referral from either the DSHS or the DCYF is removed, and the DOL is given authority to determine the documentation requirements for individuals receiving continuing public assistance grants who are eligible for an at-cost identicard. Participation in the WIC Program is added to the definition of individuals receiving continuing public assistance grants eligible for an at-cost identicard.

The DOL is directed to study on the feasibility of offering reduced-fee identicards. The issues for examination in the study include:

- assessing the current cost of identicards, and its impact on families and customers with limited resources;
- reviewing other states and how they handle pricing of their identity credentials;
- evaluating eligibility criteria for at-cost identicards;
- recommending improvements to accessing identicards for the public; and
- identifying cost and revenue impacts associated with any changes or expansion in a reduced-fee identicard program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains multiple effective dates. Please see the bill.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The DOL requested this bill. A state identification document is an important tool for participating in society and for accessing services and supports. The bill addresses

barriers for identification for young people. Currently, only parents, guardians, or employers can sign a driver's license application for a person under 18 years of age. Youth living with other members of family, in foster care, or in other circumstances face barriers, and we need to support them. Other states allow responsible adults to sign forms for youth. People who are licensed before 18 years of age are required to take driver's education and are less likely to get into serious accidents. Social workers are not guardians, but they are responsible adults who have relationships with youth and support youth in the transition to adulthood. Youth access to a license can reduce work for social service workers. The bill streamlines access to at-cost identicards. Members of the public frequently ask for a reduced cost identicard option, and this bill will study the issue.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Claire Wilson, prime sponsor; Beau Perschbacher, Department of Licensing; and Jarel Sanders, Department of Children, Youth, and Families.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.