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Steve Yonkers  
Director, Identity and Credentialing/REAL ID Program  
United States Department of Homeland Security  
Office of Policy, Strategy, and Plans  
Washington, DC 20528

**RE: Automated Solutions for the Submission of REAL ID Source Documents [Docket No. DHS-2019-0056]**

The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on effective solutions for state implementation plans in accordance with REAL ID program intent. AAMVA believes there are solutions that satisfy program requirements that may be unnecessarily restricting state effectiveness in administering the program.

AAMVA urges the Department to take advantage of the consolidated efforts of all invested stakeholders to modify current interpretation of program requirements. When the Act was considered and passed in 2005, many of the program requirements promulgated as a result of the Act did not take into consideration the many ways the same security intentions behind the Act could be preserved and accomplished in a less administratively burdensome way.

AAMVA submits the following recommendations for improving state ability to comply with the program:

- AAMVA recommends a review and modification of the terms, “document,” “documentation,” and “documentary evidence” as required by the REAL ID Act. When the Act was passed in 2005, document implied physical paper. In the intervening years, “document” has evolved to include electronically stored information, such as in the recent change by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) rulemaking allowing electronic odometer disclosures.
- DHS should immediately update its list of acceptable Real ID identity verification documents to allow Real ID applicants to present, and DMVs accept for identity purposes, the same documents TSA allows as sufficient for satisfying airport

security protocol (e.g. military ID and TWIC as examples). Providing consumers with additional options to satisfy the identification requirements of the Act will reduce repeat, single applicant visits to state offices, reduce constituent time and cost in procuring more difficult to obtain source documents, and ensure states can focus on getting credentials in the hands of those applicants.

In addition, DHS has the discretionary authority to add approved documentation acceptable for identity, proof of SSN, and residency through publication in the Federal Register. Military ID cards with name and DOB, DD214, medical records, and birth registration notices that match current information on names and DOB (meaning the information has not changed or amended in the intervening years) would be very useful to customers attempting to come into compliance with REAL ID. Adding to the list to establish proof of SSN documentation, it would be beneficial to include Medicare/Medicaid card or documentation with SSN, DD214 with SSN, and social security benefits summary.

- It would be helpful to allow states the flexibility to accept one residency document in some instances, such as for a customer with a registered vehicle at an address on file or for a customer's address where a product is mailed. Maryland has pointed to the example that nearly 1.7 million customers who much provide REAL ID documents have registered a vehicle with an address that is utilized for mailing vehicle registration information.
- When a Real ID holder applies for a license/ID in a new state of record, allow the DMV to accept the transfer of Real ID status to avoid DMVs having to re-verify/scan all source documents. This potentially saves the states cost associated with processing time, data storage and retention costs, and staffing cost via reduction in transaction wait times.
- Setup an exception process for older applicants, whereby certain program requirements are not applicable to individuals of a certain age; or the requirements are less burdensome for those of a certain age that have difficulty in satisfying documentation requirements because those documents originated in a time where of less uniformity and security in the provision of identity documentation.
- Allow DMVs to electronically verify application data elements without the need for physical presentation of the documents to satisfy program requirements (see Section 3 below). This includes verification of:
  - A Social Security Number (SSN) without the card being present
  - Date of Birth directly with a vital records agency without presentation of the physical birth certificate
  - Passport data without the document being present

Individual states have expended significant resources building system capabilities to verify source documentation data. The process of source verification provides a greater level of reliability than simply reviewing physical documentation because it requires a direct interaction and confirmation with the issuing agency.

The ability to use these technology tools to accomplish unattended identity vetting should be *discretionary* should DHS consider it. Providing agencies this option would provide a new service avenue that would expand agencies' capacity to credential more people who are seeking a REAL ID in the near term.

- Permit existing DL/ID holders to perform a secure online verification of their US Permanent Resident Card via the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) to obtain a REAL ID compliant card. Remove the “valid, unexpired” regulatory requirement associated with the Permanent Resident Card.
  - The State of VA has provided a description of this proposed solution in the docket. The proposal carries the potential to avoid any data errors, streamline in-state applicant processing, and save significant time and resources at the state staffing level.
  - The State of Maryland has provided another example in this docket, citing that customers who have lawful, permanent residency, but whose card itself may be expired, the process to reapply and procure a new card can be a lengthy one. Removal of the “valid, unexpired” regulatory requirement would help save these customers multiple trips to get temporary licenses while waiting for additional paperwork.
  - This is an efficiency solution that should be provided as a discretionary option to issuing agencies.
  - This proposal would require adding a field for US permanent resident card expiration dates to the SAVE verification transaction.
- Pause the re-certification process until after the October 2020 deadline. When recertification is resumed, identify mutually agreed upon standards of assessment to avoid DHS' past practice of overturning past written guidance which costs states millions in additional expense, delays in REAL ID processing and customer frustration.
- Eliminate the requirement to reverify the SSN of customers renewing a REAL ID/ID credential. The requirement is redundant and is an unnecessary cost.
- Eliminate the need for agencies to image proof documents if they have been previously imaged by another jurisdiction. As with the previous recommendation, this requirement represents an unnecessary redundancy. Instead of source documents residing in every jurisdiction the applicant has been credentialed, it would only require the images be retained in a single jurisdiction, reducing the potential for data exposure.

- Consideration of mobile driver's licenses (mDL) and/or electronic identity credentials. These considerations carry the potential for real time credential verification, customer convenience and security.

AAMVA expands upon these general concepts by providing the following additional detail specific to modernizing REAL ID processing:

- 1) REAL ID requires an identity vetting process that is near identical to a number of federal identity documents that are deemed acceptable for federal purposes, including boarding commercial aircraft. These documents include passports, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) trusted traveler cards (global Entry, NEXUS, SENTRI, FAST), a Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC), and a Military ID. As such, states should be authorized to issue a REAL ID to individuals who hold both a valid driver's license and one of these federal documents, without having to reprocess the same breeder documents or applicants.
- 2) To reduce redundancies where secure vetting has already occurred, states would welcome the option to recognize another state's REAL ID determination by providing REAL ID reciprocity on license transfers; meaning when an individual moves to another state, the new state could perform an even exchange for a REAL ID without having to repeat the entire documentation/verification process. This is accomplished when both states are REAL ID compliant and fully participating in the State-to-State Verification Service, which will allow for both the verification of the REAL ID as well as the transfer of the applicant's record.
- 3) The increased availability and reliability of online verification processes has made the physical presentation of original documents unnecessary. As these systems verify the applicant's data and are not vulnerable to the challenges of physical document counterfeiting, states seek the ability to use appropriate verification systems in the licensing application in lieu of an applicant having to physically present documentation. Specifically, the use of:
  - a. SSOLV to satisfy the verification requirements in lieu of presenting a SSA card.
  - b. Verification of birth records through the National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS) in lieu of presenting an original or certified copy of a birth certificate.
  - c. USPVS to satisfy the verification requirements for a passport in lieu of presenting a passport.
- 4) Since current holders of a Commercial Driver License with a HAZMAT endorsement have already gone through identity vetting that is equal to or greater than REAL ID requirements, states should be permitted to upgrade holders of valid Commercial Driver's Licenses with a HAZMAT endorsement to a REAL ID without having to duplicate the verification process.

- 5) The prescribed REAL ID process for proving a name change presents challenges for individual who were born with a different name and have lived the vast majority of their life with a legally changed name. States should have flexibility for proof of legal name so that if the state can determine there is a connection, no additional documents are needed.

Other Considerations:

- AAMVA recommends DHS intensify its public outreach, much like it has done to promote TSA Pre-Check, and also consider ways to avoid creating new delays and costs for DMVs in Real ID processing. Education of the public remains one of the biggest obstacles to realizing the REAL ID program's goals. Applicants that are in DMV branch offices are often well aware for the purpose of their visit. Given DHS's specific oversight of the Real ID program and airport security, and given this program's potential to disrupt air travel, DHS's specific focus on a concerted effort to educate travelers is of paramount importance.
- AAMVA reminds DHS of the privacy concerns associated with programs such as REAL ID and recommends DHS continue to reinforce that the program in no way represents a national credentialing program, and that the program does not constitute a federal identity database. AAMVA further recommends that DHS ensure program integrity by communicating that federal access to state databases is strictly controlled and limited to official business as it relates to specific individuals.

The above recommendations for improving the administration of the REAL ID program are based on 15 years of expertise in satisfying program requirements. They represent the combined consensus of an association that is dedicated to serving the public's best interest. AAMVA remains committed to securing our constituents personal information, protecting their travel interests, and facilitating accessibility for all transactions that require a proof of identity document. With this commitment in mind, and given the potential for the REAL ID program to significantly impact every traveler, AAMVA thanks DHS for its continued consideration and its shared commitment to serving the public.

Cian Cashin  
AAMVA Director of Government Affairs  
[ccashin@aamva.org](mailto:ccashin@aamva.org)