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**HOUSE BILL 1953**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2024 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Entenman, Jacobsen, Leavitt, Reed, Ormsby, Callan, and Reeves; by request of Department of Licensing

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; amending RCW 46.20.075, 46.20.100, and 46.20.117; creating a new section; providing an effective date; and providing an expiration date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 46.20.075 and 2023 c 445 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) An intermediate license authorizes the holder to drive a motor vehicle under the conditions specified in this section. An applicant for an intermediate license must be at least 16 years of age and:

(a) Have possessed a valid instruction permit for a period of not less than six months;

(b) Have passed a driver licensing examination administered by the department;

(c) Have passed a course of driver's education in accordance with the standards established in RCW 46.20.100;

(d) Present certification by his or her parent, guardian, ((~~or~~)) employer, or responsible adult as defined by rule to the department stating (i) that the applicant has had at least 50 hours of driving experience, 10 of which were at night, during which the driver was supervised by a person at least 21 years of age who has had a valid driver's license for at least three years, and (ii) that the applicant has not been issued a notice of traffic infraction or cited for a traffic violation that is pending at the time of the application for the intermediate license;

(e) Not have been convicted of or found to have committed a traffic violation within the last six months before the application for the intermediate license; and

(f) Not have been adjudicated for an offense involving the use of alcohol or drugs during the period the applicant held an instruction permit.

(2) For the first six months after the issuance of an intermediate license or until the holder reaches 18 years of age, whichever occurs first, the holder of the license may not operate a motor vehicle that is carrying any passengers under the age of 20 who are not members of the holder's immediate family. For the remaining period of the intermediate license, the holder may not operate a motor vehicle that is carrying more than three passengers who are under the age of 20 who are not members of the holder's immediate family.

(3) The holder of an intermediate license may not operate a motor vehicle between the hours of 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. except (a) when the holder is accompanied by a licensed driver who is at least 25 years of age, or (b) for school, religious, or employment activities for the holder or a member of the holder's immediate family as defined in this section.

(4) The holder of an intermediate license may not operate a moving motor vehicle while using a wireless communications device unless the holder is using the device to report illegal activity, summon medical or other emergency help, or prevent injury to a person or property.

(5) It is a traffic infraction for the holder of an intermediate license to operate a motor vehicle in violation of the restrictions imposed under this section.

(6) Except for a violation of subsection (4) of this section, enforcement of this section by law enforcement officers may be accomplished only as a secondary action when a driver of a motor vehicle has been detained for a suspected violation of this title or an equivalent local ordinance or some other offense.

(7) An intermediate licensee may drive at any hour without restrictions on the number of passengers in the vehicle if necessary for agricultural purposes.

(8) An intermediate licensee may drive at any hour without restrictions on the number of passengers in the vehicle if, for the 12-month period following the issuance of the intermediate license, he or she:

(a) Has not been involved in an accident involving only one motor vehicle;

(b) Has not been involved in an accident where he or she was cited in connection with the accident or was found to have caused the accident;

(c) Has not been involved in an accident where no one was cited or was found to have caused the accident; and

(d) Has not been convicted of or found to have committed a traffic offense described in chapter 46.61 RCW or violated restrictions placed on an intermediate licensee under this section.

(9) For the purposes of this section, "immediate family" means an individual's spouse or domestic partner, child, stepchild, grandchild, parent, stepparent, grandparent, brother, half-brother, sister, or half-sister of the individual, including foster children living in the household, and the spouse or the domestic partner of any such person, and a child, stepchild, grandchild, parent, stepparent, grandparent, brother, half-brother, sister, or half-sister of the individual's spouse or domestic partner, and the spouse or the domestic partner of any such person.

**Sec.**  RCW 46.20.100 and 2017 c 197 s 7 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) **Application**. The application of a person under the age of ((~~eighteen~~)) 18 years for a driver's license or a motorcycle endorsement must be signed by a parent ((~~or~~)), guardian ((~~with custody of the minor. If the person under the age of eighteen has no father, mother, or guardian, then the application must be signed by the minor's~~)), employer, or responsible adult as defined by rule.

(2) **Traffic safety education requirement**. For a person under the age of ((~~eighteen~~)) 18 years to obtain a driver's license, he or she must meet the traffic safety education requirements of this subsection.

(a) To meet the traffic safety education requirement for a driver's license, the applicant must satisfactorily complete a driver training education course as defined in RCW 28A.220.020 for a course offered by a school district or approved private school, or as defined by the department of licensing for a course offered by a driver training school licensed under chapter 46.82 RCW. The course offered by a school district or an approved private school must be part of a traffic safety education program authorized by the office of the superintendent of public instruction and certified under chapter 28A.220 RCW. The course offered by a driver training school must meet the standards established by the department of licensing under chapter 46.82 RCW. The driver training education course may be provided by:

(i) A secondary school within a school district or approved private school that establishes and maintains an approved and certified traffic safety education program under chapter 28A.220 RCW; or

(ii) A driver training school licensed under chapter 46.82 RCW that is annually approved by the department of licensing.

(b) To meet the traffic safety education requirement for a motorcycle endorsement, the applicant must successfully complete a motorcycle safety education course that meets the standards established by the department of licensing.

(c) The department may waive the driver training education course requirement for a driver's license if the applicant demonstrates to the department's satisfaction that:

(i) He or she was unable to take or complete a driver training education course;

(ii) A need exists for the applicant to operate a motor vehicle; and

(iii) He or she has the ability to operate a motor vehicle in such a manner as not to jeopardize the safety of persons or property.

The department may adopt rules to implement this subsection (2)(c) in concert with the supervisor of the traffic safety education section of the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

(d) The department may waive the driver training education course requirement if the applicant was licensed to drive a motor vehicle or motorcycle outside this state and provides proof that he or she has had education equivalent to that required under this subsection.

**Sec.**  RCW 46.20.117 and 2021 c 158 s 5 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) **Issuance**. The department shall issue an identicard, containing a picture, if the applicant:

(a) Does not hold a valid Washington driver's license;

(b) Proves the applicant's identity as required by RCW 46.20.035; and

(c) Pays the required fee. Except as provided in subsection (7) of this section, the fee is ((~~seventy-two dollars~~)) $72, unless an applicant is:

(i) A recipient of continuing public assistance grants under Title 74 RCW, ((~~who is referred in writing by the secretary of social and health services or by the secretary of children, youth, and families~~)) or a participant in the Washington women, infants, and children program. Any applicant under this subsection must be verified by documentation sufficient to demonstrate eligibility;

(ii) Under the age of ((~~twenty-five~~)) 25 and does not have a permanent residence address as determined by the department by rule; or

(iii) An individual who is scheduled to be released from an institution as defined in RCW 13.40.020, a community facility as defined in RCW 72.05.020, or other juvenile rehabilitation facility operated by the department of social and health services or the department of children, youth, and families; or an individual who has been released from such an institution or facility within ((~~thirty~~)) 30 calendar days before the date of the application.

For those persons under (c)(i) through (iii) of this subsection, the fee must be the actual cost of production of the identicard.

(2)(a) **Design and term**. The identicard must:

(i) Be distinctly designed so that it will not be confused with the official driver's license; and

(ii) Except as provided in subsection (7) of this section, expire on the eighth anniversary of the applicant's birthdate after issuance.

(b) The identicard may include the person's status as a veteran, consistent with RCW 46.20.161(4).

(c) If applicable, the identicard may include a medical alert
designation as provided in subsection (5) of this section.

(3) **Renewal**. An application for identicard renewal may be submitted by means of:

(a) Personal appearance before the department;

(b) Mail or electronic commerce, if permitted by rule of the department and if the applicant did not renew the identicard by mail or by electronic commerce when it last expired; or

(c) From January 1, 2022, to June 30, 2024, electronic commerce, if permitted by rule of the department.

An identicard may not be renewed by mail or by electronic commerce unless the renewal issued by the department includes a photograph of the identicard holder.

(4) **Cancellation**. The department may cancel an identicard if the holder of the identicard used the card or allowed others to use the card in violation of RCW 46.20.0921.

(5) Any person may apply to the department to obtain a medical alert designation, a developmental disability designation, or a deafness designation on an identicard issued under this chapter by providing:

(a) Self-attestation that the individual:

(i) Has a medical condition that could affect communication or account for a health emergency;

(ii) Is deaf or hard of hearing; or

(iii) Has a developmental disability as defined in RCW 71A.10.020;

(b) A statement from the person that they have voluntarily provided the self-attestation and other information verifying the condition; and

(c) For persons under ((~~eighteen~~)) 18 years of age or who have a developmental disability, the signature of a parent or legal guardian.

(6) A self-attestation or data contained in a self-attestation provided under this section:

(a) Shall not be disclosed; and

(b) Is for the confidential use of the director, the chief of the Washington state patrol, and law enforcement and emergency medical service providers as designated by law.

(7) **Alternative issuance/renewal/extension**. The department may issue or renew an identicard for a period other than eight years, or may extend by mail or electronic commerce an identicard that has already been issued. The fee for an identicard issued or renewed for a period other than eight years, or that has been extended by mail or electronic commerce, is ((~~nine dollars~~)) $9 for each year that the identicard is issued, renewed, or extended. The department must offer the option to issue or renew an identicard for six years in addition to the eight year issuance. The department may adopt any rules as are necessary to carry out this subsection.

(8) Identicard photos must be updated in the same manner as driver's license photos under RCW 46.20.120(5).

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The department of licensing must conduct a study on the feasibility of offering a reduced-fee identicard. In completing this study, the department shall:

(a) Examine the current cost of identicards and its impact on families and customers with limited resources;

(b) Conduct a review of additional states and how they handle pricing of their identity credentials;

(c) Review parameters of eligibility for identicards issued under RCW 46.20.117(1)(c);

(d) Recommend improvements to accessing identicards for the public;

(e) Identify any changes in revenue associated with expanded eligibility for reduced-fee identicards; and

(f) Identify any costs associated with administering and promoting a reduced-fee identicard program.

(2) A report of the study findings and any recommendations are due to the governor and the transportation committees of the legislature by December 1, 2025.

(3) This section expires December 1, 2025.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 1 through 3 of this act take effect January 1, 2025.

**--- END ---**