

Central Issuance

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What has changed? What can I expect?**

The Office of the Illinois Secretary of State (SOS) is introducing a new, highly secure driver's license and ID card (DL/ID) and is changing the overall issuance process to better serve you. The SOS has upgraded the DL/IDs to ensure they are more secure, and meet many industry and government standards.

- The SOS has moved from over-the-counter issuance to central issuance by using a centralized manufacturing facility to produce the DL/IDs. This new process allows the SOS to comply with many U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Real ID requirements. In addition, the changes increase the security of the card by adding new features to deter counterfeits and to help protect you from identity theft.
- Instead of leaving the driver services facility with your final DL/ID in hand, SOS staff will provide you with a temporary secure paper DL/ID to be used until your new card arrives in the mail. If you are renewing your DL/ID, the SOS will return your old DL/ID back to you after punching a hole in it. Facility wait times will decrease as the temporary DL/IDs print immediately, whereas the former permanent DL/IDs took a few minutes to print.

- **What is central issuance and how is it different from the way the DL/IDs have been produced in the past?**

DL/IDs are produced two ways: over-the-counter issuance (or in your local driver services facility) and central issuance. In both cases, you apply for a DL/ID in exactly the same way. With over-the-counter issuance, you must take a seat and wait while your DL/ID is processed and printed in the facility. You then leave with your permanent DL/ID in hand. With central issuance, you receive a temporary secure paper DL/ID immediately and your permanent DL/ID will arrive in the mail in approximately 15 business days.

- **What is REAL ID?**

The REAL ID Act is a federal mandate by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that sets standards for state-issued driver's licenses and identification cards and prohibits federal agencies from accepting for official purposes driver's licenses and identification cards from states that do not meet these standards. DHS has acknowledged that the changes Illinois is making to the issuance process and card design produces a more secure driver's license and identification card.

- **Why is Illinois making these changes?**

Several REAL ID requirements mandated by the DHS — including improved physical DL/ID security features, fraud prevention measures and manufacturing facility security requirements — are met by moving to central issuance. The transition to central issuance brings Illinois up to 84 percent compliant with REAL ID. In order to achieve full compliance, the Illinois General Assembly must pass a law authorizing implementation of REAL ID and must provide the necessary funding.

In addition, Illinois is joining other states that have also moved to a similar secure DL/ID to meet industry and government standards. Central issuance allows better fraud/ID theft prevention by allowing the Secretary of State's office to investigate possible fraud before applicants receive their DL/ID — preventing its issuance and mailing.

Over-the-counter printing technology can no longer produce the highly advanced type of anti-counterfeiting security features required to help prevent/deter fraud.

- **When will it start?**

The office will begin centrally issuing Temporary Visitor Driver's Licenses and Safe Driver Renewals with the new design in the middle of May. Then, the SOS will begin transitioning its Driver Services facilities to central issuance. All driver services facilities will be utilizing central issuance by the end of July 2016.

- **How many DL/IDs will the SOS issue in the first year?**

The office anticipates centrally issuing over four million DL/IDs over the next 12 months.

- **Is central issuance the process for every type of card I receive?**

Yes, except for Non-CDL Instruction Permits, which are printed in the Driver Services facility on the same secure paper as the temporary DL/IDs.

- **If I only have a temporary secure paper driver's license, what happens if I get pulled over and the police officer asks for my DL?**

If you are pulled over, present your temporary secure paper driver's license to the police officer. The Secretary of State's office has informed all Illinois law enforcement agencies of the new design and issuance process. In addition, law enforcement can verify if you have a valid license through various official electronic systems. More than half of U.S. states — 39 in fact — have transitioned to central issuance so law enforcement officers nationwide have grown accustomed to the temporary secure paper DL/IDs.

- **Will bars/restaurants, banks, retail stores, etc., accept the temporary document as a proof of identification?**

The SOS has conducted an educational campaign for law enforcement, businesses, agencies and other groups who regularly review customer's driver's license and identification cards. These groups have been informed of the changes and the purpose of the temporary secure paper DL/IDs. It is, however, up to the management of each

establishment to determine whether or not they will accept a temporary DL/ID as a valid identity document. According to experts in the industry, in other states that have implemented central issuance, businesses became comfortable with the temporary secure paper DL/IDs and readily accept them after a short transition period.

- **Can I board a plane with my temporary secure paper DL/ID?**

According to the DHS, you must present your temporary secure paper DL/ID in conjunction with your old DL/ID to board an airplane. Federal Transportation Security Administration (TSA) agents are aware many states have moved to centralized production of their DL/IDs. If you are concerned your temporary license might be rejected, you should carry another form of identification — such as a U.S. passport — with you when traveling.

- **How long does it take to get the new DL/ID in the mail?**

Individuals should allow up to 15 business days. The temporary secure paper document is valid for up to 90 days. If you have waited more than 15 business days and your card still has not arrived, check the status by visiting www.cyberdriveillinois.com or calling 217-782-7044.

- **Are other states doing this?**

Yes, 39 states have moved to centralized production of DL/IDs. First, the move to central issuance is necessary for any state to meet the federally mandated REAL ID Act required by the Department of Homeland Security. Second, this method has enabled these states to increase the security of their cards as well as the overall issuance process.

- **If I'm renewing my DL/ID, what happens to my old card?**

At the end of your facility visit, you will receive your temporary secure paper DL/ID and your old DL/ID card will be returned to you with a hole punched in it.

- **Where is the factory located?**

The factory is located in Illinois.

- **What is different about the new DL/ID design?**

The SOS has selected a card design that is highly sophisticated and contains security features that are among the most advanced in the country. Your new DL/ID contains multiple visible and invisible security features that are linked and layered, making it very difficult to alter or counterfeit.

- **How does centralized production of my DL/ID increase security?**

In a central issuance system your DL/ID is produced in a highly secure facility, similar to how credit cards are produced. This level of security simply cannot be matched by over-the-counter issuance at a driver services facility, where card manufacturing materials

might be accessible by many individuals. Additionally, this type of production allows the office to use some of the most advanced security features that are unavailable in over-the-counter issuance computer printing equipment.

- **How does central issuance protect me against identity theft and fraud?**

After you apply for a DL/ID, the SOS has the time needed to verify your identity before your permanent DL/ID is mailed to you. The office checks to ensure that applicants have not already received one or more DL/IDs under different names. In addition, the office works to ensure applicants are not using a fake or stolen Social Security number, immigration card or birth certificate. If fraud or identity theft is suspected, the SOS is able to suspend production of the DL/ID for further investigation and prevent the card from being delivered. With the old over-the-counter issuance system, by the time the office discovers potential fraud, it is too late; the person committing fraud has already left the Driver Services facility with a permanent, valid DL/ID card in hand.

- **How long am I going to have to wait at the Driver Services facility for all additional security checks to be completed?**

Your wait time will actually be *less* with a centralized production method. With central issuance you don't have to wait for the permanent license to be produced. You leave the office with a temporary secure paper DL/ID — which takes only a few seconds to print. Many additional security checks are done *after* you leave the office.

- **Even if it comes from a secure, centralized factory, is sending a driver's license by mail safe?**

Yes. The mailing process used to send DL/IDs is similar to that used by the financial services industry to deliver credit and debit cards. In addition, federal agencies use the mail to send Social Security cards and U.S. passports. There is no indication on the outside of the envelope that it contains a DL/ID. If a card can't be delivered, it will not be forwarded, but instead returned to the SOS. Also, mailing the DL/ID helps the office to ensure that applicants provided a legitimate address. Since 2011, through the Safe Driver Renewal program, the SOS has centrally issued more than 1.9 million DLs via U.S. mail. In addition, the office also mails important business documents and vehicle titles to businesses and individuals. Mail theft and mail fraud is a federal crime.

- **Will the transition to central issuance increase the DL/ID fees?**

No. The fees will remain at \$30 for a DL and \$20 for an ID.