

Date of Hearing: April 17, 2023

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
Laura Friedman, Chair  
AB 1738 (Wendy Carrillo) – As Amended April 5, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Mobile Homeless Connect Pilot Program

**SUMMARY:** Requires the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to establish a pilot program in the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, and Sacramento and the City and County of San Francisco to assist persons experiencing homelessness with obtaining an identification card (ID). Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires the guidelines for the development of the pilot program to be done in collaboration with the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency (BCSH).
- 2) Requires DMV to provide direct outreach in collaboration with local homeless service providers that contract with the local continuum of care.
- 3) Requires DMV to identify and prioritize locations identified by the local continuum of care.
- 4) Requires DMV, starting January 1, 2026, to submit an annual report to the Legislature that includes information on the number of persons experiencing homelessness engaged, the number of ID cards issued, and any other metrics determined by DMV and BCSH.
- 5) Defines a homeless services provider to include a governmental or nonprofit agency receiving federal, state, or county or municipal funding to provide services to persons experiencing homelessness or that is otherwise sanctioned to provide those services by a local homeless continuum of care organization, or a human services provider or public social services provider funded by the state to provide homeless children or youth services, health services, mental or behavioral health services, substance use, disorder services, or public assistance or employment services.
- 6) Repeals the provisions of this bill on January 1, 2029.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Authorizes the DMV to issue an ID card to any person who provides their true full name, correct age, and any other identifying data as required by DMV. (Vehicle Code Section (VEH) 13000)
- 2) Establishes a \$26 fee to be paid to DMV for the issuance of an ID card, adjusted annually for inflation. (VEH 14902)
- 3) Establishes a \$6 fee, adjusted annually for inflation, for ID cards issued to individuals that qualify for public benefits. (VEH 14902)
- 4) Establishes an \$8 fee, adjusted annually for inflation, for ID cards issued to individuals in a correctional facility. (VEH 14902)

- 5) Authorizes DMV to adjust certain fees annually by the California Consumer Price Index, rounded to the nearest dollar. (VEH 1678)
- 6) Waives the ID fee for unhoused persons. (VEH 14902)
- 7) Specifies that the issuance of an original or replacement ID card for a senior citizen shall be issued free of charge. (VEH 14902)

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown

**COMMENTS:** DMV has held multiple mobile popup events to help unhoused persons and others get ID cards. For example, a three day event from Governor Newsom’s Mobile Homeless Connect program in August of 2022 resulted in 84 applications for ID cards for unhoused persons. DMV has participated in a variety of outreach events statewide, including events with ACT Mental Health Systems, Delancy Street Outreach, Fresno County Sheriff’s Department, Project Homeless Connect, and Project Room Key amongst others.

In 2019 DMV, issued 137,888 ID cars for unhoused persons. In 2020, it issued 75,314 IDs, and in 2021, it issued 100,721. While unhoused persons can get ID cards for free, they cannot get the same fee waivers for driver’s licenses.

According to the author, “Persons experiencing homelessness must have a state-issued identification card, among other documents, in order to access a range of key services, including permanent supportive housing, affordable housing, and rental subsidy programs. AB 1738 would build on a one-time pilot program brought forward by the Governor’s office, the Mobile Homeless Connect program. This bill would expand the program to a year-round, full-time effort, partnering mobile Department of Motor Vehicles teams with Continuums of Care (CoCs) across the Counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, Sacramento, and the City and County of San Francisco.

Homelessness is solvable with sustained investments in proven solutions and accountability. The Mobile Homeless Connect Pilot Program will speed up the process of rehousing individuals experiencing homelessness by processing document and identification requests at interim housing sites and targeted encampments.”

In recent years, the California Legislature has made numerous attempts to reduce barriers for homeless and incarcerated individuals to get an ID card. AB 1733 (Quirk Silva) Chapter 764, Statutes of 2014 created a process for DMV to waive the fee for an ID card for homeless individuals. The rationale given at the time for the fee waiver was because “many people experiencing homelessness lack the necessary forms of personal identification needed to establish their eligibility for various public assistance and social programs. The most common forms of ID that people need in order to access these programs are birth records and a valid, government-issued photo ID.” The Legislature also passed SB 629 (Roth) Chapter 645, Statutes of 2021, which streamlined the process for individuals that are incarcerated to get an ID card while in custody of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Lack of access to an ID can impact on an individual’s ability to access other services. In particular, ID cards are often required for housing applications, access to health benefits, and opening bank accounts. ID cards are required for individuals to access the public benefits that would qualify them for the reduced ID fee this bill provides for.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, lack of access to an ID created a particularly treacherous reality. Many health care providers require patients to provide qualifying identification, namely a government-issued ID, in order to receive a vaccine. Without an ID card, people are less likely to be able to be vaccinated and therefore more susceptible to infection, creating health consequences for themselves and the public at large.

*Committee concerns:* DMV currently conducts a variety of outreach events, upon request, to provide IDs for unhoused individuals.

The Motor Vehicle Account (MVA), the primary funding source for DMV, remains structurally imbalanced. Although the MVA is projected to have a positive fund balance through the next three fiscal years, in 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26, expenditures are anticipated to outpace revenues, reducing the fund balance from \$515 million in 2021-22 to \$10 million in 2025-26. The structural imbalance remains even though all future DMV and California Highway Patrol capital outlay costs are being shifted away from the MVA to the General Fund in an attempt to keep the fund solvent. By 2026-2027, the MVA is projected to run a \$314 million deficit.

This pilot program only becomes operative upon an appropriation of funding by the Legislature. As this bill moves forward, the Legislature may want to consider if DMV can sustain new programs that are duplicative of actions they are already taking in light of the impending insolvency of the MVA.

Double Referral: Should this bill pass this committee it will be referred to the Housing and Community Development Committee.

*Related Legislation:*

AB 464 (Schiavo) would, amongst other things, waive the driver's license fees for persons who are verified to be homeless persons. That bill passed out of Assembly Health Committee and is pending before this Committee.

AB 962 (Fong) exempts the fee for an identification card (ID) for low income applicants issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) from being adjusted for inflation. That bill passed out of this committee and is pending before Assembly Appropriations Committee.

*Previous Legislation:*

AB 1733 (Quirk Silva) Chapter 764, Statutes of 2014, created a process for DMV to waive the fee for an ID for homeless individuals.

SB 1098 (Budget) Chapter 212, Statutes of 2004 established a \$6 ID fee for low income individuals.

AB 2510 (Wilson of 2022) would have provided for free driver's license cards for unhoused persons. That bill was vetoed by the Governor.

AB 771 (Bennett of 2021) was substantially similar AB 2510. That bill was held on suspense in Assembly Appropriations Committee.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

City of Long Beach  
City of Sacramento, Mayor Darrell Steinberg  
Corporation for Supportive Housing  
Downtown Women's Center  
LA Family Housing  
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority  
Mayor of City & County of San Francisco, London Breed  
National Alliance to End Homelessness  
Safe Place for Youth  
Office of Los Angeles Mayor, Karen Bass  
The People Concern

**Opposition**

None on file

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