

Marie Illinois Legislative News

Illinois to make standard driver's licenses available to noncitizens regardless of immigration status

Temporary visitor's licenses will be replaced with document that can be used as ID

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Immigrants in Illinois with or without permission from U.S. immigration authorities will soon be able to obtain standard driver's licenses that can be used for identification.

Gov. JB Pritzker signed House Bill 3882 at the end of June, phasing out the "Temporary Visitor Driver's License," or TVDL, which noncitizens currently use to drive legally in Illinois. The new law takes effect July 1, 2024.

"This legislation is a significant step in eliminating the barriers to opportunity that many undocumented immigrants face," Pritzker said in a statement. "We're ensuring every eligible individual can obtain a driver's license, making our roads safer, decreasing stigma, and creating more equitable systems for all."

TVDLs look similar to a standard

driver's licenses, except they have a purple strip across the top that reads "TVDL" above the words "NOT VALID FOR IDENTIFICATION." Under the new law, those people will qualify for standard licenses that carry the words "Federal Limits Apply" at the top, but which do not qualify as REAL ID for travel purposes.

Immigrant rights advocates say the purple bar on the TVDL stigmatizes the people holding them, creates barriers to other kinds of services that require identification such as picking up medication from a pharmacy or signing an apartment lease, and exposes them to law enforcement action.

"They know and the officer knows that this form of ID essentially serves as an admission of being undocumented or having a temporary visa," Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias said during a June 21 news conference. "TVDLs have become the 'Scarlet Letter' of someone's immigration status and sadly exposes them to discrimination or immigration enforcement."

In 2013, Illinois became one of the first states in the nation to offer TVDLs to residents without legal residency status. Proponents argued they would help ensure that all drivers on state roads, regardless of immigration status, had passed a road test and carry liability insurance. Currently, more than 300,000 individuals carry Illinois TVDLs, according to the secretary of state's office.

The process for an individual who does not have a social security number to receive a standard license would be the same as it was for receiving a TVDL. The applicant must have lived in Illinois for more than a year and must provide U.S. immigration documentation, or if they don't have that, a passport or a consular card that is within two years of its expiration date.

Giannoulias' office said that documentation will ensure that noncitizens are not added to the voter rolls as part of Illinois' automatic voter registration program.

The measure also prohibits the

secretary of state from sharing driver information with immigration officials unless the official has a courtissued warrant, order or subpoena.

Real IDs requirements, which are scheduled to go into effect in May 2025, include stricter documentation such as a birth certificate and Social Security number to prove U.S. citizenship. They will be required for air travel and access to military bases or other secure facilities.

HB 3882 was among more than 150 bills that Pritzker signed on June 30.

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IDOT unveils 6-year, \$41 billion plan for infrastructure projects

Largest multiyear plan in state history to affect all 102 counties

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The Illinois Department of Transportation unveiled a plan on July 7 for spending nearly \$41 billion in federal, state and local funds over the next six years to repair and upgrade roads, bridges, airports, rail lines and other infrastructure throughout the state.

The latest version of the plan, which IDOT updates annually, is the largest multiyear plan in state history. It's driven by the state's 2019 Rebuild Illinois capital infrastructure program. The initial sixyear Rebuild Illinois plan included \$33.2 billion for transportation, funded largely by annualized increases to the state's motor fuel tax and increases to driving-related licensing fees that took effect in 2020.

"Over the next six years, we're investing over \$40 billion to improve all modes of transportation across our great state," Gov. JB Pritzker said at a news conference in Springfield. "And that means better roads and bridges, modernized transit and aviation, and expanded and faster passenger rail service. It even extends to improved river ports, new sewers and water infrastructure and a huge upgrade to bicycle and pedestrian accommodations."

More than half of the plan, \$27 billion, will go toward road and bridge projects, including \$4.6 billion in the current fiscal year. That will fund repair and reconstruction of 2,866 miles of roadway and 9.8 million square feet of bridge deck on the state highway system, along with

another 738 miles of roadway and 1.1 million square feet of bridge deck in systems maintained by local governments.

The project list includes \$611.5 million for reconstruction and improvements to portions of Interstate 90 in Cook County that will include improving safety and access to O'Hare International Airport in Chicago. The plan also calls for spending \$135.1 million to expand portions of U.S. Highway 24 to four lanes in Peoria and Fulton counties; \$156 million to replace a bridge over the Mississippi River in Quincy; and \$116 million to replace a bridge over the Ohio River at Cairo.

The multiyear plan also earmarks \$13.96 billion for other modes of transportation, including \$9.85 billion for transit systems, \$2.67 billion for freight and passenger rail, \$1.25 billion for aviation projects, and \$190 million for ports and waterways.

Among the intermodal projects in the plan are \$100 million for safety and reliability improvements on Amtrak's Saluki service between Chicago and Carbondale and runway improvements at municipal airports in Litchfield and Pontiac.

Transportation Secretary Omer Osman said the \$41 billion six-year plan represents a 10 percent increase over the previous multiyear plan, and the money earmarked for the current fiscal year represents a 25 percent increase over the previous fiscal year.

"But that is due in large part to the engineering and planning effort in the early years of capital program (which) is starting to result in more construction activity on work on the street," he said.

Pritzker and other officials at the news conference emphasized that the Rebuild Illinois program is meant to do more than improve safety and efficiency in transportation. The program is also supporting thousands of high-paying jobs in construction, engineering and other fields.

This is more than just new rail. This is more than a runway at an airport," said Illinois AFL-CIO President Tim Drea. "This is about opportunities. We can see all those physical infrastructure improvements, but what we don't really see is the opportunities that this program creates for a diverse workforce with high wages, middle class wages, health care, and retirement security."

Through four years of the Rebuild Illinois program, IDOT has completed \$12.1 billion of improvements statewide, including 5,339 miles of highway, 533 bridges, and 762 other safety improvements.

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AFSCME ratifies new 4-year contract with the state Agreement provides 4% pay raise this year; nearly 18% over 4 years

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Gov. JB Pritzker and the state's largest public employee union announced Tuesday that they have agreed on a new contract that will provide a nearly 18 percent pay raise over four years, including a 4 percent raise this year.

The contract also expands parental leave to 12 weeks and calls for new joint efforts to improve workplace safety.

A spokesperson for the governor's office said in an email that the contract is projected to cost an additional \$204 million in the first year and \$625 million over four years.

Members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Council 31, which represents about 35,000 state employees, voted in local union meetings over the last two weeks to ratify the contract, which negotiators had tentatively agreed to on July 1.

The announcement came on the same day Pritzker, leaders of the

Democratic National Committee, and Chicago labor leaders announced they had reached a "labor peace agreement" covering the 2024 Democratic National Convention to ensure there will be no labor disruptions during that event.

"Illinois is a pro-worker state — and when it comes to workers' rights, my administration is committed to ensuring that every Illinoisan has access to goodpaying opportunities," Pritzker said in a joint statement with AFSCME Council 31 announcing the state contract. "This contract represents a partnership that won't just expand our pool of state employees — it will strengthen our state's workforce and provide opportunity for employees and their families."

AFSCME Council 31 Executive Director Roberta Lynch said the contract "helps to address the toll that inflation has taken on state employee incomes and keeps health care affordable.'

The joint statement said the agreement contains other provisions intended to streamline the filling of vacancies and to help recruit, hire and retain workers.

That includes new contract language "to reflect the state's transition to an

electronic hiring process," forming a joint labor-management committee that will meet to identify roadblocks to hiring, establishing a pilot program for recruitment bonuses for positions with high vacancy rates, and ensuring emplovees who are on parental leave can still bid on vacancies during their leave.

Negotiations over a new contract were taking place at the same time state lawmakers were negotiating a \$50.4 billion budget package for fiscal year 2024, which began July 1.

Democrats, who hold supermajorities in both chambers of the General Assembly, said during those negotiations there were enough resources in the budget to pay for the new contract.

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