

State of Vermont Enhanced License – Update

Enhanced Driver Licenses/ID Cards (EDL/ID)

What is the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative?

WHTI is a federal law that regulates which documents U.S. citizens can use when they travel in the Western Hemisphere. Beginning June 1, 2009, only WHTI approved documents can be used for return to the United States. You can read more about this initiative at the web site of the [U.S. Department of Homeland Security \(DHS\)](#).

When will the full rules of WHTI go into effect?

On June 1, 2009, the U.S. government will implement the full requirements of the land and sea phase of WHTI. The proposed rules require most U.S. citizens entering the United States at sea or land ports of entry to have a passport, passport card, or [WHTI-compliant document](#).

Why is Vermont issuing Enhanced Driver Licenses/ID Card (EDL/IDs)?

The federal government passed the [Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative \(WHTI\)](#), which requires a passport or other federally-approved identification or proof-of-citizenship document for all travel into the United States. To preserve travel, trade, and cultural ties with Canada and increase security at the border, we are offering EDL/ID Cards to Vermont residents who choose to participate. The EDL/ID meets federal requirements, and is an approved alternative to a passport for re-entry into the U.S. at land and sea borders between the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, and the Caribbean.

What is an EDL/ID?

An EDL/ID is an approved travel identification document for land and sea border crossings between the U.S. and Canada, Mexico, Bermuda and the Caribbean. An EDL is also a driver license.

Will I be required to get an EDL?

No, the Enhanced Driver License Program is completely voluntary.

When will the EDL/ID be available?

We will issue a small number in December of 2008 as part of a pilot project. The general public will be able to get an EDL/ID in the first quarter of 2009.

What are the advantages of an EDL/ID?

An EDL/ID allows Vermont residents to travel by land and sea between the U.S. and Canada, Mexico, Bermuda and the Caribbean without a U.S. passport. The documents also speed border crossing, cost less than a passport and fit in your wallet.

Will the EDL/ID replace a passport?

No, an EDL/ID does not replace a passport. An EDL/ID will speed land and sea border crossing between the U.S. and Canada, Mexico, Bermuda and the Caribbean, but an EDL/ID is not acceptable identification to travel by air to Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, the Caribbean or any other country.

Is an EDL/ID acceptable for domestic air travel within the U.S.?

Yes. For domestic air travel within the U.S. an EDL/ID card is acceptable as proof of identity to board a domestic flight. This is subject to change based on Federal laws and regulations.

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Can I get an EDL/ID if I have a green card or work visa?

No, only United States citizens who can provide proof of citizenship are eligible for an EDL/ID.

Do I need to pass the knowledge or driving tests to get an Enhanced Driver License?

If you want to get an EDL for your first Vermont driver license, you must pass both the knowledge test and the driving test. If you already have a valid Vermont driver license or a valid license from another state, you don't need to pass the knowledge or driving test unless you have a medical or physical condition that indicates testing is required.

Can I get an EDL/ID if I live outside of Vermont?

Possibly, you must be a resident of Vermont and show us proof of residency when you apply. If you are a Vermont resident but temporarily living outside of Vermont (military, college student, etc) then you may qualify. You will need evidence of residency as well as evidence of current status and address. The Vermont EDL must have a Vermont address; you may not list your temporary address on the EDL.

Can I apply for an EDL/ID online or by mail?

No, you must apply in person so you can be interviewed by our staff, provide documents to prove your citizenship, identity, and residence, and have your photograph taken.

Can I get an Enhanced Driver License if I have a license from another state but living in Vermont while on active military service?

No, you must be a resident of Vermont and be able to show us proof of residency when you apply.

Will children need an EDL/ID?

U.S. children under the age of 16 will be able to present an original or copy of their birth certificates, or other proof of citizenship such as a naturalization certificate or citizenship card. Groups of U.S. and Canadian children ages 16 through 18, when traveling with a school or religious group, social organization, or sports team, will be able to enter under adult supervision with originals or copies of their birth certificates or other proof of citizenship.

Can children get an EDL/ID?

Yes. Enhanced Non Driver ID cards, Enhanced Learner Permits and Enhanced Junior Operator Licenses will all be available.

Will Native Americans need an EDL/ID?

Native Americans will be able to continue presenting tribal documents until June 1, 2009, provided they are affixed with a photo. Customs and Border Protection is working closely with interested Native American tribes toward the development of an enhanced tribal card that complies with WHTI.

How long will it take to get my EDL/ID?

You should receive your EDL/ID within 10–14 days after your application is approved.

What is the protective sleeve?

The protective sleeve protects the Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tag from being read when the card isn't being used for border crossing.

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I didn't receive a protective sleeve for my EDL/ID. How do I get one?

You can get a protective sleeve at the Montpelier office.

My protective sleeve is worn, damaged, or lost. Can I get another one?

Yes. You can get another protective at the Montpelier office.

What security features does the EDL/ID have?

The EDL/ID is designed with enhancements that are industry best practices for security, including:

- An icon on the front of the card to indicate it is an EDL/ID.
- A machine readable zone on the back of the card that can be scanned at the border like a passport.
- A radio frequency identification (RFID) tag to speed identification checks at border crossings.
- A security sleeve to protect the RFID tag from being read when the card isn't being used for border crossing.

Does the EDL/ID card transmit my personal information?

No. The RFID tag embedded in your card does not contain any personal information, just a unique reference number. The RFID tag does not have a power source and cannot transmit data. An RFID reader at the border crossing station sends radio waves to the tag in your card and collects the reference number so it can be matched to our records to verify the information printed on the front of your card.

I heard the EDL/ID has a computer chip embedded in it. Can someone use the chip to get my personal information?

No. The radio frequency identification (RFID) tag embedded in an EDL/ID does not contain any personal information, just a reference number. Your card also comes with a security sleeve which prevents the RFID tag in your card from being read when it isn't being used at a border crossing station.

Can I turn off the radio frequency identification (RFID) tag?

No, tampering with or deactivating the RFID tag embedded in your EDL/ID will invalidate the card so it cannot be used for border crossing.

Who has access to the personal information I give when I apply for an EDL/ID?

DMV employees who have passed a thorough background check have access to your personal information. The data we will be required to share with DHS is limited to; First & Last name, Birth date, Gender, Citizenship, Address, Expiration Date and Photo. By law, we cannot share this information with anyone else unless required by court order to release the information to a law enforcement agency.

What is RFID?

Radio Frequency Identification is a wireless technology that stores and retrieves data remotely. An RFID system typically includes an RFID tag with a microchip and antenna embedded in a card or other item, an RFID reader, and a database.

How does it work?

1. The RFID tag embedded in your EDL/ID contains a unique reference number. At the border crossing station, an RFID reader uses electromagnetic waves like the waves coming to your car radio to energize the tag and collect this reference number.

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2. The reader converts the radio waves reflected back from the RFID tag into digital information and transmits it to the Customs and Border Protection network. Data encryption, secure networks, and firewalls protect the information while it is being transmitted.
3. The reference number is compared to our records to verify that your identity matches the information printed on the front of your EDL/ID card.

Does the EDL/ID use a special kind of RFID tag?

To provide added security and convenience when crossing the border, an ultra-high frequency passive vicinity RFID tag is embedded in each EDL/ID. We use this type of tag because:

- Ultra-high frequencies typically offer better range and can transfer data faster.
- Passive RFID tags are more secure because they don't have a power source, and cannot transmit information until they get power from the RFID reader.
- Vicinity RFID tags are faster and easier to use because they can be read from several feet away from the reader.

Why does my EDL/ID card need an RFID tag?

To speed up identification checks at the border, the federal government requires RFID technology in identification cards used to re-enter the United States. To meet this federal requirement and follow best practices for card security, each EDL/ID contains an RFID tag like the one used in U.S. passports.

Can someone use the RFID tag in my EDL/ID to get my personal information?

No. The passive RFID tag embedded in your EDL/ID doesn't contain any personal information, just a unique reference number. In addition, the tag doesn't have a power source and cannot transmit data unless it is activated by an RFID reader. When you get an EDL/ID, we will give you a security sleeve to protect the RFID tag from being activated when you are not at a border crossing station.



Questions, comments or concerns?

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SENATE BILL NO. 358 ENHANCED DRIVER LICENSE –SECTION BY SECTION

Sec. 1 defines enhanced license as any license or nondriver identification card that indicates one's identity and citizenship. Additionally, such documents shall include various security features. Further, a definition for "personal radio frequency identification chip number" is created. The enhanced license is to be a new, *additional* form of license. It is a voluntary, not mandatory program.

Sec. 2 provides that all persons involved in producing enhanced licenses shall be subject to security clearance procedures including background investigations. This is to insure the security of the licensing process.

Sec. 3 enacts a new statute, 23 V.S.A. § 7.

Subsection (a) describes the content of the license document. It will have identity data including a photograph or imaged likeness, an indication of citizenship, a machine readable zone on the reverse side and contain a radio frequency identification chip. The approval of either the General Assembly or the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules will be required if any additional personal identity information beyond what is in the bill is to be required.

Subsection (b) sets forth the requirements that must be met in order to obtain an enhanced license. These will include presentation of a photo identity document, proof of the applicant's date and place of birth, proof of Social Security Number and documentation of the applicant's principal residence address. The approval of either the General Assembly or the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules will be required if any additional personal identity information beyond what is in the bill is to be required.

Subsection (c) imposes a prohibition against non-government compilation or maintenance of a database of electronically readable information from license documents.

Subsection (d) creates an additional fee for an enhanced license to meet the additional cost of the license documents.

Subsection (e) requires an annual report to the House and Senate Transportation Committees regarding various enhanced license issues.

Sec. 4. Adds a new statute, 23 V.S.A. § 8, that requires a personal radio frequency identification number to be afforded privacy protection in accordance with the Federal Driver Privacy Protection Act.

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Sec. 5. requires a resident of Vermont to obtain an operator's license within 60 days of moving into the state. This same provision was enacted in 2003 by Sec. 71 of Act 56. Then, in 2004, Sec. 4 of Act No. 154 amended the same subsection of Title 23. That bill used the pre-amendment version of 23 V.S.A. § 601(a) as its basis. As a result, the residency provision was removed. This provision would reverse that inadvertent action.

Sec. 6 repeals the reporting requirement after the report of 2011 and removes the present requirement that operator licenses contain an organ donor statement. This is to provide necessary space on the license document for other information. Additionally, the license document is not the most effective means of providing information regarding organ donation. The Vermont Anatomical Gift Registry is the preferred means. Removing the statement from licenses has the approval of the Department of Health.

Secs. 7 and 8. amend the anatomical gift sections of Title 18 to recognize that the organ donor statement will no longer appear on the license document.

Sec. 9 Authorizes three limited service positions for the enhanced license program.

Sec. 10 makes all provisions of the bill effective on passage with the exception of the issuance of enhanced licenses which will be delayed until the necessary systems are in place.

Questions, comments or concerns?

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