ASSEMBLY, No. 5509

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 17, 2026

Sponsored by:
Assemblywoman LINDA S. CARTER
District 22 (Somerset and Union)
Assemblyman CLINTON CALABRESE
District 36 (Bergen and Passaic)
Assemblyman WILLIAM F. MOEN, JR.
District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

Co-Sponsored by:
Assemblywoman McCoy

SYNOPSIS

Concerns display of legal name on driver's licenses and identification cards.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 9/24/26)

AN ACT concerning the display of legal names on driver's licenses and identification cards, amending P.L.1987, c.20 and P.L.1980, c.47, and supplementing Title 39 of the Revised Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. Section 2 of P.L.1987, c.20 (C.39:3-9a) is amended to read as follows:

2. Each driver's license issued pursuant to R.S.39:3-10 shall have the legal name of the licensee endorsed thereon in **[**his**]** the licensee's own handwriting. For the purposes of this section, "legal name" **[**shall mean**]** means the name recorded on a person's birth certificate **[**unless otherwise**]** , exactly as the name appears on the person's birth certificate, or, if changed by marriage, divorce, or order of court, exactly as the name appears on the person's marriage license, divorce decree, or order of court. The **[**director**]** chief administrator may require that only the legal name be recorded on the driver's license. A person who has been issued a driver's license pursuant to R.S.39:3-10 whose name is changed due to marriage, divorce, or by order of court shall notify the **[**director**]** chief administrator of the change in name within two weeks after the change is made.

A person who fails to notify the **[**Director of the Division of Motor Vehicles**]** chief administrator of a change in name as required **[**in**]** by this section shall be subject to a fine. A person who is fined under this section for a violation of this section shall not be subject to a surcharge under the **[**New Jersey Merit Rating Plan**]** Motor Vehicle Violations Surcharge System as provided in section 6 of P.L.1983, c.65 (C.17:29A-35).

For the purposes of this section, a digitized signature image shall constitute a licensee's signature in **[**his**]** the licensee's own handwriting. A digitized signature image is an electronic representation of a person's written signature.

(cf: P.L.1999, c.28, s.1)

2. Section 2 of P.L.1980, c.47 (C.39:3-29.3) is amended to read as follows:

2. a. (1) The New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission shall issue an identification card to any resident of the State who is 14 years of age or older and who is not the holder of a valid permit or basic driver's license. The identification card shall attest to the true name, correct age, and veteran status, upon submission of satisfactory proof, by any veteran, and shall contain other

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

identifying data as certified by the applicant for ⟦such⟧ the identification card. ⟦Every⟧ Each application for an identification card shall be: signed and verified by the applicant ⟦and shall be⟧ ; accompanied by the written consent of at least one parent or the ⟦person's⟧ applicant's legal guardian if the ⟦person⟧ applicant is under 17 years of age; and ⟦shall be⟧ supported by ⟦such⟧ any documentary evidence of the age, identity, ⟦and⟧ veteran status, ⟦or⟧ blindness, or disability of ⟦such person as⟧ the applicant that the chief administrator may require.

The chief administrator shall ensure that a person's full legal name appears on an identification card issued pursuant to this section. For purposes of this section, "legal name" means the name recorded on a person's birth certificate, exactly as the name appears on the birth certificate, or, if changed by marriage, divorce, or order of court, exactly as the name appears on the person's marriage license, divorce decree, or order of court.

A person issued an identification card pursuant to this section may be issued a standard identification card or a REAL ID identification card. The chief administrator shall require any applicant for a standard identification card to provide, as proof of the applicant's identity, age, and residence, primary and secondary documents ⟦,⟧ with which the chief administrator shall attribute point values in accordance with the ⟦point based⟧ point-based identification verification program established pursuant to section 28 of P.L.2003, c.13 (C.39:2A-28). The point total required to prove the identity of an applicant for the standard probationary license shall be the same for every applicant, regardless of immigration status. ⟦In the event that⟧ If the commission changes the point total threshold, the requirement that every applicant reach the same point total threshold shall remain in effect.

In addition to requiring an applicant for an identification card to submit satisfactory proof of identity, age, and, if appropriate, veteran status, the chief administrator ⟦also⟧ shall also require the applicant to provide:

(a) as a condition for obtaining a standard identification card, proof of the applicant's social security number and one document providing satisfactory proof that the applicant is a New Jersey resident. If the applicant does not have a social security number, the applicant shall either:

(i) provide satisfactory proof of an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number; or

(ii) indicate, in a manner prescribed by the commission and consistent with all other provisions of P.L.2019, c.271 (C.39:3-10o et al.), that the applicant is not eligible to receive a social security number; or

(b) as a condition for obtaining a REAL ID identification card: two documents providing satisfactory proof that the applicant is a

New Jersey resident; proof of the applicant's social security number or verification of ineligibility for a social security number in accordance with the "REAL ID Act of 2005," Pub.L.109-13, any acts amendatory or supplementary thereto, and any federal regulations adopted thereunder; and proof that the applicant's presence in the United States is authorized under federal law.

Any documents and personal information, including an applicant's photograph, obtained by the commission from an applicant for a standard identification card shall be confidential **[**,**]** ; shall not be considered a government record pursuant to P.L.1963, c.73 (C.47:1A-1 et seq.), P.L.2001, c.404 (C.47:1A-5 et al.), or the common law concerning access to government records **[**,**]** ; and shall not be disclosed by the commission for any purposes related to Title 8 of the United States Code without the informed consent of the applicant, a warrant signed by a State or federal judge, or a lawful court order or subpoena **[**; except that**]** . However, nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit **[**,**]** or in any way restrict **[**,**]** any action where such prohibition or restriction would be contrary to federal law **[**;**]** and **[**except that**]** information under this subsection may be shared in accordance with section 2 of P.L.2021, c.139 (C.39:2-3.9). When responding to a warrant, court order, or subpoena, the commission may disclose only those records or information specifically requested in the warrant, court order, or subpoena.

Possession of a standard identification card issued pursuant to this section shall not be considered evidence of an individual's citizenship or immigration status and shall not be used as a basis for an investigation, arrest, citation, prosecution, or detention.

Information regarding an applicant's Individual Tax Identification Number, social security number, or ineligibility to receive a social security number obtained by the commission for the issuance of a standard identification card pursuant to this section **[**,**]** shall not be considered a government record pursuant to P.L.1963, c.73 (C.47:1A-1 et seq.), P.L.2001, c.404 (C.47:1A-5 et al.), or the common law concerning access to government records **[**,**]** and shall not be disclosed by the commission except where: **[**(1)**]** required by section 11 of P.L.1998, c.1 (C.2A:17-56.60); **[**(2)**]** the applicant provides written informed consent to the disclosure; **[**(3)**]** the requesting entity presents a warrant signed by a State or federal judge, a lawful court order, or a subpoena; **[**(4)**]** required by State or federal law **[**,**]** and to the extent that the disclosure may be necessary to permit the State to participate in the National Driver Register program, as set forth in 49 U.S.C. s.30301 et seq.; **[**(5)**]** the disclosure is in connection with an audit or investigation of identity fraud, driver's license fraud, or non-driver

identification card fraud; or ⟦(6)⟧ consistent with section 2 of P.L.2021, c.139 (C.39:2-3.9).

If the chief administrator has reasonable cause to suspect that any document presented by an applicant pursuant to this section is altered, false, or otherwise invalid, the chief administrator shall refuse to grant the identification card until ⟦such time as⟧ the document may be verified by the issuing agency to the chief administrator's satisfaction.

A person ⟦violating⟧ who violates this section shall be subject to a fine not exceeding $500 or imprisonment in the county jail for not more than 60 days.

(2) In addition to the requirements for the form and content of an identification card pursuant to this section, the Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission shall, upon submission of satisfactory proof, designate on an identification card that the ⟦card⟧ holder is a Gold Star Family member. The commission shall provide to the [1]⟦Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs⟧ Department of Military Affairs and Department of Veterans Affairs[1] personal identifying information for any person issued an identification card with a Gold Star Family designation pursuant to this section.

b. The designation of veteran status on an identification card shall not be deemed sufficient valid proof of veteran status for official governmental purposes when any other statute, or any regulation or other directive of a governmental entity, requires documentation of veteran status.

c. For the purpose of this section:

"Gold Star Family member" means a spouse, domestic partner, partner in a civil union, parent, brother, sister, child, legal guardian, or other legal custodian, whether of the whole or half blood or by adoption, of a member of the Armed Forces of the United States or National Guard ⟦,⟧ who lost his or her life while on active duty for the United States.

"REAL ID identification card" ⟦shall have⟧ means the same ⟦meaning⟧ as provided in R.S.39:1-1.

"Veteran" means any resident of the State now or hereafter who has been discharged honorably or under general honorable conditions in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States, or a Reserve component thereof, or the National Guard of this State or another state as defined in section 1 of P.L.1963, c.109 (C.38A:1-1) ⟦; and⟧.

"Satisfactory proof" means, in the case of a veteran, the applicant's DD-214, DD-215, or DD-256 form, as issued by the federal government, or NGB-22 or other approved separation forms as outlined by all branches of the Armed Forces, or federal activation orders showing service under Title 10, section 672, or section 12301 ⟦,⟧ of the United States Code, or a county-issued

veteran identification card pursuant to P.L.2012, c.30 (C.40A:9-78.1 et seq.), or a veteran identification card as issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs under the "Veterans Identification Card Act of 2015," (38 U.S.C. s.5706). In the case of a Gold Star Family member, satisfactory proof includes any or all of the following:

(1) a certification from the Department of New Jersey of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., or any other organization formed for the support of family members of members of the Armed Forces of the United States or National Guard **[**,**]** who lost their lives while on active duty for the United States, that the applicant is either the spouse, domestic partner, partner in a civil union, parent, brother, sister, child, legal guardian, or other legal custodian, whether of the whole or half blood or by adoption, of a member of the armed forces or National Guard who died while on active duty for the United States; or

(2) (a) documentation deemed acceptable by the Adjutant General, including, but not limited to, a federal DD Form 1300, Report of Casualty, or a federal DD Form 2064, Certificate of Death Overseas, which identifies the member of the Armed Forces of the United States or National Guard who died while on active duty for the United States; and

(b) documentation indicating the applicant's relationship to the service member.

(cf: P.L.2021, c.139, s.8)

3. (New section) a. The Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission shall modify, or cause to be modified, as necessary, any technology, including, but not limited to, a driver’s license or identification card production system, or a driver’s license or identification card format under the authority of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission to ensure compliance with section 2 of P.L.1987, c.20 (C.39:3-9a) and paragraph (1) of subsection a. of section 2 of P.L.1980, c.47 (C.39:3-29.3).

b. The chief administrator shall adopt, pursuant to the “Administrative Procedure Act,” P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations necessary to implement the provisions of this section.

4. This act shall take effect on the first day of the sixth month next following enactment. However, the Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission may take any anticipatory administrative action in advance as shall be necessary for the implementation of this act.

STATEMENT

This bill requires every driver's license and every identification card issued by the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (commission) to display the legal name of the licensee or holder, as appropriate. Under the bill, "legal name" is defined as the name recorded on a person's birth certificate, exactly as the name appears on the birth certificate, or, if changed by marriage, divorce, or order of court, exactly as the name appears on the person's marriage license, divorce decree, or order of court.

The bill also requires the Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission to modify, or cause to be modified, as necessary, any technology system, including, but not limited to, a driver's license or identification card production system, or a driver's license or identification card format under the authority of the commission to ensure compliance with the bill's provisions.