

For Immediate Release:

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Federal REAL ID Deadline Extended to Oct. 1, 2021

Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White announced today that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has extended the federal REAL ID deadline an additional year to Oct. 1, 2021. DHS cited the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact the virus is having on the general public and driver's license and ID card-issuing agencies nationwide. Earlier this month, White, along with other state and business leaders from around the country, called on DHS to extend the REAL ID deadline.

Current Illinois driver's licenses or ID cards will continue to be accepted at airports, military bases and secure federal facilities until Oct. 1, 2021. Once Driver Services facilities reopen, White is suggesting that people who want a REAL ID wait until their current driver's license or ID card is about to expire before visiting a facility to apply for a REAL ID. For those whose driver's license or ID card expires after Oct. 1, 2021 and want a REAL ID, they can use their valid U.S. passport or other [TSA-acceptable documents](#) to fly domestically until they must renew their current card.

"The decision to extend the REAL ID deadline to Oct. 1, 2021 – a year past the old deadline – is the proper and necessary action during this time of uncertainty and crisis," said White. "I urge Illinoisans with valid driver's licenses and ID cards not to rush to our facilities to obtain a REAL ID once they reopen."

As a reminder, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, White closed all offices, including Driver Services facilities statewide to the public, through April 7, due to the health and safety recommendations by experts endorsing social distancing efforts to minimize transmission of the virus. Many other states have followed with similar actions.

White is reminding residents that many transactions with the Secretary of State's office may be conducted online at www.cyberdriveillinois.com. Some Secretary of State employees continue working to process these transactions as efficiently as possible.

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