

For Immediate Release:

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Secretary of State Jesse White Launching Comprehensive Plan to Address the Heavy Customer Volume at Facilities Caused by COVID-19 Pandemic

*Expanding appointment program in September to additional Chicagoland facilities
Expanding remote renewal program for DLs/IDs so more customers can renew remotely*

Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White is launching a comprehensive plan to address the heavy customer volume at Driver Services facilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. White's plan includes two key elements:

- Expanding the appointment pilot program in September to include most Driver Services facilities in the Chicagoland area.
- Expanding remote renewal over the next six months to allow approximately 1 million more people to renew their driver's licenses and ID cards online, by phone or by mail. Letters will be mailed out to those who qualify beginning in September until the end of February 2022.

"During the pandemic, my office has continued to serve the public, including face-to-face transactions, in a safe and responsible manner," said White. "Throughout this time, we also greatly expanded online services. This next step will allow many more people to renew their driver's licenses or ID cards remotely instead of visiting a Driver Services facility. To further address the heavy customer volume at facilities, my office is expanding the appointment program in September to include most Chicagoland facilities, so customers who must visit a facility can schedule an appointment. Certain designated facilities will still accommodate walk-in customers."

Expanding the Appointment Program

Beginning the first week of September, customers will be required to make an appointment to visit the following three Chicago facilities: Chicago North, 5401 N. Elston Ave.; Chicago South, 9901 S. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive; and Chicago West, 5301 W. Lexington St. The days and hours of operation at these facilities will be Tuesday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. beginning Aug. 2.

Lake Zurich, Melrose Park, Midlothian and Woodstock have been serving as appointment facilities since early this year. These facilities, which also operate Tuesday through Saturday, will continue requiring appointments.

The week of Sept. 7th, many other metro Driver Services facilities will also require appointments. These facilities include Schaumburg, Bridgeview, Lombard, Des Plaines, Waukegan, Naperville, Aurora, Plano and Joliet.

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Appointments will be required for customers applying for or renewing REAL IDs, standard driver's licenses and ID cards, and for behind-the-wheel road tests at these facilities. Customers can visit www.cyberdriveillinois.com to schedule an appointment up to 10 days in advance during this phase of the program. New appointment slots will be available each day at www.cyberdriveillinois.com.

All 16 facilities will have the same standardized days and hours of operation: Tuesday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Secretary White emphasized that seniors, persons with disabilities and expectant mothers will be served as walk-ins at all 16 of the designated appointment facilities.

Beginning in September, customers can schedule an appointment online or by calling the appointment helpline at 844-817-4649. The Secretary of State is partnering with the Chicago Lighthouse to provide these call center services. The Chicago Lighthouse's call centers offer career opportunities for people who are blind, visually impaired, disabled, veterans and economically disadvantaged.

Larger central and downstate Illinois facilities will implement a customer scheduling system in the near future.

Walk-in Facilities

White noted that not all facilities will go to the appointment-based system. Many small, rural facilities will not require the appointment system because they do not encounter the heavy customer volume that large facilities encounter.

Additionally, some Chicagoland facilities will remain accessible to walk-in customers. These facilities include Deerfield, Elgin, Chicago Central (James R. Thompson Center) and the temporary facility at Prairie State College in Chicago Heights.

Expanding remote renewal to address heavy customer volume

Beginning in September and running through February 2022, White's office will be expanding remote renewal for driver's license and ID card holders. During this six-month period, the office will mail letters to eligible customers with expired driver's licenses and ID cards, requiring them to renew online, by phone or by mail. The office estimates that this will eliminate the need for approximately 1 million people to visit a facility.

In addition, White's office will continue mailing remote renewal letters to drivers and ID card holders 90 days before their cards expire. Through this innovative approach, most customers will be able to renew remotely and avoid visiting facilities. Customers who must visit a facility include first time driver's license or ID card applicants, first time REAL ID applicants and drivers ages 75 and older who are required by state law to visit a facility when renewing their license.

White continues to encourage people to conduct other business online at www.cyberdriveillinois.com. Aside from driver's license and ID card renewals for those who qualify, online services include obtaining a duplicate driver's license or ID card, ordering a driver record and purchasing license plate stickers.

As a reminder, White has extended all driver's license and ID card expiration dates to Jan. 1, 2022. This extension does not apply to commercial driver's licenses (CDL) and CDL learner's permits.

In addition, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has extended the federal REAL ID deadline to May 3, 2023.