

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Extending MVC Deadlines and Streamlining Processes During Pandemic

09/10/2020

TRENTON – Governor Murphy today signed legislation (A4486) which authorizes the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) to use stored driver's license or identification card photos for longer than eight years and limits certain appointment times at MVC locations to senior citizens and persons with certain medical conditions during COVID-19 pandemic. The Governor also signed A4520, which temporarily extends deadlines to register vehicles and obtain driver's licenses for new State residents during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

"The temporary, but necessary closure of our MVC facilities earlier this year has resulted in an undeniable burden on many residents," **said Governor Murphy**. "Under the leadership of Chief Administrator Sue Fulton, the MVC has made great progress in providing residents with the services that they need, under unprecedented circumstances. This legislation will reduce wait times and allow our vulnerable populations to have the access they need to obtain critical services."

"Over the past year we've more than doubled our online transactions; A4486 will allow even more New Jerseyans to 'Skip the Trip' to Motor Vehicle Centers," **said MVC Chief Administrator Sue Fulton**. We continue to work collaboratively with our legislative partners and the Governor's office to overcome the obstacles posed by COVID-19, reduce wait times, and keep New Jerseyans on the road."

Primary Sponsors of A4486 include Assemblymembers Daniel R. Benson, Valerie Vainieri Huttle, and Aura K. Dunn, and Senators Patrick J. Diegnan Jr., and Nicholas P. Scutari.

"Since the beginning of the pandemic, businesses across the nation have designated seniors-only hours for elderly residents. I am pleased the MVC will now do the same," **said Assemblyman Benson**. "With designated appointment times, seniors will be able to access MVC services while largely avoiding crowds. Additionally, extending the time the MVC can use stored photos to update driver's licenses will limit the number of times seniors need to visit the MVC amid this public health crisis."

"Seniors are at a higher risk of experiencing complications from COVID-19. As a result, many are exercising an abundance of caution when it comes to going out in public," **said Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttle**. "Allowing seniors to use stored photos to update their licenses will reduce the amount of trips they need to make to the MVC, and designating specific 'senior hours' at agencies will limit their exposure to the public during the pandemic."

"As we work through these unprecedented times it is important that we mitigate the need to be physically present at MVC locations," **said Senator Diegnan**. "These laws will help MVC locations function more efficiently, reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19, and accommodate our seniors and immunocompromised so they are not forced to risk their health over a visit to the MVC."


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"As we continue to work through this public health crisis, it is imperative we take an agency-wide look at the MVC's operations to ensure all possible steps are being taken to protect the public, especially our most vulnerable residents," **said Senator Scutari**. "It is vital that we provide relief by loosening regulations in order to achieve maximum efficiency during these tough times, extending deadlines is a simple way to aid our residents and cut down lines."

A4486 extends the validity of all driver's license and identification card photographs from a maximum of eight years to a maximum of 12 years. The bill further allows residents 65 years of age or older to be eligible to use a stored photograph for each standard driver's license or standard identification card renewal. The legislation also requires the chief administrator, during the COVID-19 public health emergency, to reserve one day per week or a certain time each day or each week, to be determined by the chief administrator, at certain commission agency locations to offer appointments exclusively to the following individuals to register a newly purchased, newly acquired, or transferred motor vehicle: (1) senior citizens, and (2) customers who, due to a medical condition diagnosed by a licensed medical doctor or osteopathic physician and evidenced by proof, in a form prescribed by the chief administrator, cannot wear masks or face coverings.

Primary sponsors of A4520 include Assemblymembers Daniel R. Benson, Anthony S. Verelli, and Ralph R. Caputo, and Senators Patrick J. Diegnan Jr., and Shirley K. Turner.

"While the pandemic put many things on hold, we still need the ability to get new driver's licenses or register vehicles during this crisis," **said Assemblyman Benson**. "We have to do whatever it takes to fix the MVC, so you don't have to camp out overnight or wait all day at an agency just to get these simple tasks done. This law will give many drivers relief, while helping the MVC eliminate its backlog."

"New residents who've just moved to New Jersey cannot update their documentation online," **said Assemblyman Verelli**. "With only two months to register vehicles and get new licenses, new residents are rushing to MVC agencies to get their new information squared away. By doubling the amount of time they'll have to visit the MVC, we'll make the process easier on the agency and residents alike during these difficult times."

"The MVC won't be able to clear its backlog overnight," **said Assemblyman Caputo**. "One way we can help alleviate this burden is by staggering when new residents need to visit the MVC. This law will grant this flexibility to new residents, which in turn will give the MVC some much-needed relief."

"It has been two months since the MVC offices reopened and they are still struggling to overcome the backlog that accumulated during their closure," **said Senator Turner**. "This extension will provide greater leeway for new residents of the state, allowing them to avoid the long lines and postpone registering their vehicle and obtaining a New Jersey license."

A4520 provides that a person who is allowed to operate a motor vehicle as a non-resident has 120 days (up from 60 days) to obtain a New Jersey driver's license and to register a motor vehicle upon becoming a resident of the State, if that person becomes a resident during the Coronavirus 2019 public health emergency, which is defined as the period of time during which Executive Order No. 103 of 2020, and any subsequent executive order extending the public health emergency, is in effect.

The legislation will take effect immediately.

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