

Utah's mobile driver license eventually could make laminated ID cards an optional relic

By MARK SHENEFELT

Ogden Standard-Examiner

4/13/21

https://www.standard.net/news/government/utahs-mobile-driver-license-eventually-could-make-laminated-id-cards-an-optional-relic/article_89da46c2-3c8f-545d-9f9e-8249b01185f1.html

Eventually, there may be no more digging a laminated ID card out of your purse or wallet, if planners of Utah's mobile driver license are on the right track.

Utah is preparing to try the mobile technology, said to be a better method of preserving the privacy of personal information while increasing convenience.

A mobile driver license, mDL for short, will be used through cellphone apps. It will be accessed via QR codes, near-field communication (NFC) transfers, and later, Bluetooth, according to state officials and a technology provider.

Utah's mDL will be the first in the nation to incorporate the industry standards established for privacy, security, interoperability and authenticity, the Utah Driver License Division announced recently.

The pilot program will begin with 100 test users and may be expanded to 10,000 participants later in the year, the division said.

Planners said they will have a booth at the Governor's Public Safety Summit in Layton in July where some residents will be set up with the mobile ID.

However, mDL would not be implemented statewide without legislative approval. The Driver License Division will report results to lawmakers if the pilot project is successful.

Further, the announcement said, "Utahns will continue to have the option to receive a physical card for the driver license or identification card."

Officials hope mDL will gain acceptance for banking, travel, police traffic stops, and restaurant and liquor store transactions that require age verification.

The Utah mDL program is powered by Global Enterprise Technologies Corp.

Several other states, including Arizona and Oklahoma, have mobile ID programs, but the Utah announcement said the Global Enterprise rollout will be the first in the country in full compliance with American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators and International Standards Organization requirements.

The requirements are intended to enable verifiers not affiliated with the state to gain access to and authenticate a person's driver license information. A driver also has control over what information is released — no handing over a card with everything on it.

State technology initiatives sometimes draw suspicion from civil libertarians. For example, federal law enforcement agencies' access to Utah driver license photo facial recognition data caused a flap a few years ago, drawing criticism from the Libertas Institute and the American Civil Liberties Union of Utah.

But the mDL project is causing no uproar.

"We don't have any concerns or comments on this particular issue," Libertas President Connor Boyack said by email.

Jason Stevenson said the ACLU has no position on the issue.

Department of Public Safety Commissioner Jess L. Anderson said privacy and security are key benefits of mDL.

"Your privacy is of the utmost importance to us and the mDL gives you control over your data," Anderson said in the announcement. "You choose what information to share when your identification is requested."

Efforts to contact Chris Caras, Driver License Division director, for more information about the program were not immediately successful.

You can reach reporter Mark Shenefelt at mshenefelt@standard.net. Follow him on Twitter at [@mshenefelt](https://twitter.com/mshenefelt).