

New driver's license option causing long lines and confusion

BY ELLEN PILL

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Wooster resident Sheryl Bowers, left, received a new compliant card from Bonnie Alfred, manager of the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicle at Wooster, after her second visit.

Effective July 2 of this year, Ohio began to offer a new option when obtaining or renewing a driver's license. The change is causing long lines at motor vehicle bureaus and confusion regarding the difference between options and the documents required.

Many individuals are finding they arrive at the bureau and don't have the proper documentation, thus necessitating a return trip to complete their license renewal.

"A lot of women come in and don't realize they need a marriage license," said Bonnie Alfred, manager of the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicle at Wooster. "The best thing to do is to call us first if you have any questions."

The traditional driver's license is now called a standard card. The new option is called a compliant card. The change was instituted "in an effort to ensure greater security and identity protection for customers and to comply with federal regulations," said Lindsey Bohrer, the Ohio Department of Public Safety Board of Motor Vehicles information officer.

After Oct. 1, 2020, airline passengers and those entering federal facilities and military bases will be required to show either the compliant card or have additional documentation. The traditional standard driver's license will no longer be adequate identification.

Wooster resident Sheryl Bowers received a new compliant card after her second visit to her local license bureau. The first time she didn't have all the required documents.

"Today I brought my Social Security card, my driver's license, my birth certificate — it has to be an original — and I brought one other form of identification," Bowers said, the paperwork for her new license in hand.

Joy Hostetler also was back to the bureau for the second time in order to obtain her new driver's license. "I didn't know anything about the changes," she said. "I had come in yesterday and saw the poster listing all the identification needed. Hopefully I have what I need today."

"Everything has to be precise," Alfred said.

Bottom line is if the name on your birth certificate is different than the name on your current driver's license, you are required to show paperwork tracing the name change(s) back to your birth name.

Arthur explained how that might work for a woman who's been married several times and changed her name. "She has to bring in every marriage license to follow the path back to the one that has her maiden name on it."

The change is being implemented in all 50 states. According to Arthur, Ohio is the 42nd state in the country to comply with the change.

Bohrer suggested individuals go to www.bmv.ohio.gov/NEWDL-ID/index.aspx for further information. Calling ahead to confirm needed documents also may be useful in avoiding multiple trips for license renewal. Ample time should be allowed as all local offices report being busier than usual due to the extra paperwork involved with the new requirements.

Individuals must show proof of five elements of identity in order to obtain a compliant card: full legal name, date of birth, legal presence in the United States, Social Security number and Ohio street address.

Name, date of birth and legal presence may be proven with a U.S. passport or passport card or a birth certificate (original or certified copy). Social Security number requires a Social Security card, a W-2 wage/tax form or a 1099 income statement. Ohio street address requirement may be met by showing two official business or government documents with the address.

Additional information regarding allowable documentation may be found via the website or by calling one of the offices of the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles contact information is as follows:

—Wayne County, 200 Vanover St., Suite 3, Wooster; 330-287-5640; Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

—Holmes County, 75 E. Clinton St., Millersburg; 330-674-1998; Monday from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Tuesday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon.

—Tuscarawas County, 1260 Monroe St. NW, Suite 11-F, New Philadelphia; 330-602-8787; Monday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.