

**REPORT OF THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF  
CORRECTIONS**

**Findings and Recommendations on  
Government-issued Identification for Inmates  
(Chapter 656, 2025)**

and

**REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR  
VEHICLES, STATE BOARD OF LOCAL AND  
REGIONAL JAILS, AND VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH**

**House Bill 2221 – Local & Regional Jail  
Report (Chapter 656, 2025)**

**TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



**HOUSE DOCUMENT NO. 10**

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
RICHMOND  
2025



# **Findings and Recommendations on Government-issued Identification for Inmates**



**Department of Corrections**

**November 1, 2025**



## Preface

Enactment Clause 3 of Chapter 656, 2025 Acts of Assembly charged the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) with the following:

*3. That the Department of Corrections, in coordination with the State Board of Local and Regional Jails, the Department of Motor Vehicles, and the State Registrar of Vital Records, shall (i) identify the number of prisoners released with and without identification cards; (ii) review the processes involved in assisting a prisoner in applying for and obtaining a government-issued identification card, birth certificate, or social security card as required pursuant to §§ 53.1-31.4, as amended by this act, and 53.1-116.1:02 of the Code of Virginia; (iii) identify any obstacles that may interfere with a prisoner obtaining such identification or documents prior to such prisoner's release or discharge; and (iv) issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly no later than November 1, 2025.*

The Director of VADOC, in coordination with the Executive Director of the Board of Local and Regional Jails (BORLJ) convened a work group of identified stakeholders on June 23, 2025, at the VADOC Headquarters in Richmond, Virginia. During the work group, it was mutually determined that due to both the statutory autonomy of the VADOC and the BORLJ, as well as the scale of the challenges inherent in each department's policies and procedures for attaining government-issued ID for inmates upon release or discharge that it would best serve the legislative charge of each agency to submit separate reports of findings and recommendations to the General Assembly. The report herein contains only the findings and recommendations of the workgroup as they relate to the attainment of government-issued identification for inmates in VADOC custody upon release or discharge into the community. The report includes an executive summary of key findings.

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Joe Baron - Norfolk Sheriff's Office  
Mike O'Tool - Norfolk Sheriff's Office  
William C. Smith - Western Tidewater Regional Jail  
Michelle Lewis - Northern Neck Regional Jail  
Mike Edwards - Kemper Consulting  
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# Executive Summary

The Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) remains committed to ensuring that inmates under the care of the VADOC have access to the identification documents necessary for successful reentry. Identification documents, including birth certificates, Social Security cards, and DMV IDs, are essential for accessing employment, housing, healthcare, and other critical services. By securing identification documents, public safety is enhanced through the successful reintegration of incarcerated individuals. Prioritizing early acquisition and providing structured support, the VADOC equips individuals with tools and resources needed to rebuild their lives and contribute positively to their communities.

- Through interagency partnerships, structured programs, and targeted reentry support, staff assist individuals in navigating barriers such as legal name changes and required in-person verification. Facilities may escort individuals during the final 30 days of incarceration to SSA offices, Vital Records offices, or DMV locations as needed.
- Staff provide extensive guidance and coaching on the importance of identity documents in promoting good citizenship and enabling access to employment, housing, healthcare, and other essential community services. Financial assistance is available for fees associated with obtaining required documents, and all facilities are monitored through the Offender Management System to ensure compliance.
- VADOC continues to explore opportunities to leverage legislative and policy initiatives, to incentivize acquisition of identity documents. Partnerships with the Virginia Department of Health aim to streamline electronic access to birth certificates for Virginia-born individuals, improving timeliness and reliability.

## Identified Barriers

- Legal name changes can create cascading barriers, complicating access to birth certificates, DMV IDs, and replacement Social Security cards.
- Nationwide delays in processing birth certificate applications may hinder timely document acquisition.
- Limited DMV Connect visits, cancellations and reschedules can restrict prerelease access to DMV IDs for some individuals.

## Recommendations

- VADOC recommends that an MOU be entered into between VADOC and DMV to electronically transfer the personal information (PI) on the prescribed Offender ID form prior to the former inmate entering a DMV customer service location to obtain an ID.
- VADOC recommends that additional PI elements be added to the offender ID form to assist DMV in verifying an individual's proof of legal presence.
- The department recommends that the scope of the efforts outlined in Chapter 656 be expanded to include individuals on community supervision.

## Background

VADOC has long provided re-entry programming to address the attainment of key identification documents for inmates including birth certificates, social security cards, and DMV-issued identification cards. VADOC policies and procedures require that all inmates are assisted in attaining these documents prior to their release into the community to help facilitate the attainment of employment, housing, healthcare, and other critical services which contribute to successful reintegration.

The provisions of Chapter 656 effectively codified the department's procedures for obtaining inmates identification documentation while enhancing the department's current practice of providing a water-marked Offender Information form upon release for inmates who are unable to attain identification prior to release. The statute's prescribed form, the Offender ID form, contains a photograph of the inmate, the inmate's full name, the inmate's date of birth, the address of the facility in which the inmate resided at the time of his release or discharge, the inmate's release address, and if available, the inmate's citizenship or residency status and Social Security number. This form may be submitted to the DMV in-lieu of the required identification documents to apply for DMV-issued ID.

# Inmates Released With and Without Identification

6,452 inmates who entered VADOC facilities with more than 90 days to serve were released during FY25 (excluding releases due to death).

Of the 6,452 releases:

- 5,082 were released with a Birth Certificate (79%)
- 4,725 were released with a Social Security Card (73%)
- 2,889 were released with a DMV ID (45%)

Of the 6,452 releases:

- 2,387 were released with all three forms of identification (37%)
- 2,255 were released with two of the three forms of identification (35%)
- 1,025 were released with one of the three forms of identification (16%)
- 785 were released without any of the three forms of identification (12%)

The table below provides a breakdown of the percentage of attainment by each document type:

**Table 1: VADOC Facility Releases with >90 days to Serve by Identification Document Status for FY25\***

Document Status	No. of Inmates	Pct.
No Birth Certificate (BC)	82	1%
No SSN	369	6%
No DMV Issued ID	1,804	28%
No BC & No SSN	51	1%
No SSN & No DMV	522	8%
No BC & No DMV	452	7%
No BC, No SSN, No DMV	785	12%
Yes BC, Yes SSN, Yes DMV	2,387	37%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,452</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Inmates who transferred into a VADOC facility with more than 90 days to serve who were released from incarceration during FY25; excludes releases due to death, as of September 23, 2025.

# **Current ID Programming and Barriers**

Prior to release, the department's re-entry policies and procedures require that inmates are assisted with attaining their birth certificate, social security card, and DMV issued ID. This documentation can be used to obtain employment, housing, healthcare, or other critical services, which have been proven to reduce recidivism. The documents which are requested on the inmate's behalf and the barriers to obtaining those documents are detailed below:

## **Birth Certificates**

VADOC prioritizes obtaining birth certificates early in the incarceration period. Staff assist inmates upon intake with applications to state Vital Records offices. Fees associated with birth certificate requests are covered by institutional loans if funds are insufficient. Support is provided to foreign-born individuals and those with legal name changes. Compliance is mandatory, and refusal may result in disciplinary action to the inmate under offense code 119c, including loss of accumulated good time and reclassification to Class Level IV until requirements are met.

## **Barriers to obtaining Birth Certificates**

Widespread delays in processing birth certificate requests nationwide, compounded by additional verification requirements for legal name changes, remain significant barriers. VADOC mitigates risks and ensures compliance through monitoring via the Offender Management System, allowing facilities to track and verify document acquisition prior to release. VADOC does not maintain formal agreements with vital records offices within Virginia or in other states and must therefore adhere to standard state-specific procedures when assisting individuals in obtaining birth certificates. However, ongoing discussions with the Virginia Department of Health aim to facilitate electronic access to birth certificates for Virginia-born inmates, enhancing both timeliness and reliability of document acquisition.

## **Social Security Cards**

VADOC prioritizes obtaining replacement Social Security cards as part of reentry preparation. Through a Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the Social Security Administration (SSA), staff may submit applications on behalf of inmates. Previously, Virginia was limited to a 120-day request period; however, through an enhanced partnership with the SSA, in 2024, the request period was extended to 180 days of release. There is no cost to the inmate or Department for the replacement social security cards.

Compliance is mandatory, and refusal may result in disciplinary action to the inmate under offense code 119c, including loss of accumulated good time and reclassification to Class Level IV until requirements are met.

### **Barriers to obtaining Social Security Cards**

The SSA MOU does not cover initial issuance of Social Security Numbers or corrections to name changes. VADOC policy provides a structured pathway to address these barriers, guiding individuals in securing certified legal documents and providing financial assistance via institutional loans when fees create hardships. Staff coordinate with local SSA offices on a case-by-case basis for in-person verification when required.

### **Department of Motor Vehicles Identification Cards (DMV ID/REAL ID)**

All inmates, except those releasing to a detainer, must obtain a Virginia DMV ID as part of reentry preparation. Since 2012, VADOC has partnered with DMV to provide identification, beginning with four mobile offices and evolving into a statewide DMV Connect system. This initiative ensures inmates have access to essential documents prior to release, supporting employment, housing, and community reintegration. Through the DMV Connect program, mobile teams visit correctional facilities and CCAP sites to process applications, verify documentation, and update photos. Inmates apply for an identification card six months prior to release, with veterans eligible for a veteran designation. The DMV Connect program now offers the population the opportunity to obtain a REAL ID, providing enhanced identification for reentry and access for those requiring commercial airline travel at the time of release. Fees are assessed, with loans available for indigent individuals. Those already holding a valid DMV ID or driver's license are exempt. Compliance is mandatory, and refusal may result in disciplinary action to the inmate under offense code 119c, including loss of accumulated good time and reclassification to Class Level IV until requirements are met. The VADOC issues releasing inmates and probationers an official, watermarked Offender Information Form to support post-release identification efforts when an ID cannot be obtained during incarceration.

### **Barriers to obtaining DMV Identification Cards**

Legal name changes can complicate the process of obtaining a birth certificate, which is required for securing a DMV ID prior to release. Nationwide delays in processing birth certificate applications further impede access. DMV Connect site visit cancellations and scheduling changes, along with facility operational needs, can result in inmates releasing without identification cards. The costs associated with securing the DMV ID and other identification documents may discourage inmate participation. Some states have used legislative measures to cover these costs, incentivizing the acquisition of identification documents. Staff provide

guidance and coaching to inmates on the importance of these documents, highlighting their role in promoting good citizenship, successful reentry, and access to employment, housing, and essential services. VADOC provides the option to transport inmates for in-person visits to SSA, Vital Records, or DMV offices when necessary to resolve unique cases.

# **Recommendations**

VADOC has developed the following recommendations in coordination with the convened workgroup to improve the current process by which inmates are able to obtain DMV issued identification post release using the Offender ID form:

## **Recommendation 1A: Data-sharing of Issued Offender ID forms with DMV**

The department recommends that an MOU be entered into between VADOC and DMV to electronically transfer the information obtained on the Offender ID form prior to the former inmate entering a DMV customer service location to obtain an ID. Currently VADOC Offender ID forms are printed on watermarked and numbered security paper. DMV has noted that in recent years they have experienced an uptake in fraudulent documentation being submitted to their customer service locations including incidences of fraudulent documentation with counterfeited physical security measures. By transferring the Offender ID form electronically within a reasonable amount of time from its issuance, DMV can create a shell customer profile which can be used to verify the identification elements on the form when submitted to a customer service agent.

## **Recommendation 1B: Enhance Offender ID Form to Verify Proof of Legal Presence**

The department recommends that additional PI elements be added to the Offender ID form to assist DMV in verifying an individual's proof of legal presence. As the Offender ID form will serve in lieu of documents which the DMV would normally require to verify proof of legal presence and a former inmate's legal presence could potentially have changed in the time between their release and their application for a DMV ID, additional PI data is required to re-verify proof of legal presence at that time. VADOC and DMV are currently coordinating on identifying those PI elements based upon the data currently available for inmates in VADOC custody. These enhancements will ensure confidence that DMV IDs will only be issued to individuals with proper eligibility.

## **Recommendation 2: Expanding scope to include Individuals on Community Supervision**

The department recommends that the scope of the efforts outlined Chapter 656 be expanded to include individuals on community supervision. Supervisee's benefit from the same recidivism reducing factors as individuals released from incarceration when attaining

a government issued ID while on probation or parole. When a supervisee does not possess an ID, their probation officer will issue them an Offender Information Form so that they can apply for a DMV ID. Community supervision would benefit from inclusion in all the enhancements recommended in this report and any further legislative expansions.





# **House Bill 2221 – Local & Regional Jail Report**

**October 31, 2025**

Department of Motor Vehicles  
State Board of Local and Regional Jails  
Virginia Department of Health

## **Executive Summary**

House Bill 2221, 2025 (HB2221), requires the State Board of Local and Regional Jails (BLRJ) to work in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Corrections (DOC), the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Office of Vital Records to review processes and identify obstacles involved in assisting inmates with applying for and obtaining government-issued identification(s) and report findings and recommendations to the General Assembly no later than November 1, 2025.

### **Report Findings:**

- Efforts to facilitate identification issuance for inmates faces a range of operational, administrative, and systemic obstacles across the Commonwealth.
- Local and regional jail challenges differ significantly from those pertaining to state prisons because a significant number of inmates in local and regional jails are often released within hours or days, leaving little or no time to initiate or complete identification application processes.
- Jails and the DMV report limited full-time employee positions and administrative bandwidth to manage the documentation and coordination necessary for inmate identification issuance.
- Most local and regional jails do not track the numbers of inmates released with and/or without identification.

### **Recommendations:**

- Explore cost and staffing needs to expand DMV Connect services to ensure services are provided equitably across the Commonwealth's local and regional jails.

## Introduction

**General Assembly Session 2025 – House Bill 2221 (HB2221), Va. Code § 53.1-31.4. Government-issued identification; Department of Corrections-issued identification.**

*3. That the Department of Corrections, in coordination with the State Board of Local and Regional Jails, the Department of Motor Vehicles, and the State Registrar of Vital Records, shall (i) identify the number of prisoners released with and without identification cards; (ii) review the processes involved in assisting a prisoner in applying for and obtaining a government-issued identification card, birth certificate, or social security card as required pursuant to § 53.1-31.4, as amended by this act, and 53.1-116.1:02 of the Code of Virginia; (iii) identify any obstacles that may interfere with a prisoner obtaining such identification or documents prior to such prisoner's release or discharge; and (iv) issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly no later than November 1, 2025.*

House Bill 1405, 2024 (HB1405) – the substitute bill amended Va. Code §53.1-31.4 to require the DOC to establish a procedure for inmates to secure a government-issued identification card, birth certificate, or social security card through the DMV. The bill required the DMV to expedite the application process.

Current Va. Code §53.1-116.1:02 allows a sheriff, jail superintendent, or other jail administrator to establish a procedure for securing such identification through the DMV. The substitute bill required such a procedure to be established and added a provision requiring the DMV to expedite the application process.

HB1405 was carried over to the 2025 General Assembly Session, and the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee requested the State Compensation Board (SCB) review jail processes and the number of inmates served. The SCB's survey resulted in jail data for the Calendar Year (CY) 2023.

The Virginia General Assembly passed HB2221, requiring the BLRJ to work in conjunction with DOC, DMV, and VDH to:

- (i) identify the number of prisoners released with and without identification cards;
- (ii) review the processes involved in assisting a prisoner in applying for and obtaining a government-issued identification card, birth certificate, or social security card as required pursuant to COV §§53.1-31.4, and 53.1-116.1:02;
- (iii) identify any obstacles that may interfere with a prisoner obtaining such identification or documents prior to such prisoner's release or discharge; and
- (iv) issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly no later than November 1, 2025.

**For this report, the term "ID" means any government-issued identification card, birth certificate, or social security card.**

## **Methodology**

The following report was created collaboratively with input from:

- Chesterfield County Sheriff's Department
- Norfolk City Sheriff's Office
- Northern Neck Regional Jail
- Rockingham Regional Jail
- State Board of Local and Regional Jails (BLRJ)
- State Compensation Board (SCB)
- Virginia Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Virginia Department of Health – Office of Vital Records (VDH)
- Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
- Virginia Association of Regional Jails
- Virginia Sheriff's Association
- Western Tidewater Regional Jail

## **Engagement**

To inform the development of this report, a comprehensive stakeholder engagement and survey process was conducted. The DOC launched the initiative on Monday, June 23, 2025, with all stakeholders attending a hybrid in-person/virtual meeting. At that time, stakeholders emphasized the need for realistic expectations given operational limits. Stakeholders also opted for a differentiated approach for local and regional jails and state prisons, given the following differences between them. Jails face significant constraints, including short custodial durations, limited resources, and a fragmented process not designed for consistent ID delivery. DOC has a standardized, mature process for obtaining IDs and vital records, given longer incarceration periods and centralized operations. The differentiated approach led BLRJ and DOC to proceed with separate but coordinated efforts to reflect distinct challenges and processes.

On Tuesday, July 1, 2025, BLRJ electronically distributed a survey via Microsoft Forms to all 66 local and regional jails statewide. The survey was developed collaboratively with input from key agencies and stakeholders, including DMV, VDH, local and regional jails, and BLRJ staff. The survey remained open until Thursday, July 17, 2025. At the conclusion of the survey period, 32 responses were received, representing 33 of the 66 local and regional jails. Preliminary survey results were compiled and shared with stakeholders on Friday, July 18, 2025, providing an early opportunity for review and feedback.

Redacted survey results were shared with all stakeholders on Friday, August 1, 2025. A final stakeholder discussion was held on Wednesday, August 20, 2025, allowing participants to finalize collaborative contributions to the report and submit final feedback to BLRJ on Friday, September 5, 2025. The completed report was shared with the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security's Office on Wednesday, October 8, 2025, and reported to the General Assembly on Friday, December 12, 2025.

This methodology reflects a structured, transparent, and inclusive approach, designed to ensure the final report is sound in both data and stakeholder input.

**(i) identify the number of prisoners released with and without ID cards;**

HB1405 was carried over to 2025, with the request that the SCB review jail processes and the number of inmates served with ID. The SCB's survey resulted in jail data for CY 2023 and reflected:

- Most of the jail respondents indicated DMV Connect provided successful services to inmates prior to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- The jails that did not have access to DMV Connect reported:
  - using the DMV website;
  - transporting inmates to DMV;
  - Community Service Board (CSB) assistance;
  - dependence upon program volunteers to assist with document retrieval.

Through the direction of HB2221, the BLRJ surveyed local and regional jails to address subsection 3. *(i) identify the number of prisoners released with and without identification cards.*

When asked if the local and regional jails have a policy to assist inmates in obtaining ID prior to release:

- 65% of the 32 responses report the facility has a policy;
- 34% of the 32 responses report no policy.

Currently, the COV §53.1-116.1:02 requires the sheriff, jail superintendent, or other jail administrator to provide the assistance necessary for prisoners who have been confined for at least 90 days to apply for and obtain ID, provided the records and information necessary can be readily obtained and the prisoner has not declined an offer of assistance. COV §53.1-116.1:02 further states: "The sheriff, jail superintendent, or other jail administrator *may* establish a procedure for securing such identification through the DMV."

As follow-up, regarding releases with an ID:

- 18% of the 32 responses report that the facility tracks the number of inmates released with an ID;
- 81% of the 32 responses report that the facility does not track the number of inmates released with an ID.

In correlation, regarding releases without an ID:

- 3% of the 32 responses report tracking the number of inmates released without an ID;
- 96% of the 32 responses report no tracking of the number of inmates released without an ID.

As referenced above, most local and regional jails do not track the numbers of inmates released with and/or without ID. Based upon survey responses, it is not possible to quantify the number of inmates released with and without ID.

**(ii) review the processes involved in assisting a prisoner in applying for and obtaining a government-issued identification card, birth certificate, or social security card as required pursuant to COV §§53.1-31.4, and 53.1-116.1:02;**

### **Collaboration with Agencies on Inmate ID Processes**

Participants were asked to identify the external agencies with which they collaborate to assist incarcerated individuals in obtaining ID prior to/after release (select all that apply):

- 31% of the 32 responses report collaboration with DMV;
- 20% of the 32 responses report collaboration with Social Security Administration (SSA);
- 19% of the 32 responses report collaboration with VDH – Office of Vital Records;
- 11% of the 32 responses report collaboration with Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) and/or the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA);
- 17% of responses report other collaborations.

The most cited agencies were the DMV, VDH, SSA, and the DVS/VA. Additionally, several community-based organizations, such as Virginia CARES and Blue Ridge Behavioral Services, were also noted for their assistance.

### **Nature of Collaboration and Services**

Survey responses report wide variation in how facilities coordinate with external agencies to obtain ID documents. Collaborations range from formal memoranda of understanding to informal procedures developed out of necessity. Several key themes emerged:

#### **On-Site Services**

Several facilities report the benefits of the DMV Connect program, which brings DMV staff directly into jail facilities to photograph inmates and process ID applications. These visits typically occur quarterly or semi-annually and are coordinated by designated staff (e.g., Programs Managers or Reentry Coordinators). A minimum number of eligible inmates, generally 10 or more, is required to schedule these visits. Once applications are processed, IDs are mailed or dispatched to the facility within 7-10 days and held until the inmate is released.

#### **Off-Site Services**

For inmates with court-approved movement, in work release programs, or those approaching release dates with prospective employment lined up, several facilities provide off-site transportation to local DMV offices.

#### **Mail-In and Remote Coordination**

Facilities without access to DMV Connect or off-site transportation often rely on mail-based coordination with SSA, VDH, and other agencies. Applications and cover letters are submitted by facility staff, and ID documents are mailed back to the facility or provided to inmates upon release. Some facilities assist by providing application

materials, verification documents, or institutional ID forms. Some facilities also receive SSA documents by mail, through prior arrangements with SSA.

### **Fees**

As part of the survey, participants were asked to select who is best responsible for fees associated with obtaining inmate ID (select all that apply):

- 60% of the 32 responses report the inmate is responsible;
- 19% of the 32 responses report local and regional jails are responsible for indigent inmates only;
- 12% of the 32 responses report no fees;
- 10% of the 32 responses report local and regional jails are responsible for all inmates.

Funding accessibility for vital records, such as birth certificates, varies by facility.

### **Examples of Identity Verification Upon Intake & Release**

As part of the survey, participants were asked to briefly describe how the facility verifies the identity of inmates upon intake/release. Based on the responses provided, the majority report using both the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and the Virginia Criminal Information Center (VCIN) as the primary tools for verifying inmate identity at intake/release. Some facilities also reported using “LiveScan” fingerprinting, “Jail Tracker,” “Immigration Alien Query (IAQ),” and review of court documentation. Several facilities also include using physical identifiers such as scars and tattoos, and some report using “29 Query” for cross-verification. These methods are often used in combination to ensure accurate and secure identification of inmates.

### **Resources Provided to Inmates at Time of Release**

Survey responses report that while many facilities offer some form of support or documentation to inmates upon release, resources are typically limited in scope, and availability varies widely. The most common forms of support are ID-related documents, which are often only provided upon request. These documents, such as booking cards, jail-issued ID cards, admission sheets, and verification letters, are often used for basic reentry needs, such as cashing checks from inmate accounts or initiating applications for benefits.

Some responses report jails go further by providing summary forms that consolidate critical personal information, including name, date of birth, SSA number, physical description, and custody history. These documents, such as the “Person Descriptor Details” form or “Commitment Summary,” are reportedly helpful for securing housing, employment, or official state ID, especially for inmates who lack access to other forms of documentation. Pursuant to COV §53.1-116.1:02, if an inmate requests assistance, jails will facilitate support prior to release, provided the necessary records and information can be readily obtained, and the inmate has not declined the offer of assistance.

**(iii) identify any obstacles that may interfere with a prisoner obtaining such identification or documents prior to such prisoner's release or discharge; and**

Efforts to facilitate ID issuance for inmates include a range of operational, administrative, and systemic obstacles across the Commonwealth. These obstacles hinder the ability to facilitate timely accessibility to valid ID documents prior to inmate release. Local and regional jail challenges differ significantly from those pertaining to state prisons due to the volume and rapid turnover of inmates. These timelines, in addition to other challenges, create a fast-moving and ill-suited process for implementation, verification, and completion.

**Short Timelines**

A significant number of local and regional jail inmates are released within hours or days, leaving little to no time to initiate or complete ID applications or processes. These short windows limit the ability of jail and DMV staff to collect, verify, and submit necessary documentation before inmate release occurs.

**Identity Verification**

One of the major concerns of timely ID issuance is the difficulty surrounding verification of identity. Many inmates enter the jail system with multiple aliases, conflicting dates of birth, and/or incomplete records. Some local and regional jails utilize LiveScan fingerprinting, which can assist in confirming identities; however, such tools may not be universally available or utilized across the Commonwealth.

There are also significant concerns with the creation of standardized jail forms, including form integrity, susceptibility to alteration, and forgery. These forms will require multiple layers of verification and authentication and could create further delays under such tight timelines.

**Discontinuation of Services**

Several jails report former collaborations that have since ended, particularly with DMV Connect, due to agency capacity, COVID-19 disruptions, or lack of funding/resources.

**Staffing**

Jails and DMV report limited full-time employee positions and administrative bandwidth to manage the documentation and coordination necessary for inmate ID issuance. In some smaller jurisdictions, there may be no dedicated personnel assigned to support these types of processes, resulting in further delays or inconsistencies.

**Transportation**

Many facilities report limited transportation capacity as a barrier, and some have discontinued off-site trips due to logistical constraints pertaining to staff and safety.

### **Financial Burden & Unclear Fee Structure**

The cost of obtaining valid ID remains an obstacle for inmates and jails. While some local and regional jails assist indigent inmates, the majority report that the inmate is responsible for associated fees. Many inmates lack funds and family support, making it difficult to initiate or complete the process. VDH lacks statutory authority to waive fees for ID cards, creating inequities for inmates, and additional financial costs to local and regional jails. Without a dedicated funding stream, ID issuance efforts will remain inconsistently applied across the jail landscape.

### **Court-Related and Jurisdictional Disruptions**

Ongoing court proceedings, unknown release dates, and frequent inmate transfers abruptly halt ID application efforts. These disruptions interrupt processes, communication, and delay completion.

### **Out-of-State Inmates**

Inmates born outside of Virginia present a distinct set of challenges related to ID processes. Obtaining an out-of-state birth certificate can be very time consuming, expensive, and procedurally inconsistent, as each state maintains unique application and timeline requirements. These processes and delays are problematic when paired with the short duration of stay of jail inmates. Additionally, some out-of-state vital records offices require in-person verifications and/or notarized documentation, which is difficult, if not impossible, to provide.

**Recommendation:**

The following section reflects the insights and voice of stakeholders during these discussions and does not reflect a formal recommendation from BLRJ.

**Stakeholder Recommendation: Restore DMV Connect Services to All Jails**

Explore cost and staffing needs to reinstate DMV mobile services equitably across the Commonwealth's local and regional jails.

Stakeholders supported the restoration of DMV Connect services, which previously allowed mobile ID processing within all local and regional jails via mobile trucks. These mobile truck services are no longer available due to the decommissioning of the units. Although services are now available through suitcase-based camera kit visits, DMV expressed that such services impact other on-site customer service functions at DMV locations. The following recommendations should be considered:

- DMV could conduct a comprehensive cost and staffing analysis for restoring DMV Connect services to all local and regional jails across the Commonwealth. Elements of training, technology, and operational support needs should be considered.
- Local and regional jails could provide a comprehensive cost and staffing impact analysis for DMV Connect support services. Some jails have no reentry specialist positions and would require additional funding and/or positions. Jails will be required to prepare pre-submission documents without dedicated reentry staff to facilitate scheduling and workload management.
- Clear roles and responsibilities will need to be collaboratively created by DMV and local and regional jails to ensure populations are served efficiently, equitably, and consistently.

**Stakeholder Discussion Item #1: Too Many Challenges Surrounding Standardized Temporary Jail ID/Form**

The idea of a uniform temporary ID form for inmates nearing release was discussed. While there was broad agreement on potential value, about feasibility, leaving significant questions unanswered.

- Local and regional jails face significant challenges, including short duration of custody, limited staffing resources, and significantly different operational and administrative procedures and processes.
- Local and regional jail challenges differ significantly from those pertaining to state prisons due to the volume and rapid turnover of inmates. These timelines, in addition

to other challenges, create a fast-moving, ill-suited process for implementation, verification, and completion.

- Inmates received with inaccurate identification compromise the integrity of a standardized form.
- Questions remain regarding the feasibility of implementation, including whether all jails can comply with proposed expectations, and the potential of liability, cost, and resource implications involved.

**Stakeholder Discussion Item #2: Digital Identity Verification & Interagency Coordination:**  
Stakeholders shared challenges associated with pursuing digital identity verification expansion or formal interagency protocols at this time. However, the topic was raised with the following context:

- Jails do not control the identification data received from inmates upon intake. Law enforcement and courts provide this information, and jails cannot change this data once set by the courts.
- Current ID verification systems such as NCIC, VCIN, and LiveScan have limitations and inconsistencies, especially when dealing with aliases or immigration-related data.
- Not all jails have dedicated reentry or intake staff, which makes consistent identity processing difficult.
- ID verification remains a major concern. Jails are legally required to inquire about citizenship. However, tools such as LiveScan only flag individuals as “not legally present,” but does not confirm legal presence.
- Adding the court system and DVS/VA to future discussions on identity verification could be beneficial, but this issue is time-consuming and beyond the scope of this report. DVS advises that current services focus on post-release assistance to veterans. Therefore, inclusion in future considerations would be beneficial to investigate potential opportunities for DVS assistance pre-release

Further considerations for long-term systemic improvements are important, but additional research, stakeholder engagement, and cross-agency coordination will be needed before any actionable steps can be proposed.



