

Wisconsin Driver Card Fact Sheet

The Driver Card is a **limited purpose driver's license** that would give full authority to **operate a vehicle** to applicants who are currently not able to provide proof of their immigration status required for a Wisconsin Driver's License. The Driver Card could not be used for federal purposes, which under REAL ID is defined as boarding an airplane or entering a federal building, but could be used for driving and obtaining insurance.

To be eligible for a Driver Card, an applicant would need to successfully pass driving skills, knowledge, and vision tests and meet age requirement for driver's licenses; provide proof of residency in Wisconsin for at least 6 months; provide proof of identity; provide a valid Individual Taxpayer Identification Number from the IRS; and pay the applicable license fee. Persons with their driving privileges suspended or revoked will not be eligible for a Driver Card.

Why does Wisconsin need the Driver Card?

In May 2005 the U.S. Congress passed the REAL ID Act, requiring all states to check immigration status before issuing a driver's licenses or state ID, and to only issue driver's licenses to persons who are US citizens or have legal status. The state of Wisconsin, in anticipation of the REAL ID Act, passed a state law in March 2006 entitled Act 126, which took effect on April 1, 2007. Under Act 126, undocumented immigrants and persons with legal immigration status who do not have a social security number can no longer obtain a driver's license or state identification.

Immigrants have jobs and families that make driving a necessity. Because of Act 126, persons without proper documentation have been forced to drive without licenses or with false documents. Without a driver's license it is more difficult to access auto insurance, and having uninsured drivers on our roads puts all Wisconsin residents at risk. Restricting driver's licenses has made our roads less safe and does not solve our broken immigration system.

The Driver Card is needed to:

- **Protect Public Safety.** The Driver Card would insure that more drivers on Wisconsin roads obtain proper driver education, pass driving tests and vision exams, and be entered into the state DMV database. People with Driver Cards would be eligible for auto insurance, therefore reducing the number of uninsured drivers on our streets. The Driver Card will help law enforcement officials conducting traffic stops by providing a positive proof of identity of the driver and access to their driving record.
- **Bring Needed Revenue to Wisconsin.** In a time of fiscal crisis, the Driver Card will bring badly needed revenue to our state. According to an estimate of the Wisconsin Fiscal Bureau in 2009, the Driver Card would generate \$1 million within the first year of implementation. The Driver Card would also provide a needed economic spark plug for the automotive industry and have a ripple effect into all sectors of the state economy. Since implementing a similar driver card in Utah, the state has issued over 35,000 cards and has brought in over \$1 million in revenue.
- **Help Wisconsin Families, Communities and Economy.** Immigrants make countless positive contributions to Wisconsin communities, schools, churches, economy, and culture. For example, Latino immigrants make up an estimated 42% of the labor force on Wisconsin dairy farms, and have become essential to this \$16 billion dollar industry and cultural cornerstone of our state. The Driver Card would ensure that people drive safely and legally to work in order to continue to be productive members of our communities.