

# **The Paper Trip III**

## **The Master Guide To New Identity**

**By  
Barry Reid**

**Copyright 1998 EDEN PRESS  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

**For a free copy of our current Privacy Catalog, write:  
EDEN PRESS, P.O. Box 8410, Fountain Valley, CA 92728**

# Table of Contents

## Introduction

<b>The New Big Brother .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Levels of ID: One, Two &amp; Three .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Danger: Identity Theft .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Using a Mail Forwarding Service .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Living With New ID .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Fingerprints &amp; Criminal Records .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Birth Certificates .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Delayed Certificates of Birth .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Drivers's Licenses &amp; State ID .....</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Social Security Numbers .....</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Passports .....</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>Make Your Own ID .....</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>Trends &amp; Developments .....</b>	<b>149</b>
<b>Sources &amp; Resources .....</b>	<b>155</b>

# INTRODUCTION

Twenty-seven years ago I wrote the first "ID" book, The Paper Trip. Its purpose was simple and direct. A person who followed its methods could "disappear" from a troubling past and "reappear" with a new identity based on government-issued ID. All this was to be accomplished without the government knowing what had happened. The objective was to escape the negative records and references that could unfairly restrict an individual to a lifetime of options both limited and limiting.

The book and its methods have continued to help individuals regain control of their lives with a "new start". Battered women have been able to protect themselves and their children from further abuse. "Ex-cons" have taken the opportunity to build new lives free of damaging records. Objectors to the Johnson-McNamara War were able to return from Canada without the FBI on their trail. But the applications for The Paper Trip were actually greater than my original concerns.

It has been estimated that at any given time several million Americans are "fugitives" from their homes. They run away to escape any number of conditions which they feel they can no longer tolerate. Leaving, typically with little or no preparation, is preferable to remaining. Government studies show that between 300,00 and 500,000 teenagers also run away from home each year. These young people are often trying to escape parents who are overbearing or abusive in ways they can stand no longer. Perhaps not so surprising, social workers have often observed that runaway children are healthier mentally than their parents are!

People who run away from home come from every segment of society, and in every age category. Professionals, people on welfare, businessmen, housewives (yes!), truck drivers and artists, all may seek the open road when they feel overwhelmed by their problems. Men and women both may run off to be with their sweethearts. Even men in their early and middle 70s have run from institutions, from grown-up children they claim are abusing them or as a kind of last attempt at independence.

It is only fair to point out that most runaways, adult as well as teenagers, do in fact return, usually within one week to a month. These people are reacting to stress in their lives, not necessarily trying to establish a new life somewhere else. Some, of course, do stay away for an extended period of time, and have to make changes and adjustments to survive. Our advice has proven useful to such individuals, and we continue to hear from them concerning their new lives.

In 1977 I published The Paper Trip II to expand the possible ways a new identity could be created. The use of *legal name change* and more in-depth data relating to all the forms of government-issued ID guided readers with more information on "paper tripping".

Of course we've heard the charge that these books somehow aided criminals by encouraging the use of other identities to pursue crime. Our answer has always been that criminals already have the intent to commit crime regardless of "ID". Does possession of a handgun make a person a robber? If we truly wanted to help reduce crime, why not censor the entertainment media that glorify it? The answers are obvious: The uses and needs for new identity are every bit as compelling AND legitimate as the entertaining depiction of crime, even violence. We either live in a free society or we don't.

Over the years we have received hundreds of letters from "paper trippers" thanking us for the help they found in The Paper Trip (later renamed The Paper Trip I) and The Paper Trip II. In many cases these books literally saved their lives. One such person was the political activist from the Sixties, Abbie Hoffman. Abbie lived "underground" for many years as "Barry Freed", emerging in the Eighties as a local politician in his native New York State. Hoffman's adventures could fill this book many times over, but his adroit use of The Paper Trip enabled him to avoid a life-threatening situation and return to the lifestyle he enjoyed most, political activism.

In the years since the publication of The Paper Trip I & II we have become aware of even more compelling uses for "new ID". We found that not every personal situation really requires the "deep cover" of a totally new identity. People can still create a new identity like that given Mafia informers by the U.S. Marshall's *Witness Protection Program*, but it might also be a case of tactical overkill. We know that "deep cover" ID is sometimes necessary, but recent developments have encouraged us to look at alternate ID with a broader focus.

We now believe that a wide range of "lesser" forms of ID can nevertheless secure much needed privacy and personal security. The Paper Trip III will explore the creation and uses of ID that can produce effective protection as well as new personal benefits. As you will soon discover, alternate ID can have several "levels" or areas of application. Government agencies continue to make changes in issuance and use of ID, but the needs for individuals to enjoy privacy and security remain as necessary as ever. The Paper Trip III advances paper tripping into these areas with new applications and practices. There CAN be different solutions to the same problem. All we need to succeed is to ask the right questions and take on a creative perspective. The Paper Trip III will offer new ways to solve old problems. Let's begin...

Barry Reid  
October, 1998



## Chapter II

# THE NEW BIG BROTHER

"Big Brother" is no longer the concept of an all-seeing, all-knowing *government* presence in our lives. Rather, he is now aided and abetted by *organizations and private industry* that trade on personal data collected for one purpose but used—and sold—for completely different purposes. This commercial activity is completely beyond the review and/or control of the named subjects of that data. At best, the information creates a marriage of efficiency and convenience for both companies and consumers. In many instances, however, the gathering of that data is an outright, but usually legal, invasion of privacy.

Perhaps the biggest threat to privacy comes from computers, which get faster and cheaper and reach further into our lives every day. Now, not only can businesses collect personal information at an unprecedented pace, they can use it faster and more widely than ever before.

And the biggest collector of personal information is the junk-mail industry. There are at least 17,000 mailing lists, according to the publisher of the Standard Rate and Data Service, a catalog of mailing lists. Estimates vary, but most privacy experts believe those lists track more than 2 billion names and that the average American is on at least 25 lists, and as many as 100, at any one time.

Who compiles the lists? Everyone from the National Organization for Women, which tracks donors, to Johnnie D's Films, which keeps tabs on men who recently have bought an adult video. The lists are available to virtually anyone who knows where to look and can afford the \$75 or so it typically costs to buy 1,000 names.

Let's say you're a gynecologist starting a new practice. You might want to turn to Act One Mailing List Services of San Francisco. Act One can sell you the names of 77,528 women who suffer from yeast infections and an additional 67,157 people who have problems with bladder control or incontinence. Those lists cost \$130 per 1,000 names. For \$10 per 1,000 more, Act One will throw in phone numbers. Another \$5 per 1,000 will get you a geographic breakdown. Act One lifts that information from surveys consumers fill out to receive coupons and samples.

What if you're in the business of offering travel packages and you want to put together a trip to Europe for gay men. Strubco of New York would be a good place to start. This list company sells the names of 83,055 people who have applied for or hold the Uncommon Clout Visa card, an affinity card for the gay community. The cost: \$85 per 1,000 names.

Virtually every time you give your address to someone who is not a friend or family member, it is collected, sorted and sold. Anytime you hop on the Internet, your movements can be tracked by those operating World Wide Web sites. Dial a toll-free number anywhere in the country and the company you call captures your phone number.

This free flow of information, however, does offer many benefits. Instant access to credit histories means that car loans can be approved in minutes instead of days. Computerized medical records may save the life of an unconscious patient wheeled into an emergency room. Even junk mail has become more relevant, as marketers are able to pinpoint specific consumer tastes.

But increasingly, Americans believe they have no say over what personal information about them is gathered and how that data is used. A Louis Harris & Associates poll last year found that eight of 10 Americans feel they have "lost all control" over how information about them is circulated and used by companies. Six in 10 have refused to give information to a business because they thought it was not really needed or too personal.

"If it isn't a legal violation, it's certainly a moral violation to let the institutions of the world punch a few buttons to find out my credit history," said Gerald Garrett, a lawyer who found out that companies checked his credit history 27 times last year. "Big Brother is a small juvenile compared to today's system."

## The New Big Brother

---

Direct marketers contend that consumers are willing to give up information as long as they get something in return. New parents may be uncomfortable with the idea of a portrait studio knowing they just had a baby, until they decide they need to get some snapshots for the grandparents. "People accept the trade-offs," says Jonah Gitlitz, president of the Direct Marketing Association.

As evidence, the industry notes that direct mailers and telephone marketers coaxed \$385 billion out of U.S. consumers last year. The industry expects that number to jump to \$540 billion by the end of the decade.

At times, the steady stream of junk mail and phone calls is little more than nuisance. Mailboxes overflow with unsolicited letters that seem to know that you just moved, recently retired, or are in the market for a car. To those Americans annoyed by junk mail, the bother extends no further than dumping those offers in the trash.

But information gathered for one reason increasingly is used for purposes you didn't intend. Auto insurers have found that customers with bad credit histories are likely to cost them more than customers with a handful of traffic tickets. Though California law prohibits it, drivers in many other states who have bad credit also have higher auto-insurance rates.

Public agencies are also getting in on the act. Need a computer tape with the name of every child born in California in a given year, their races and ethnic backgrounds, the names of the mothers and fathers, and even the parents' education levels? The California Department of Vital Statistics has just the ticket--for \$300.

Want to know how many Volvos are registered in your county? Put in a call to R.L. Polk, the largest reseller of this "state" data. Curious about how much your neighbor Blanche paid for that town house, or how many bathrooms she has? County records tell all.

From the first breath you take and beyond the last, public records chronicle your life. They describe the 1,700-square-foot, two-story house you bought for \$265,000 five years ago; the Ford Explorer you pushed incautiously to 83 mph on the Interstate last September; sparse facts about that lovely wedding in 1991, but excruciating details of the nasty breakup 18 months later; the dry cleaners you bought in town last year, and the suspension of your boyfriend's cosmetology license.

The records have always been available, but when they were stacked away in bins of paper, they were out of reach for broad review. Now those records are being digitized at a breakneck pace, flowing into both private and public computer coffers that make them accessible--and searchable--at the push of a button to a widening audience. That has made electronic public records a valuable--and volatile--commodity, and the subject of a growing privacy debate.

Cash-strapped state and local governments are turning to computer manipulation of data to cut costs and block wrongdoing. They are also looking for ways to pay for these new computer systems by selling their information. State and local agencies invested \$34 billion last year in information technology, according to G2 Research, a California consulting company, \$10 billion more than was spent on computers by the entire federal government.

In California, John Flynn, head of the state's new Department of Information and Technology, is developing a plan to create a single, "virtual" state database on individuals, replacing the duplication of files now kept separately at up to 123 agencies. "When I came here last year I asked how many people in the state are getting benefits," said Flynn, explaining that the state's motives for creating a single file are far from sinister. "But we couldn't answer it, because there are so many systems."

Privacy experts, however, see the potential for abuse in such consolidation of records.

"In many ways our privacy is protected by *bureaucratic inefficiency*," said Beth Givens, project director at the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse in San Diego. "When we see an entity as large as California becoming an efficient handler of information, it is time to sit up and take notice."

In most states, the biggest moneymaker is the sale of information you provide you when get a driver's permit or license your car. That's certainly true in California, where information compiled by the Department of Motor Vehicles brought in \$57 million last year.

"The state's biggest buyer of DMV data is R.L. Polk, which often resells it for statistical purposes," said Ken Reed, who manages the DMV's office information services. "A prospective

## The New Big Brother

---

Volvo dealership might come to Polk to find out how many Volvos there are in a certain area of Sacramento, so they could know how much repair work they would get," said Reed.

However, Flynn notes, the state does restrict access to personal information. A law allowing only certain parties, such as insurers or police, to obtain addresses and other DMV information took effect in 1990 after the murder of "My Sister Sam" actress Rebecca Schaeffer. She was gunned down a year earlier by an obsessed fan who had obtained her home address by paying \$250 to a private investigator to search DMV records.

Flynn calls the DMV earnings "the tip of the iceberg" and says the state is looking to earn more on other information it now supplies as public records at minimal cost. "Taxpayers have already paid for this information to be collected, so the question arises, why should they pay again? But the position I take is yes, the taxpayers paid for it but some business now wants to use it, so shouldn't they pay for that privilege so the taxpayers can then hire a new cop or teacher?"

At the federal level, privacy constraints on public records are much more stringent, forbidding release of personal information regarding such things as Social Security, Medicare and tax information. There is a continuum from federal to state to local, and as you go down the continuum data is easier to obtain. All the real juicy stuff--property records, court records--are at the local level.

The debate on privacy of records centers on several issues. Should governments sell what they know about you? Should they be required to tell you in advance if they plan to use your information for another reason? Should they get your permission or prior authorization? Should they use information you are forced to provide, such as to get a license or permit, for a different purpose, such as enforcing payment of child support?

While the debate goes on, however, computers at the state level are humming away with "data match" programs, which crosscheck data from two or more sources to enforce laws. California now has such a program, denying driver's licenses to those who fail to pay child support.

In a partnership with counties, the state is taking computer records from district attorneys statewide and matching them against DMV records. Those who fail to pay court-ordered child support will be given 150 days to pay before their licenses are suspended. "We estimate it will increase collections by \$84 million a year," said Bill Walsh of the state Office of Child Support. Walsh projected that about 600,000 drivers could face license suspension.

Federal law restricts "computer matching," but privacy advocates say federal and similar state rules have been widely ignored or many exceptions have been allowed, such as the DMV exception in California. Privacy experts applaud the goal of many such programs, but worry about the precedents. Is it OK for the government to force you to give information and then use it against you?

California resident Bob Beken hates junk mail so much that he jotted an anti junk mail "contract" on the back of a check when he bought a book at Computer City. It read: "Computer City agrees NOT to place Robert Beken on any mailing list or send him any advertisements or mailings." Beken also noted on the contract that breaking it would cost Computer City \$1,000.

"A month later, bingo," says the San Diego computer consultant. Computer City, which had acquired Beken's address from his check, started sending him mailings. Beken eventually got revenge. A small claims court ordered the retailer to pay him \$1,000, plus \$21 in court fees for breaking his cribbed contract.

Beken is not the only consumer fed up with corporate America's massive marketing machine. He is representative of millions of others who have tossed a junk mailer in the trash with annoyance or rudely responded to a dinner-time phone call from a marketer. Beken's victory, however, is an anomaly.

"We are less and less in a position of controlling what we receive and who calls us," says Philip Beaudoin, an executive with the American Electronics Association who is frequently solicited with evening phone calls. Beaudoin says he and his wife have become very efficient at saying no to marketers, but "that doesn't seem to shut it off."

The old adage of knowing your customer is still the measure of business success in the competitive marketplace of the 1990s. But companies can't personally know the masses that shop at their stores, buy their products, and use their services. So they gather reams of data

## The New Big Brother

---

about consumers, crunch it into high-powered computers, and spit it out in targeted marketing pitches.

Burger King, for example, tracks the birthdays of nearly 5 million children who are members of its kids club so it can send them birthday promotions and coupons. Catalina Marketing tracks the grocery purchases of nearly 130 million consumers so cash registers can automatically provide shoppers with coupons. And First Interstate Bank, recently acquired by Wells Fargo, offered pre-approved loans to Sunset magazine subscribers last fall who had been selected based on credit information from TRW Systems and Services.

Through such information gathering, companies can offer discounts and target those most likely to buy their products. But the data also have given companies tremendous insight and access into consumers' lives. Sometimes the attention isn't wanted. "When companies don't target consumers well it raises concerns," says Martin E. Abrams, director of information policy and privacy at TRW Systems and Services. "Consumers want choices but they don't want to feel embarrassed or feel that companies have too much information about them."

Consider Ken and Deena Stetter. When the couple moved into a new home marketers knew where to find them before their friends did. One of the Stetters' first visitors was a deliveryman carrying a certified letter from a company selling window blinds. Ken Stetter says it is not unusual for the couple to receive five phone calls each evening from solicitors. "The telephone calls are a bit much," he laments. "It's intruding on my privacy."

More than half of those polled in a recent survey by Yankelovich Monitor, a consumer research organization, agree with Stetter and consider unsolicited phone calls attempting to sell services or products a serious invasion of privacy. Sixty-eight percent said the unauthorized sale of mailing lists--the bread and butter of catalogers--is also a serious privacy invasion.

"Companies have a whole lot more information on their customers than they should ever use," says Claude Johnson, president of Retail Resources, a database marketing consultancy in New Jersey. Yet Johnson acknowledges that many of the retailers now gathering information on consumers aren't yet deft at database marketing, leaving room for information abuse. Also, as competition between businesses becomes fiercer, ***information about consumers is becoming as much a commodity as the products companies sell.***

"As we get into an economy where it is more difficult to sell, then there is pressure to use more information and push the envelope of technology use," says Abrams. Southern California attorneys, for example, sued Circuit City in 1993 contending that the electronics retailer violated California civil code by requiring customers to provide addresses and phone numbers before completing a transaction that involved an extended service plan. Attorneys say Circuit City didn't need the information to complete the sale, but simply wanted it to solicit consumers for other Circuit City warranty programs.

Last year, a judge barred the company from requesting personal identification information on credit-card transactions with extended service plans. Attorneys are still suing the company for civil damages. "The consumer is being misled," says Daniel Lynch, one of the attorneys involved in the case.

Logging addresses and phone numbers of consumers, however, is a basic building block of a database-marketing program, something more and more companies are developing. Two-thirds of the nation's retailers have database-marketing programs in place, and most of the rest are planning to develop programs, according to the Direct Marketing Association.

Why the increase in information gathering? Because database marketing is effective and cost efficient. The average junk mailer has a 2 percent to 4 percent return rate, compared with the double-digit rates some database marketers say they reap. Furthermore, companies using database marketing say it is cost-efficient because they are able to target the consumers most likely to buy their products. "We're getting twice the return on our advertising dollar," says John Goodman, a vice president with Helzberg Diamonds, a Kansas City-based jewelry chain that operates 173 stores.

Other companies are using database marketing to get a competitive edge and distinguish their products and services. Ritz-Carlton hotels try to make service more personal by keeping tabs on guest birthdays. Patrons are offered cookies and chocolate if they stay at the Ritz-Carlton on their birthday. Information about guest preferences, such as whether they like The Wall Street Journal vs. The Financial Times, is noted and recorded throughout the hotel's

## The New Big Brother

---

system, so a guest staying at the Ritz-Carlton Laguna Niguel will get the same treatment in Palm Beach, Fla.

Similarly, Best Western recently spent \$13 million to upgrade its computers so the chain can track which guests are allergic to down pillows and which ones prefer hot chocolate rather than coffee. "The more personal we can make your stay, the more likely we are to keep you," said Mary Swenson, Best Western's vice president of worldwide sales and marketing. "We're just starting to realize the potential.

"But consumers such as Beken have seen the potential of such marketing and they don't like it. Beken is waging a one-man war on junk mail, even selling manuals that inform other consumers on how to stop unwanted mail from filling their boxes. "We're an open book and it's outrageous," says Beken.

Many companies are becoming more sensitive to consumers' concerns about privacy. American Express, one of the largest collectors of consumer data, has a privacy ethics code that pledges to collect relevant information and disclose its uses to the consumer. Burger King does not provide information on kids club members to other companies under any circumstances. And Catalina Marketing does not collect names and addresses of consumers, but rather tracks purchases by denoting the consumer by number.

Sophisticated database marketers also are careful not to make their pitches too personal, realizing that consumers who are peeved won't purchase. Goodman, with Helzberg Diamonds, says he would never send a pitch to a consumer that would identify what the customer had previously bought or when or how frequently the consumer shopped at his store. The reason: It's just too invasive. "It's incredibly important to respect the individual on the other end of your communication," he says. "There are living, breathing people on the end of your analysis. They're not just demographic variables."

But lest you think for a moment that the "private" side of Big Brother has suddenly become soft in the head, there is now a service called "PrivacyGuard" (\$59.95 a year), promoted through banks, which might better be called the "privacy thief." The customer authorizes a direct-mail data base company, CUC, to obtain your SSN and medical, insurance and driving records, to which they would not otherwise have access. CUC will provide a free credit report (whoopie!), but also use its 68-million-name data base to market buying clubs and to promote restaurants, shopping malls, and other retailers. They say people enjoy getting junk mail. Well now they're going to get it in buckets, and they've even been talked into "paying" for it. Go figure...

### HOW TO DEAL WITH THE NEW BIG BROTHER

You don't need to let excessive junk mail and unwanted phone calls continue to clutter your life. And you certainly don't want these intrusions to become incremental "records" that could ultimately provide the "surveillance" their generation will insidiously provide. The new Big Brother will be adept at stalking you through myriad "lists" that can be matched and massaged to reveal "someone just like you"...

Here are the basic, minimal steps anyone should take to reduce exposure to the net of list surveillance.

Be stingy with stats. Don't give out your name, address and phone number. Warranty cards and contest entries are used by marketers to collect your name and address and to solicit you. Think twice about putting your home phone number on your checks.

Consider being unlisted. An unlisted phone number and address can go a long way toward cutting down on intrusions. To take even greater precautions, use a post office box.

Don't get too clubby. Think twice about joining clubs at supermarkets or bookstores. Data about your purchases are gathered so stores can mail you targeted offers.

Get off mailing lists. You can get your name dropped from many mailing lists by contacting the Direct Marketing Association's Mail Preference Service at P.O. Box 9008, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11735-9008.

Get off phone lists. Send your name, address and phone number to the Direct Marketing Association's Telephone Preference Service, P.O. Box 9014, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11735-9014.

Ask telemarketers to take your name off their phone lists.

## The New Big Brother

---

These are the "polite" things you can do, just to get the ball rolling. The major purpose of this book, of course, is to liberate you entirely from the growing dangers of surveillance—and thus, **CONTROL**—which Big Brother now threatens from both the public and private areas of our society.

Before we leave this chapter, however, let's take a closer look at the new, dual nature of Big Brother. On the public side, consider this modern horror story:

*Mike and Jody Lumpkins were well received when they moved into a new neighborhood in Manhattan, Kansas, until local police tacked a notice on a nearby mail box listing their address as belonging to a sex offender. This was pursuant to "Megan's Laws" now on the books in nearly every state. Children began teasing the couple's daughters. Rocks were thrown at their trailer. Kids would sneer at Mike Lumpkins as he walked by.*

*It was all a horrible mistake. The Kansas Bureau of Investigation said that the Lumpkins' trailer belonged to a convicted sex offender who had moved out without telling authorities. At first the KBI did not respond to their complaint because its registry lists only addresses, not names, but eventually they corrected their list. The Lumpkins are not sure this is the end of their family's difficulties.*

We already know that Big Brother can be heavy-handed on the public side, but the private side reveals qualities and character just as venal and potentially harmful.

The biggest firm in the list-compiling business is Metromail in Lombard, Illinois. Here are a few of their known actions in just the last five years. The company was caught using prison labor to process personal data from its questionnaires, an implicit violation of the standards of the Direct Marketing Association. An Ohio woman who was victimized by a prisoner sued the company for damages, and this year three other persons joined her lawsuit.

Metromail was also caught using voter-registration lists with millions of names from Arizona and California for commercial purposes, a violation of laws in both states. And in 1996, the company rented a list with children's names on it to a Los Angeles TV reporter posing as the man convicted of kidnapping and killing 12-year-old Polly Klaas in California. This, too, violates accepted practices in the business.

In the same year, Metromail admitted providing names and ages of children in a household to whoever called a 900-number look-up service. It still provides names of adults, although the Direct Marketing Association ethical standards say that information gathered for marketing purposes ought to be used only for that purpose.

The often cited "Direct Marketing Association," in which Metromail is a dominant member, has taken no action on complaints filed against Metromail on these infractions. "This is a nightmare for consumers, not to mention a tremendous competitive disadvantage for companies that try to follow the rules," says J. Blair Richardson, a Virginia attorney who represents a list company that has been exposing Metromail's practices.

Recently, the direct-mail business embraced Metromail as one of its own. The board of directors of Direct Marketing Days in New York (DMDNY) voted Metromail's chief executive, Susan Henricks, its "direct marketer of the year," one of the most coveted awards given in the industry. In accepting the award, Henricks said that her company plans to use the Internet to harvest "much deeper lifestyle information and the ability to learn more about product preference." (Can the message be any plainer..?)

So what about "getting off a mailing list"? A great idea, perhaps, but the reality is essentially non-existent. Current "Fair Information Practices", with the full blessings of the FTC, permit wide latitude for collection and use of personal information. Consumers are permitted—once they locate each of the 14 companies involved—to "opt out" of having their information listed by the services. But they will be shocked to learn from the small print that they may not have their names and addresses deleted from the databases. They may only prevent certain non-public information, like Social Security numbers and dates of birth, from being available to the general public. Private investigators and direct mailers will still have access to that information, regardless of the wishes of a consumer.

## The New Big Brother

The 14 companies now observing these "fair information practices" are listed below, along with some of their more noteworthy actions and accomplishments in the personal information business. These companies are as much Big Brother as any other entity you can imagine. We offer them to the light of day...

**Acxiom Corp.**, Conway, AR (501/336-1000), a huge list and direct-marketing company regarded by some direct-mailers as willing to press the limits of acceptable list-marketing practices; manages most of Trans Union's personal data and shares board directors with Trans Union; operates a look-up service.

**CDB Infatek**, Santa Ana, CA (800/427-3747), an "information broker" owned largely by a spin-off of Equifax called ChoicePoint, ordered by the FTC in 1991 to cease reselling credit information in violation of the Fair Credit Reporting Act. It has sold postal address changes in violation of Postal Service rules.

**DCS Information Systems**, Plano, TX (800/2993647), a data base company with header information (including unlisted phone numbers), change-of-address data, and driver-license, driver-registration and voter registration records from states in its DCS National Inquiry System, which allows debt collectors, police, and businesses to search on-line by name and date of birth.

**Database Technologies Inc.**, Boca Raton, FL (800/279-7710), operates a data base for investigators called Autotrack with driver and motor-vehicle, divorce, marriage, corporate, property-ownership, and other records from a variety of sources with variable rates of reliability.

**Equifax Credit Information Services**, Atlanta GA (800/685-1111), a national credit bureau cited in 1995 by the FTC for major violations of the Fair Credit Reporting Act and currently operating under a federal consent order to comply with the FCRA.

**Experian**, Allen, TX (800/682-7654), a national credit bureau cited by the FTC and attorneys general in 17 states in 1991 for violation of state and federal consumer laws, operating now under a federal court-ordered decree to comply with the Fair Credit Reporting Act and state laws.

**First Data Solutions Inc.**, Omaha, NE (402/4987125), a major mailer that acquired Donnelley Marketing's massive nationwide files, operates a look-up service on individuals, to serve mailers, banks, and creditors.

**Information America, Inc.**, Atlanta, GA (404/4796500), operates an extensive national data base of public-record information and for a while offered Social Security numbers in the header information it sells.

**IRSC Inc.**, Fullerton, CA (714/526-8485), an "information broker" ordered by the FTC in 1991 to cease reselling credit information in violation of the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

**Lexis-Nexis**, Dayton, OH (800/543-6862), a legal and news information service that in 1996 inaugurated a service called P-TRAK permitting anyone to call in for another person's Social Security number, address, and listed or unlisted phone numbers (header information). It then suppressed SSNs and said that news reports about its originally disclosing SSNs were erroneous.

**Metromail Corp.**, Lombard, IL (800/228-4571), a huge direct marketer caught violating DMA ethical standards four times 1995 and 1996 and the subject of a consumer lawsuit for permitting prisoners to process the company's consumer data.

**National Fraud Center**, Horsham, PA (215/6570800), originally a joint venture of Trans Union, now operating a fraud-detection and investigation database.

**Online Professional Electronic Network (OPEN)**, Columbus, OH (614/481-6999), an on-line re-seller of commercial and personal credit reports from Experian.

**Trans Union Corp.**, Chicago IL (800/888-4213), a national credit bureau that continues to sell credit information for marketing both header information and "below the line" information in defiance of a 1993 FTC order and is currently operating under a separate 1992 federal court consent decree to comply with federal and state consumer laws.

### BIG BROTHER wants to be BIGGER BROTHER

Let's begin the last part of this chapter with a quick history lesson. In 1940 the German Army invaded Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France. While the military exploits of the Wehrmacht received widespread attention, the surreptitious achievements of a specialized branch of the SS, the SD (*Sicherheitsdienst des Reichsfuhrers SS*) received much less notice. All the invaded countries maintained advanced systems of paper records on their citizens. Some of these were held by local governments such as town clerks' offices, while others were held by churches, private clubs, organizations, and national government ministries. The SD immediately seized these records shortly after occupation.

## The New Big Brother

---

SD information analysts proceeded to examine closely birth records, voting records and business records. The results of these personal data analyses are now well known. Jews and those of Jewish descent, Jehovah's Witnesses, seminary students, Gypsies, the mentally retarded, Socialists, Communists, pacifists, Liberal Republicans, Catholic Action and Catholic Youth members, Protestant theologians, and homosexuals were rounded up by the SD's sister service, the Gestapo, for shipment to concentration camps and in most cases to their deaths. (*Information from Handbook of Personal Data Protection, 1992, Wayne Madsen.*)

Since 1996 the U.S. has rushed towards the total registration and enumeration of our citizens, more than at any other time in our history. Separate congressional subcommittees and federal agencies have implemented their own identity requirements without considering the cumulative effects on the country as a whole. Worse, there have been no hearings or private studies to consider this trend, either. To wit:

Sen. Alan Simpson, now retired, pushed for a computerized system so that all employers could verify an applicant's eligibility for work as well as his or her SSN. He insisted he was not moving the nation closer to a universal identity card ("something out of the pages of Adolph Hitler with the most disgusting connotation"). "Suggesting the use of some fascist 'national identification card' certainly detracts from the national debate," he said.

Sen. J. James Exon proposed requiring an ID card proving that a person is an adult before he or she could have access to the Internet. Really!

Sen. Dianne Feinstein led the fight for tightening identity requirements, even for the creation of a biometric identity card to be carried by all Americans. She later decided to campaign to protect the confidentiality of Social Security numbers, apparently not too concerned that her previous effort represented the greatest threat. She blithely asked her staff and privacy advocates to "reconcile the inconsistency."

Thanks to Simpson and Feinstein, the Immigration and Naturalization Service now issues a voluntary, "tamper-proof" Employment Authorization Document (I-766) for immigrants authorized to work in the U.S. Might we not suppose that now that these "foreigners" possess a seemingly more reliable identity document than the rest of us, that citizens would not only accept a national ID, but also actually clamor for it? Of course INS Commissioner Doris Meissner spent a lot of time insisting that nothing her office was doing would accelerate the move towards a national ID. Please note, however, that in 1996 the House narrowly rejected (221-191) approving a "tamper-proof" worker identity card for all Americans.

Congress did enact a law that same year requiring a unique number for anybody seeking health care in the U.S., whether self-paid or not. The justification was to facilitate transfer of health plan coverage when people changed jobs, and was considered merely "administrative simplification."

Another law was passed that says only a drivers license with an SSN displayed on it, or encoded electronically, would be acceptable ID for federal agencies, effective in the year 2000. But Congress showed it was more likely poking the beast with a dull stick in directing the Dept of Health and Human Services to report to it "*on ways to reduce the fraudulent use of birth certificates, including any such use to obtain a Social Security account number or a state or federal document related to identification or immigration.*" To date no such action has been taken, and is likely to be politically explosive whenever it is. Don't forget that the only people who fear negative publicity more than bureaucrats are the politicians who provide their jobs. And bureaucrats are not known for their nerve.

The welfare-reform law requires an SSN to get a state professional license, a commercial drivers license, an occupational license, or a marriage license, as well as to participate in a divorce action, child-support decision, or paternity determination.

Also in 1996, Congress created a National Directory of New Hires, with name, SSN, and birth dates, exactly the kind of database the Nazis found so useful. Again, the justification behind this was to make sure only certified Americans get onto payrolls.

At the same time the FAA continues to enforce a secret directive that has had the effect of requiring a government-issued photo ID to board an airplane. When issued in 1995, we should all remember, the FAA said it would be only "temporary." Have you tried boarding lately without your photo ID...?



## The New Big Brother

---

In March 1997 the Food and Drug Administration began enforcing a requirement (21 CFR 801 et seq.) that anyone 26 years of age or younger verify age by producing a photo ID, before purchasing tobacco products.

On the "positive" side all these new requirements rely on documents which are relatively easy to produce or acquire under other names, ages, etc. (Readers of this book will soon discover options they might exercise in this regard, should they so desire.) They studiously *avoid* relying on identity techniques that are regarded as more secure, such as signature comparison, fingerprints, and cross-referencing personal information.

On the "negative" side, however, Big Brother is forcing us into the *practice* of having a universal ID system without admitting it, for fear of political reaction. *In practice*, we are increasingly being asked, "Your ID, please?" to participate in simple, innocent activities of daily life, such as using a library, traveling, or entering a government building. Admittedly, complaints have been few, but how much longer before the question becomes the demand, "Your papers, please!" *Achtung!*

A thumbprint is required for drivers licenses in California, Colorado and Texas, even though nothing is done with it besides retaining it with the application. The newer "digitized" drivers licenses in states like Michigan have the potential for being "read" by non-DMV scanners (read "commercial compilers of private data") with consequent reduction in privacy and personal security. Michigan even tried to require a photo ID to vote, but the measure was later declared unconstitutional. (Politicians gain nothing by preventing people from voting, you know.)

Are people complaining about these developments? To quote a federal judge discussing the airlines' ID requirements, "Nobody cares." Even organizations representing members of ethnic groups that have suffered because of enumeration in other regimes have failed to express concern about the trend. After all, "It can't happen here..."

**A Letter from a real Paper Tripper**

Dear Eden Press:

I just wanted to thank you for your books: The Paper Trip I and II. These books have been a great help to me.

After I received your books and read them, I called Vital Records in neighboring states. South Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, West Virginia and Tennessee are closed to the public. Kentucky has a research department. So I went to Kentucky but I didn't have to go to Vital Records, except to get an appointment for a birth certificate. I found all the information I needed in an old newspaper.

After I received my birth certificate I got any old Bible that had not been written in, and filled it out for what I needed. I found it at a flea market.

Then I went to get a State ID card. They ask three or four questions, which I answered "no" to each, and received the ID card in about 15 minutes. The same day I applied for S.S. card. They asked three or four questions, while I was standing at a window. The answer to all questions was "no." I had to fill out an application, which was no problem. They said I should have my card in about three or four weeks. My nerves were shot. But there was no reason for them to be, it was a breeze!

I waited two days, and went back to get my learners permit. I used my ID card, took the test, missed one question, and got my permit. I got a friend to put me on his insurance. I waited a few more days and went back to get my drivers license. I did not take anyone with me. No questions were asked, except when the officer who rode with me for the test noticed my smooth left turn. He looked straight at me and asked, "So how long have you been driving without a license?" My answer was, "Since I was 14..."

All of this was done in eight working days. I had NO problems! I now have a donor's card from the Living Bank in Houston, Texas, a state ID card, a pocket size birth certificate, and a drivers license. I'm only waiting on my new Social Security card. I also have a full size paper birth certificate. I did all of this without using the address where I am now living. I have a "box" address across town (not a P.O. box), and put "apt. #" instead of the box number. Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,

Someone Else

PS: By the way, I am now 3 ½ years younger than I used to be. Thank you again for your help!

## Chapter III

# LEVELS OF ID: ONE, TWO & THREE

Everyone already has an identity. People call you by your name. Your birth certificate proves where and when you were born and shows the full name you were given. During school years your name becomes attached to report cards, diplomas, even degrees. The state puts its official insignia on a drivers license with your name, address, and personal data. If your parents choose to claim you as a dependent on their Federal Tax Form 1040, they will have obtained a Social Security Number for you years before you need to use it yourself for employment purposes. Ultimately you may travel abroad and need a passport issued on the basis of your documented proof of identity and citizenship. In short, your identity is manifested by the various government-issued documents that bear your name. This is how the System works. You are who your ID says you are, and everything is just fine.

But IS everything just fine? You already know the answer. Modern times have brought us lots of troubling problems. Records of all kinds follow us around, labeled by our ID. The concept itself may not be objectionable, but the manner in which records are generated, filed, cross-filed, distributed, and ultimately "regenerated" defiles any notion of individual propriety, to say nothing of privacy. A person's "identity" has become a commercial commodity bought, sold, traded, and trashed thanks to an army of "information brokers".

This army has two major divisions. The first includes the COMPILERS and OWNERS of computerized databases, such as the credit bureaus, mailing list houses, insurance companies, and all levels of government.

The second division is made up of all the USERS of databases, for example, banks, credit card issuers, merchants, insurance companies, and investigative agencies of all kinds. The users not only induce the compilers to do "cross-searches" and "profiling" to select likely targets for their investigations and promotions, but they also add names and data to these bases with little concern for accuracy. The result is an industry creating "products" and "services" based solely on YOUR IDENTITY. They are literally feeding themselves off your records without so much as a Thank-you-very-much!

Adding to this frenzy is a rapacious bunch of pure users: investigative government agencies of all kinds from the FBI and IRS on down, as well as private snoopers of all persuasions, anxious to sell your personal data to all who would inquire—for a small fee, of course. So, what does all this mean...?

It means that your identity is being constantly compromised behind your back. You aren't "you" anymore, but rather a few bytes of data available for commerce and investigation. At the very least you are a sitting target waiting for some imaginative—or perverse—list user to make the subject of his, ah-hem, interest.

Perhaps this doesn't really bother you. We are reminded by the Direct Marketing Association (the "junk mail" promoters) that at least 90% of Americans *like* to receive direct (junk) mail! We could surmise that these people don't care about the dangers we've just described, which is fine in a "free" society. But we hasten to remark that that still leaves a lot of people who *DO CARE* and *DON'T* want their personal data used to their detriment. We should also suppose that these people would also like to *DO SOMETHING* about their current situation.

The option these self-interested individuals possess is nothing less than a very useful form of "identity change", which is *perfectly legal*. Under the common law individuals can call themselves by whatever name they choose, so long as they do not intend to deceive or defraud thereby.

The purpose of selecting a name different from your "real" name should be obvious. You already know that whatever name you do use will inevitably become part of some stranger's "list", and from there take on a capricious life of its own as it passes from user to user. You will have no control over these transactions, and you certainly can have no idea of where and under what circumstances your name might appear. So why oblige the list users by using your "real"

name? DON'T! Simply adopt a "name of convenience", which we will now explain in great detail.

### HOW TO SET UP LEVEL ONE ID

Level One ID is your first line of defense in keeping others out of your business and private matters. The more information others have about you (records) the more power and control they have over you. It is ironic of course that almost all the information others possess you likely gave them in the first place. But this can now stop. You can begin to regain control of your life by limiting how much information others will have about you.

The tool you need is another name—Level One ID. It can be any name you choose, but it should be chosen with care and purpose. If you are now "Bob Jones", maybe "Tom Smith" will be sufficient, an ordinary name that doesn't mean anything in particular. But once you begin to think about using another name, a lot of possibilities come to mind. Why not consider some of these variations?

1. Choose a name with completely different initials, and not just a rehash of your true name. Using "Brian L. Morrison" for "Ben Leland Murray" would not be a good choice. Try "Robert James Trent" instead. Just rearranging your names is not good, either. Why? Computer programs used by credit reporting agencies, utilities, and landlord services can "spot" these kinds of variations and give them more scrutiny. Why not have them just sail by your "other" name instead?
2. Add a "Jr." or "Sr." to make things interesting, such as "Robert J. Trent, Jr." If anyone ever asked, you could always beg off by saying you were the "other one".
3. Who says men must use male names, and women female names? A man could just as well use "Allison Marie Peterson". A woman could use "Robert Lester Samuels". If anyone ever asked for the "fake" name, he would instantly see that you weren't that person. Again, choose names with completely different initials. A variation of this is to use a first name that is unisex: "Pat", "Kim", "Leslie", "Dana", "Terry", etc.
4. Many women are already in the practice of not giving a first name, just an initial, when putting their name on forms, lists, correspondence, and apartment directories. This provides some measure of anonymity by not giving away that the person is a "female".
5. The U.S. is full of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Why use only an "American" name? Instead of your "Scott Williams", how about "Juan Lopez", or "Ana Montes Trujillo"? Your local telephone directory will likely include many "foreign" names that strangers would not consider associating with you. We have lots of Oriental names these days, too, that would lend even greater distance. Couldn't you be a "Jason Nguyen" or "Leslie Wu"?
6. While you're at it, why not add a title to your name? As long as you are not attempting to "practice without a license" there's nothing illegal about your adding "Dr.", "MD", "Rev.", "Prof.", "Esq.", "PhD", or similar titles, to your name. This may not suit your taste for privacy, but it will be a faster way to learn who is interested in your "name" when all the unsolicited "professional" mail starts rolling in. If the attention becomes excessive, change names again, this time with a different title, or no title at all.

While we're at this fantasy game, who says you have to be a person at all? Why not be any of the following "legal entities", or simply a person who represents the entity?

1. A business. Use a fictitious firm name: American Supply Co., or Allied Enterprises.
2. A trust fund. All you need is a letterhead: "The Bernstein Family Trust".
3. An executor of an estate. Just sign your name, "John Whitcomb, Executor".
4. A conservator for an elderly heiress who insists on her privacy, of course.
5. A research facility for which "you" are only a director. The "Doctors" are in the field.
6. An international company ("you" are only the local rep; the others don't speak English).
7. How about a law firm? You don't have to be one of the partners on the letterhead, just a "clerk". Most people still have the good sense not to mess with attorneys who might easily turn and sue them. If you're going to put your hand in a beehive you better know what you're doing, right?

### SO WHERE DO "YOU" LIVE?

If you choose to use Level One ID you would be well advised not to have the name associated with your actual residence. It doesn't take long for mail carriers to form very clear ideas about the different people on their routes, judging simply from the mail they receive. You *could* have this mail delivered to your physical address, but this is definitely defeating the very purpose of creating Level One ID. Specifically, you don't want connections known or observed between you, your correspondence, and your physical address. The carrier will have all he can handle delivering the daily mail addressed to "Occupant" and "Current Resident". If a carrier should ever ask who you are, brush off the inquiry with a simple, "I get all my personal mail at my office." Or, "The owners are in Europe till next year, and I'm just house-sitting." Or, again, "I'm one of those techno-geeks who's converted everything to Email. Isn't it nice not to depend on the Postal Service anymore?" He won't ask again...

One final, very important note on dealing with any mail carrier who should ever decide to approach you: In addition to the above nosiness, he might one day appear at your door with mail that is being delivered "Certified" or "Registered". He is required to obtain a signature before he can release this mail. The sender likely wants the signature of the person to whom it is addressed. This will then give "proof" to the sender that the letter was indeed delivered to that address, and secondarily that the person named was the one who received it. So, you've just answered the doorbell and the carrier wants you to sign. What do you do?

What you do is read the following items a few times until you've memorized all these details:

First, you do not reach for his pen to sign the form. Instead you ask him to show you the letter (he might actually hand you the letter) and you take a **good look** at the name to whom it is addressed, and the name, address, and ZIP of the sender. (You would be smart to write this down in a dated note to yourself for later reference.)

Second, if you are now using Level One ID your name should not appear on any mail delivered to your residence. If this Registered/Certified mail does show your name or any other name you know or know of, you've got a snoop looking for you. He's just using this two-dollar service to smoke you out.

Third, you do not sign for the letter. You simply tell the carrier that you are not that person, and/or that you are not authorized to receive mail for anyone. The carrier will take the letter back and mark it "Undeliverable", "Refused", or some other indication of non-delivery.

Remember this: You never, ever have to sign for Registered or Certified mail. You are under no obligation, despite whatever overbearing demeanor the carrier might present. The sender can assume what he likes. He will get his letter back with no proof of anything except that it was not delivered, period.

But beware: If a snoop IS trying to use this method of finding or contacting you he will likely try again within a few weeks. Another letter or parcel will arrive requiring signature (parcels bear a "Receipt for Merchandise"), and the timing will not be coincidental. Remember the three steps above, and do not take delivery of the mail. Have it sent back. Again, however, make a note of the item, any names, addresses, and the date. Consider the experience both a warning and good practice for the future.

### AND THE MAIL GOES TO....?

By now it should be obvious that any mail you receive in your Level One ID will not be arriving where you actually live. Instead, you will have it sent to an address used **ONLY** for receiving mail, that of a mail drop, or mail forwarding service (MFS). These are private firms that receive your mail at their address and hold it for you, or provide additional services as you request. They also allow you to use their street address as your own. Most offer 24-hour access to your mail, and can be very accommodating in other ways, too. You can find a complete and detailed description of these services in our book, **THE EDEN DIRECTORY OF PRIVATE MAIL DROPS in the U.S. and 90 FOREIGN COUNTRIES**, \$19.95, from Eden Press.

But why shouldn't you use just an ordinary Post Office Box (POB)? True, the rental fees for POBs are about half those charged by an MFS, but the MFS offers a far greater variety of services and convenience, which you will find truly delightful. Your mail may be addressed to an actual street address rather than to only a POB. This alone makes your Level One ID appear more "believable", in that it actually "lives" somewhere.

## Levels of ID

---

Let's think of using Level One ID as a quiet, personal form of guerrilla warfare. Also let's think of ourselves as mere fleas on the back of a huge elephant. In classical guerrilla warfare the insurgents (guerrillas) choose very carefully the times and places they will engage the enemy, and then only if they have a good chance of prevailing. They know the enemy has more guns, manpower and money, but they will act as a continuing irritant, "bleeding" the superior forces until, hopefully, they lose spirit and give up the fight, leaving the guerrillas to hold the hill. (Kinda like Vietnam, remember?)

But here we are, little fleas riding around on the United Republic of Dumbo, fearing only a lucky whack of the tail or some unexpected mud bath. Dumbo may not like our horde sucking a livelihood through his hide, but he's never going to "get" us all, either. And we have to realize, too, that we're not going to bring him down.

The battle between the fleas and the elephant is similar to the "battle" you are going to fight to regain and preserve your identity, privacy and security. The battle plan is quite simple. It is also PATIENT. You are not going to "win" overnight, but in the long run the enemy is never going to know what hit him. And "you" won't be there for him to hit back! What will happen is that your new, Level One ID will begin to appear on lists through your normal transactions and lifestyle, but your real identity—the one you are trying to keep private—will gradually "disappear" from lists as new transactions fail to occur.

It might be helpful to think of Level One ID as a name known only AT A DISTANCE. As we noted earlier, this is not the ID you would present in a situation which *required* positive ID. Instead, it would be used in situations which simply ask for a "name", one which you will now gladly provide since it will not reveal who you really are. Here are some opportunities for you to begin using Level One ID:

- Subscriptions of all kinds.

- Correspondence of an impersonal nature, such as inquiries for information.

- Email messages, electronic "signatures".

- Secret, confidential correspondence.

- Purchase of "sensitive" products (erotica, ammo, growing lamps...)

- Transactions not made in person.

NOTE: You will never have this ID in your pocket or on your person. Level One ID is simply a name of convenience which you can use as an "interface" between the real you and the person others think they are dealing with. It is the mask of privacy with which you will smile at all the list compilers, data matchers, and electronic snoopers. You will be able to observe *them* going about their business, but they will never see or know *you*. Plan to use Level One ID aggressively against these people, and you will soon find your life becoming a lot quieter, and more and more under your control.

## LEVEL TWO ID

If your Level One ID belongs to a person no one ever sees, what kind of ID will be expected of the person who IS seen? If you are going to be walking around, living an ordinary life, at some points you will need to have ID to facilitate certain transactions and appear "normal."

Your first choice can be the ID you already have. Cashing checks, getting a traffic ticket, taking a commercial airline flight, buying a hunting or fishing license, opening accounts at banks and with credit card companies are all situations where some form of ID will be expected of you. "No ID? Sorry, can't help you..." But if you can provide the ID they request, no problem, they're ready to help. Give them the paper they want, and you'll get the paper you want.

Level Two ID is your "walking around" ID. For safety's sake you will probably want this kind of ID to be issued by government sources, at the very least your drivers license or state ID card. These cards and documents are not hard to obtain in new names, as you will see in the specific chapters dealing with the different types of ID. But if your existing ID is safe and secure enough for everyday purposes, you simply continue using it in transactions where "official" ID is required. Use Level One ID for all other purposes when it isn't a "legal" requirement that your ID be "legal." In any confrontation where ID is expected, the last thing you want is to incite curiosity.

## Levels of ID

---

If you are going to remain in the same general area your Level Two ID should probably stay in the same name, since there will a strong likelihood of your encountering many people who have known you only with that ID. If you were to start using completely new ID, yet continued shopping and banking in the same places, you would definitely be "remembered" by some clerk you might not want to hear testify someday in court. Why take the chance? Be ordinary, using the (Level Two) ID people expect, but let your private life begin disappearing from their notice thanks to your new (Level One) ID.

What we have said to this point regarding Level One and Level Two ID covers the needs of people who want essentially to lead a "quieter" life. They want to avoid unsolicited sales calls, they want to pursue special interests or hobbies in private, and above all they want to feel secure in the knowledge that their property and activities will not become the targets of data-surveillance and other forms of cyber-snooping. A tall order, perhaps, but clever uses of Level One ID can go a long ways towards diverting the gaze of the curious, and the proper use of Level Two ID can convert a swan into a mudhen, someone unworthy of notice.

## LEVEL THREE ID – DEEP COVER

Are you in fear that someone might track you down to do you harm? Would it be better for you to relocate to a new area where no one knew you, and no one could find you? Have negative records (criminal, employment, financial, etc.) made it virtually impossible for you to "start life over?" Could you benefit from having assets and finances secure from creditors, contingency-fee lawyers, even the IRS? Have domestic relationships made your life "impossible?" If any of these problems sounds close to home, the solutions you might use to your advantage could come through the careful use of Level Three ID, the truly "deep cover" ID.

Level Three ID represents a *complete change of your identity*, which must include, as a minimum, a completely different name, a completely different date of birth, and a new Social Security Number (SSN). With these new identifying factors you can build new files and records untouched by the negative problems tied to your old identity. The old records will continue to exist, of course, but your new life—in a new identity—will take off on a new course, unaffected by the past. Like the phoenix of legend, you will rise full-blown from the ashes.

The biggest problem you will face? Your mouth. People you inform about your Level Three ID will later, wittingly or unwittingly, inform on you. You can count on it. If you decide to create Level Three ID you will need to do it on your own, quietly and secretly. Hopefully you will have sufficient time in advance (two to three months) to obtain all the documents you need, and that you can orchestrate your "disappearance" so that any hounds following you will take the wrong trail(s). If you have the luxury of being able to plan in advance to create Level Three ID, you can assure yourself a very smooth landing in your new environment.

If you do have to leave in the middle of the night, however, the least you should have is sufficient cash to get by for perhaps a month or so while you assemble a new identity. One of the best books we've seen which covers this subject of "getting lost quick" is VANISH. Disappearing through ID Acquisition, by Johnny Yount, from Paladin Press. We have listed it in the chapter on Sources and Resources. Sometimes Fate deals a bad hand, but if you want to stay in the game, you will have to finesse what you have to keep playing. This very practical book reveals many "smart" moves to make when you want to get out of Dodge, *right now...* but safely.

We much prefer the approach of careful planning and informed preparation. Level Three ID demands nothing less. This is the ID you can construct completely in private, and retain until such time as you decide to assume it "live." You can have a birth certificate in a totally different name and birthdate, a different SSN, another state's drivers license or ID card, business cards, memberships, even subscriptions going to a safe address. Time allowing, you could also have credit cards in the new name, even if they are only the "secured" type. (Actually, there are many plans for secured Visa and MasterCard that will issue cards with limits of two and three times the deposit amount, and even a few that don't require any deposit!). Having a credit card or two in your pocket when you walk into a new identity is a real confidence booster, not to be overlooked. If people had to choose between the benefits of Viagra or losing all their credit cards, they would decide to keep the plastic. Some things *are* more important than others...

## Levels of ID

---

The chapters that follow will give you the information and options you can use to create Level Three ID on you own. This project is too important for your personal security to trust to some other person or advisor. Should you need help at some point along the way, your best resource will further study and planning. Take time to think things through. We believe our own books provide the kind of information you will need most, but remember to keep your eyes and ears open. Read the newspapers, listen to the news, and be alert for developments that might affect ID and the choices you want to make. The best-informed sources on this subject are most private investigators, whom you might approach if you have *specific* questions. But don't forget they also walk "both sides of the street", and will have little trouble discerning your motives if your inquiry is vague or uncertain.

Ironically, the best sources of information on government-issued ID are the various official agencies that do the issuing. Give them a call or write a letter asking your *specific* questions, and often as not you will receive back more information than you anticipated. We have found some "information officers" to be *very helpful*, actually pleased that a member of the public is taking an interest in their arcane, bureaucratic rules, procedures, etc.

One source you will NOT want to contact, however, is attorneys. Besides being woefully ignorant in this subject area, their first allegiance is to the court system (*their* workplace) and the larger, government establishment that supports it. Many attorneys could be said to be incompetent, but most will not knowingly shoot themselves in the foot. Their support for the concept of alternate ID readily justifies their reputation as "deal killers."



## Chapter IV

# DANGER: IDENTITY THEFT

By now you have probably heard the term "Identity Theft". Simply put, it means someone taking over another person's identity, that is, using records and data that are not his, but belong to someone else. In light of our concern for personal privacy this form of "paper tripping" is indeed a perversion. People who engage in identity theft are typically doing it for the worst of reasons: to commit crime.

Thieves obtain social security numbers and other identifiers and proceed to take over credit accounts, credit cards, and bank accounts. They also open new accounts with banks, retailers and other creditors, apply for jobs and housing, take out loans, open utility and long distance phone accounts, pass fraudulent checks, and carry out many other fraudulent acts—in the victim's name.

Identity theft has become a growing problem. The credit bureaus are all reporting increasing activity in this area of consumer fraud. Trans Union receives over a thousand calls a day from identity fraud victims. Equifax receives about the same number, which represents a four-fold increase from just two years ago. Credit card issuers are still reluctant to report fraud numbers and continue to downplay the threat of identity theft. Even though they call this the "fastest growing category" of credit card fraud, they claim it represents only a small portion of overall credit card fraud losses.

According to law enforcement agencies, the problem of identity theft is only getting worse. Fraud investigators with local police departments, U.S. Postal Inspectors, and the U.S. Secret Service all receive criminal reports involving identity theft. These agencies are often criticized for not doing enough to help victims, even though they are beginning to put more resources into investigation. Still, we do not know the actual number of identity theft cases reported because they do not track it as one category of crime, and are not able to gather enough evidence in many cases even to pursue them.

Randy DeGasperin, U.S. Postal Inspector in Los Angeles, said they are receiving more complaints now than a year ago involving account takeovers and true name fraud with credit cards received through the mail and have now teamed up with the Secret Service and the FBI in investigating these crimes. In a new twist, identity thieves are using empty apartments they rent in low-income areas and vacant houses as mail drops rather than post office boxes, which may arouse suspicion.

Jim Bauer, Special Agent for the U.S. Secret Service in Los Angeles, reports that their office has been educated on the issue of identity theft just in the past year to the point where victims are now routinely referred to their office. They are restructuring to work with police departments to encourage the police to accept reports and to refer to the Secret Service to investigate for patterns. Mr. Bauer stated that the problem will only get worse and that there needs to be a change in the way an individual's identifying information is valued. (Our emphasis)

Tom Lang, San Francisco Police detective, could provide no numbers but stated that identity theft crimes are "still very prevalent." He mentioned credit card issuers that will process accounts over the phone as being a big contributor to the problem.

Gene Bardot, detective in the Financial Crimes Unit of the San Diego Police Department reports that the number of inquiries their office receives is large, but the number of cases they are able to pursue is small in part because of the unwillingness of retail stores and other creditors to release documents and prosecute the thieves. Many of the law enforcement agencies we interviewed recommended that the big three credit bureaus should be tracking the number of identity theft cases.

### WHY IS IDENTITY THEFT INCREASING?

The ANSWER: Computer databases containing personal information maintained by government agencies and private companies, combined with the increasing

## Identity Theft

---

use of the social security number as a primary individual identifier, have made it easier for identity thieves to steal information for fraudulent uses on a massive scale.

A multi-million dollar credit-card fraud ring ripped off thousands of consumers whose personal information was obtained from employee lists and bank documents. Armed with this information, the fraudsters were able to pose as the consumers over the phone and requested, using change-of-address forms, that new cards be mailed to the fraud ring's address. They also requested a change of PIN numbers on the cards. ("Credit Card Ring Busted," by Margaret Ramirez, *Newsday*, February 8, 1997)

While fraud rings continue to carry out identity theft on a large scale, private and government agencies that maintain databases of personal information on thousands of consumers are making it easier, rather than harder, for these identity thieves to wreak havoc.

In March 1997, the Social Security Administration made Social Security records available online on its website. One only needed to know a person's name, Social Security number, state of birth, and mother's maiden name to access the records. The program was suspended in April due to pressure by consumer privacy advocates and members of Congress who were concerned about identity theft implications.

Private companies compile information derived from private databases such as the major credit bureaus, and public records such as court, property, drivers' and voters' records. They then resell this information for a fee over the Internet.

For example, one such information broker with a recently opened website, "Background Information Services," <<http://www.megs.com/bis/services>> claims to provide "access to the largest information selection in the industry" to "current members or one time users" which they will do "swiftly and inexpensively by computer, or fax...[usually] within 24-36 hours." Some of the records they provide include motor vehicle registration, driving records, auto registration, current residence and past employers, social security number trace, voter registration number, county and party affiliation, and civil and criminal records.

Much attention has already been focused on the "Big Three" credit bureaus--Experian, Trans Union, and Equifax. But consumers (victims) may not be as aware of other companies which compile reports where fraudulent (or mistaken) information about them may also be listed.

Two such services that have been around for years--**check verification services** and **tenant screening services**. These "bad consumer blacklists" control a person's ability to open a bank account, cash a check, and rent an apartment. When identity theft victims have had fraudulent checking accounts opened in their name (or bad checks written on an existing account) or had an apartment rented in their name, negative information could be on file with these companies. (See end of this chapter for list.)

In addition to these well-established consumer "blacklists" the Justice Department has given anti-trust approval to phone companies to start their own clearinghouse of information on consumers who don't pay their bills on time. This new consumer "blacklist" will also have negative consequences for identity theft victims who have fraudulent phone service established in their names.

**NOTE:** All of these screening services are credit bureaus, or consumer reporting agencies (CRAs). They must comply with FCRA requirements and many more stringent state credit reporting laws. Unfortunately, due to a lack of enforcement, not all consumers may be told their rights when denied on the basis of these firms' reports. Here are some real-life examples of how the "reporting agencies" can affect you:

### TENANT SCREENING

After closing out an existing credit account with Chase Visa due to fraudulent charges by her identity thief, Linda Tapia was denied credit when she tried to reopen an account with Chase three and a half months later. She was told there were too many inquiries on her credit report!

When Ms. Tapia obtained a copy of her Experian credit report, she discovered a number of inquiries from a company called "UD Registry." (UD stands for Unlawful Detainer.) Ms. Tapia

## Identity Theft

---

was directed by Experian to contact the UD Registry to get her name removed from their database. She called UD Registry to find out why they were accessing her credit report. When she realized that they were a tenant screening company, she explained that she had not rented an apartment in many years, and that it must have been something related to her identity thief.

UD Registry asked her to submit a written statement detailing that she was an identity theft victim. Ms. Tapia sent a letter to UD Registry stating this, along with a copy of her driver license. UD Registry then sent her a letter stating she should contact the property management company who submitted an application to rent an apartment in Ms. Tapia's name to UD Registry and that she could include a warning statement in her file that she was an identity theft victim. This notice would then "direct" potential creditors/landlords to call her before processing an application in her name.

After going through two layers of credit reporting agencies—first Experian and then the tenant screening company, UD Registry—she was able to discover that an apartment and a condo had been rented. One was in her name and one in the name of a woman claiming to be her daughter. Eventually, after she supplied information to the Secret Service on where the impostors might be living, the agency conducted an investigation.

While Ms. Tapia's experience did not result in a lasting black mark on her credit, other victims often do not discover that apartments have been rented in their name until they become the defendant named in an unlawful detainer (or eviction) lawsuit. If the judgment goes to a collection agency, it will ultimately be reported on the victim's credit report as a default.

That's what happened to Diane Ryan, a resident of Eureka, CA. She first discovered that her name was used to rent a university apartment in Sacramento when she was turned down for a loan at Bank of America. She obtained a copy of her credit report. It listed a debt with a collection agency attempting to collect the defaulted judgment in an eviction lawsuit that had been entered in Ms. Ryan's name when her impostor skipped out without paying the rent. Ms. Ryan spent six months trying to convince Trans Union that she did not rent the apartment, or co-sign for anyone else, despite the fact that she has lived in the same house that she owns for 31 years. Ms. Ryan found it incredible that no credit agency ever contacted her even though they reported the bad debt under her name and social security number to Trans Union. Bank of America still refuses to grant her the personal loan until the debt is removed from her credit report. (Banks can't be too careful, now, can they...?)

As Postal Inspectors have indicated, a growing number of identity thieves are renting apartments to serve as mail drops for their ill-gotten gains. Consumers should be aware that numerous national and local tenant-screening services might contain fraudulent listings if an identity thief has rented housing in their name. Tenant screening services collect information on unlawful detainer actions (eviction lawsuits) from court records, and credit information from the major credit bureaus. They then sell their "reports" to landlords in order to screen prospective tenants. Additionally, tenant-screening reports may include subjective information obtained from the landlord regarding the behavior of the tenant. An identity theft victim may be listed with one of these tenant screening services as having defaulted on an unlawful detainer judgment and not even know it.

Tenant screening reports are consumer reports under the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), and as such, consumers should be able to obtain a copy of their own report and dispute any mistakes or inaccuracies from any of these bureaus.

### CHECK VERIFICATION

Samantha discovered she was a victim of identity theft when a check she wrote at a grocery store would not clear through SCAN. SCAN is one of several national companies that keeps information on bad check writers which it provides to merchants who pay a fee for their services. When Samantha contacted SCAN, she learned that several fraudulent checks had been written in her name at major department stores and other retail outlets. She suspects that her identity was stolen from a loan application, since the bank where the fraudulent checking account had been opened had a copy of her driver's license and a recent pay stub which contained

## Identity Theft

---

her social security number. Samantha is still in the process of doing follow-up eleven months after she first discovered the fraud.

Another fraud victim, June, found out that over \$2,000 worth of checks had been processed using her driver's license number for the purchase of merchandise at a major department store. She was told by the police to fill out a fraud form with the department store, but it refused to take action. Not only did the department store not tell June how to clear her name with the check verification companies, but it also told her that they were putting her driver's license number in their computer database of bad check writers from whom not to accept checks.

Identity theft victims like Samantha and June who have had bad checks written in their name will be listed with any one of several national or local check verification or guarantee companies, such as SCAN, Telecheck, CheckRite, CheckCare, and Equifax. Check verification companies will approve or disapprove a check based on a consumer's bad check writing history compiled from a number of sources. Their records may include the consumer's name, address and phone number, checking account number and bank, and any identification, such as driver's license number that was used to cash the check. Some of these companies, known as check guarantee services, will also cover the cost of bad checks for merchants and then attempt to collect the debt from the consumer.

These companies are not only used by merchants to determine whether they will or will not accept a consumer's check, but also by banks to determine whether they will allow a consumer to open a checking or other account with their bank. It has been reported that more than 86,000 retailers, including department stores, convenience stores and supermarket use the services of 22 of the largest check verification companies. ("Computers Keep Check Files; Retailers Lining up to Get On Line with Check Verifiers," by Brian E. Albrecht, The Plain Dealer, Cleveland, OH, April 20, 1997.)

According to surveys conducted in California and New York, a large number of banks base denials of new accounts on whether a consumer's name is listed with ChexSystems' database. California and other states subject "check service systems" to the same requirements as credit reporting agencies. While the 1970 federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) did not specifically include or exclude check service systems, courts and the Federal Trade Commission consider lists of consumers' check writing histories to be consumer reports subject to the FCRA requirements regarding notice to consumer, including the right to obtain a copy of their report and dispute inaccuracies.

Recognizing the growing number of consumer complaints regarding false and inaccurate information used to characterize them as bad check writers, Congress clarified the federal law with an amendment offered by Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH) in 1994 which required consumer reporting agencies to include the dates, original payees, and amounts of any checks upon which any negative characterization of the consumer is based. (15 U.S.C. Section 1681g.)

Additionally, under the new 1996 amendments to the FCRA, when a consumer reports that information regarding checks was fraudulent or inaccurate, merchants will have to conduct an investigation of information provided to the check verification company and report the results to the check verification company or the consumer within 30 days. Consumers may have the right to sue merchants that fail to do so.

Despite these protections, many identity theft victims have reported that even after contacting these companies, filling out fraud forms, and providing them with information from the bank regarding the fraudulent checks, they continued to be turned down by merchants when they write checks because their name and driver's license number keeps coming up as a bad check writer. Victims of check fraud should contact all of the major check verification companies listed in this chapter, and any problems with clearing up inaccuracies should be reported to the FTC.

### TELEPHONE BLACKLISTS

According to a recent AP story, the Justice Department on September 10, 1997 gave its approval to phone companies who want to compile and share information about customers who fail to pay their long-distance phone bills. ("Government Helps Phone Companies Collect," by Jeannine Aversa, AP Writer, Washington Post [from Washington AP], September 3, 1997.) Major long distance carriers such as AT&T, MCI, and Sprint would use an independent clearing-

## Identity Theft

---

house to which they would supply information and also tap in to find out whether a potential customer has defaulted on their long distance bills.

What the article fails to mention, however, is the impact that such a clearinghouse will have on identity theft victims who have had long distance phone accounts opened in their name. This will be yet another "blacklist" from which victims would have to clear their names. According to a Department of Justice spokesperson, the new clearinghouse will have to comply with all FCRA requirements, so consumers should be able to request a copy of their report and be given the opportunity to correct inaccuracies.

### THE FAIR CREDIT REPORTING ACT

The Fair Credit Reporting Act was amended substantially in 1997 after years of contention between the credit industry, consumer groups, and the reporting agencies themselves. The following is a summary of the changes, both good and bad, that were made to the law:

**Joint Error Reinvestigation Notification:** The law now requires national credit bureaus to establish a joint error reinvestigation notification system to prevent the recurrence of corrected errors.

**Reinsertion of Deleted Information:** The bill ensures that inaccurate or incomplete information is removed from credit reports. It prohibits the re-insertion of deleted information unless (1) the source first certifies its completeness and accuracy and (2) the credit bureau gives the consumer notice of the re-insertion.

**Duties of Furnishers:** The law imposes modest new duties on banks, department stores and other "furnishers of information" to credit bureaus to avoid making errors and to participate in error re-investigations. The duty to avoid making errors is only enforceable by government agencies; that means consumers cannot sue a furnisher for making a mistake, only for failing to adequately re-investigate it. Previously, only Massachusetts and California imposed any duty on furnishers.

**Weigh Information from Consumers:** It requires credit bureaus, for the first time, to weigh information from consumers against information from creditors.

**Accounts Closed By Consumer:** It requires bureaus and furnishers to improve record-keeping so that accounts closed in good standing by a consumer are not mistaken for accounts terminated by a creditor for non-payment.

**Cost of Reports:** The law doubles the length of time, to 60 days, following an adverse action, that any consumer can obtain a free credit report from the bureau used. It provides that indigent persons, victims of identity theft and unemployed persons can obtain a free report annually on request from any bureau. It does not provide all consumers with a free credit report on request (as only Colorado, Georgia (2 a year) Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Vermont provide). It does not lower the price of credit reports on request. Instead, it codifies consent decrees requiring any credit bureau to provide credit reports for \$8, adjusted annually for inflation.

**Other Error Resolution Changes:** It requires national credit bureaus to install staffed toll-free telephone numbers. It requires all credit bureaus to complete re-investigation tasks within rigorous timetables, usually 30 days. It generally requires all users of credit reports to provide adverse action notification when credit or other benefits are denied or terms are changed due to a credit report. It requires both bureaus and users to provide significantly improved consumer disclosures and rights notifications when communicating with consumers (under the old law, a company that denied credit did not need to inform the consumer that he or she has the right to a free credit report). It prohibits credit bureaus from refusing to allow creditors to show reports to consumers. It increases the so-called "large dollar" exceptions to the 7-year negative information-

## Identity Theft

---

reporting period to correct for inflation. It defines when delinquencies begin, so bureaus cannot unfairly extend the 7-year reporting period.

### CHANGES AFFECTING PRIVACY

**Eases Pre-screening:** Unfortunately, the new law codifies current agency rules that allow creditors to revoke seemingly guaranteed, "pre-approved" credit offers generated from so-called "pre-screened" lists of consumers derived from reports. The new law also expands pre-screening to allow insurance, as well as credit, uses. The new law also broadens the information that can be used in pre-screening and weakens the definition of "firm" offer of credit to the point that it is virtually meaningless.

**Provides Opt-out:** As a quid pro quo for that privacy invasion, the Big Three bureaus are required to establish a joint toll-free system for consumers to opt-out of receiving such offers. These brightly colored envelopes ("Because of your excellent credit you have been selected") have been implicated in theft of identity scams. Unfortunately, the opt-out provisions are complex. A consumer opt-out by phone is only good for two years. If a consumer completes a signed "notice of election," his or her opt-out is good until canceled. Positively, users of pre-screened lists must notify consumers of the opt-out system in any mailing generated from credit reports.

**Affiliate Sharing:** The bill establishes, at the behest of the big banks, a sweeping exception to the definition of credit report. It allows holding companies to share credit reports (as well as experience information and information derived from credit or employment or insurance applications) with other affiliates, even those without permissible purposes. This provision was strongly opposed by consumer groups and the FTC. Under our worst interpretation, the provision would allow a bank to set up an unregulated credit-reporting subsidiary. Modest provisions were added disclosing the practice and providing an opt-out. Equally modest provisions were added so that if an adverse action is taken based on affiliate shared information (only in the circumstance where a consumer initiated the application, not when the affiliate "marketed" to the consumer), the consumer is notified.

**Increased Penalties For Illegal Use:** The bill makes it a felony to obtain a credit report under false pretenses and generally imposes stricter standards on credit bureaus, especially information re-sellers or super-bureaus, to prevent illegal access to reports.

**Employment Uses:** In a significant change, the consent of the consumer must be obtained before using a credit report for an employment determination. Generally, any other user with a permissible purpose can obtain a credit report without the consumer's permission. Before taking an adverse employment action on the basis of a report, the consumer must receive a copy of the report used.

### ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS

**State Attorneys General:** State Attorneys General are given authority to enforce the federal act.

**FTC Authority:** Violations of the FCRA enforceable by the FTC are now subject to civil penalties of \$2500 for the first offense, except that furnishers of information can only be forced to pay penalties if found in violation of an injunction.

**Bank Agency Enforcement:** No agency can conduct examinations or enforce the act against banks, savings institutions or credit unions except in the two examination cycles following a violation. This anti-consumer, anti-safety and soundness "safe harbor" was inserted by Sen. Connie

## Identity Theft

---

Mack at the request of the Independent Bankers Association of America. The FTC does not have jurisdiction over insured financial institutions.

**Private Right of Action:** The ability of a consumer to sue a credit bureau that reinserts false information in a credit report is greatly enhanced because the law significantly upgrades the duties of credit bureaus to avoid errors. Since the credit bureaus will face greater liability risk, all consumers should see an improvement in the accuracy of their reports. As above, consumers obtained only a limited private right of action against furnishers.

**Criminal Violations: Penalties** for obtaining information from credit bureaus under false pretenses or for officers or employees of credit bureaus providing such information (in a "knowing and willful" manner, a very high standard) have been increased to include substantial fines or two years in jail or both. Threat of these criminal penalties should help prevent identity theft.

**Credit Repair Doctors:** The new law bill establishes in federal law protections already enacted by numerous states prohibiting many deceptive practices of so-called credit repair clinics or credit doctors. For example, credit doctors commonly teach consumers with bad credit how to apply for new social security numbers or other new identifiers. Credit doctors also promise that they can remove accurate, but negative information from reports. These practices would be prohibited. In particular, the bill prohibits credit doctors from collecting any fee before completing a promised service. It also grants consumers a 3-day cooling period to rescind a credit doctor contract.

### HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM IDENTITY THEFT

Theft of identity fraud is on the rise. Often the first notice you get that someone has fraudulently assumed your identity is a call from a collection agency demanding payment on an overdue credit account which you never opened. Or your monthly billing statements do not arrive in the mail and you find out the address on your account has been changed by an identity thief. Most TOI victims never learn how the identity thieves accessed their personal identifying information. Indeed, it may be impossible for you to prevent access to *all* your personal information which is so readily available to thieves (and to junk marketers) from a variety of sources.

While the following recommendations won't prevent fraud entirely, you can take these preventative steps to close some avenues to identity theft.

**Personal information.** Always question the information gathering and handling practices of merchants, creditors, government agencies, employers, educational institutions and others. Ask, do they really need this information for a valid purpose?

**Credit card account numbers.** Do not write account numbers on checks or outside of envelopes (California and many other states prohibit merchants from requiring you to write a credit card number on your check). Avoid giving account numbers over the phone to companies you are unfamiliar with, especially when you did not initiate the call.

**Social security numbers.** Ask to have an alternative number where social security numbers are used for identification by schools, employers, or other institutions. Resist writing your social security number on checks where possible (there is no law in CA prohibiting merchants from requesting it). Keep tax records and other financial documents in a secure place and destroy or delete social security numbers from any documents before throwing them away.

**Address and phone number.** Do not give out or write your name and address down in conjunction with a credit card sale. (California and some other states prohibit merchants from requesting or requiring this information to be written on a credit card transaction slip). You may want to have your name, address, and phone number deleted from marketers' lists by writing to

## Identity Theft

---

Direct Marketing Association's Mail Preference Service (P.O. Box 9008, Farmingdale, NY 11735) and Telephone Preference Service (P.O. Box 9015, Farmingdale, NY 11735).

**Other common identification information.** Consider using other security passwords for financial accounts rather than solely common identifiers such as mother's maiden name and birth date. If you have your driver's license pre-printed on your checks, always shred canceled checks before throwing away.

**Monitor your credit report.** Obtain a copy of your credit report on a regular basis to monitor for changed addresses and fraudulent account information. To find out how to order by mail, call Experian (800-682-7654); TransUnion (800-851-2674) and Equifax (800-685-1111). Each charge \$8 for your credit report in most states. If you live in Vermont, Massachusetts, Georgia, Maryland, Colorado or also New Jersey (as of 1998), you can obtain a free credit report annually from each of the Big Three. In Maine, credit reports are \$3 and in Connecticut, the cost for the first report requested in a 12-month period is \$5.00 and \$7.50 for each subsequent report.

**Monitor your billing statements.** Check your billing statements each month for fraudulent charges and report immediately. If you do not receive your statement on time, it may be that a fraudulent change of address was sent to the creditor or the post office. Call the creditor first and then the post office to see if a change-of address has been filed in your name.

**Pre-approved credit card offers.** Credit card: 6% APR! These brightly-colored come-ons from banks are easily converted to fraudulent accounts. Always tear up—or shred—pre-approved credit card applications before throwing them away. Credit card solicitations are generated from "pre-screened lists" of credit reports provided by credit bureaus. If you do not want to receive these offers, contact each of the Big Three credit bureaus to remove your name from pre-screened lists: Experian: 800-353-0809; Trans Union: 800-680-7293; Equifax: 800-556-4711.

**Mistakes on your credit report?** For more information about errors on your credit report and what to do, write to U.S. PIRG at 218 D Street SE, Washington, D.C. 20003. You can also check out the PIRG web site at <<http://www.pirg.org/pirg>> or send an e-mail to <[watchdog@pirg.org](mailto:watchdog@pirg.org)> for a list of other available fact sheets.

**Privacy Rights Clearinghouse Hotline:** For more detailed assistance, Californians and all consumers should contact the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, an organization dedicated to assisting consumers with a wide range of privacy issues. TOI victims should obtain their informative fact sheet, "Coping with Identity Theft: What to Do when an Imposter Strikes." Call their Hotline (619) 298-3396 or access via the Internet --"<http://www.privacyrights.org>" for copies of their other informative fact sheets, which benefit consumers, no matter where you live.

## WHAT TO DO IF IT HAPPENS TO YOU

The following guide provides you with the major resources to contact. Unfortunately, at this time victims themselves are burdened with resolving the problem. It is important to act quickly and assertively to minimize the damage. In dealing with the authorities and financial institutions, keep a log of all conversations, including dates, names, and phone numbers. Note time spent and any expenses incurred. Confirm conversations in writing. Send correspondence by certified mail (return receipt requested). Keep copies of all letters and documents.

**Credit bureaus.** Immediately call the fraud units of the three credit reporting companies: Experian (formerly TRW), Equifax and Trans Union. Report the theft of your credit cards or numbers. Ask that your account be flagged. Also, add a victim's statement to your report, up to 100 words. ("My ID has been used to apply for credit fraudulently. Contact me at 311-123-567 to



## Identity Theft

---

verify all applications.") Be sure to ask how long the fraud alert is posted on your account, and how you can extend it if necessary.

*Be aware that these measures may not entirely stop new fraudulent accounts from being opened by the impostor. Ask the credit bureaus in writing to provide you with free copies every few months so you can monitor your credit report.*

Ask the credit bureaus for names and phone numbers of credit grantors with whom fraudulent accounts have been opened. Ask the credit bureaus to remove inquiries that have been generated due to the fraudulent access. You may also ask the credit bureaus to notify those who have received your credit report in the last six months in order to alert them to the disputed and erroneous information (two years for employers.)

**Creditors.** Contact all creditors immediately with whom your name has been used fraudulently--by phone and in writing. Get replacement cards with new account numbers for your own accounts that have been used fraudulently. Ask that old accounts be processed as "account closed at consumer's request." (This is better than "card lost or stolen," because when this statement is reported to credit bureaus, it can be interpreted as blaming you for the loss.) Carefully monitor your mail and credit card bills for evidence of new fraudulent activity. Report it immediately to credit grantors.

**Creditors requirements to verify fraud.** You be asked by banks and credit grantors to fill out and notarize fraud affidavits, which could become costly. The law does not require that a notarized affidavit be provided to creditors. A written statement and supporting documentation should be enough (unless the creditor offers to pay for the notary). Overly burdensome requirements by creditors should be reported to federal government authorities. For help in determining which agency to contact, call CALPIRG or the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse.

**Law enforcement.** Report the crime to all police and sheriff's departments with jurisdiction in your case. Give them as much documented evidence as possible. Get a copy of your police report. Keep the phone number of your fraud investigator handy and give it to creditors and others who require verification of your case. Credit card companies and banks may require you to show the report in order to verify the crime. Some police departments have been known to refuse to write reports on such crimes. Be persistent!

**Stolen checks.** If you have had checks stolen or bank accounts set up fraudulently, report it to the check verification companies (see below). Put stop payments on any outstanding checks that you are unsure of. Cancel your checking and savings accounts and obtain new account numbers. Give the bank a secret password for your account (not mother's maiden name).

**ATM cards.** If your ATM card has been stolen or compromised, get a new card, account number and password. Do not use your old password. When creating a password, don't use common numbers like the last four digits of your Social Security number or your birthdate.

**Fraudulent change of address.** Notify the local Postal Inspector if you suspect an identity thief has filed a change of your address with the post office or has used the mail to commit credit or bank fraud. (Call the local Postmaster to obtain the phone number.) Find out where fraudulent credit cards were sent. Notify the local Postmaster for that address to forward all mail in your name to your own address. You may also need to talk with the mail carrier.

**Secret Service jurisdiction.** The Secret Service has jurisdiction over financial fraud, but it usually does not investigate individual cases unless the dollar amount is high or you are one of many victims of a fraud ring. To interest the Secret Service in your case, you may want to ask the fraud department of the credit card companies and/or banks, as well as the police investigator, to notify the particular Secret Service agent they work with.

**Passports.** If you have a passport, notify the passport office in writing to be on the lookout for anyone ordering a new passport fraudulently.

## Identity Theft

---

**Social Security Number misuse.** Call the Social Security Administration to report fraudulent use of your Social Security number. As a last resort, you might want to change your number. The SSA will only change it if you fit their fraud victim criteria. (Remember that if you DID get your SSN changed for this reason, your file will have all names linked. Not much of an identity option here...) Also order a copy of your Earnings and Benefits Statement and check it for accuracy.

**Phone service.** If your long distance calling card has been stolen or you discover fraudulent charges on your bill, cancel the account and open a new one. Provide a password that must be used any time the account is changed.

**Drivers license number misuse.** You may need to change your driver's license number if someone is using yours as identification on bad checks. Call the state office of the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to see if another license was issued in your name. Put a fraud alert on your license. Go to your local DMV to request a new number. Also, fill out the DMV's complaint form to begin the fraud investigation process. Send supporting documents with the completed form to the nearest DMV investigation office.

**False civil and criminal judgments.** Sometimes victims of identity theft are wrongfully accused of crimes committed by the impostor. If a civil judgment has been entered in your name for actions taken by your impostor, contact the court where the judgment was entered and report that you are a victim of identity theft. If you are wrongfully prosecuted for criminal charges, contact the state Department of Justice and the FBI. Ask how to clear your name.

**Legal help.** You may want to consult an attorney to determine legal action to take against creditors and/or credit bureaus if they are not cooperative in removing fraudulent entries from your credit report or if negligence is a factor. Call the local Bar Association to find an attorney who specializes in consumer law and the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

**Dealing with emotional stress.** Psychological counseling may help you deal with the stress and anxiety commonly experienced by victims. Know that you are not alone. Contact CALPIRG or the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse for information on how to network with other victims.

**Making change.** Write to your state and federal legislators. Demand stronger privacy protection and fraud assistance by creditors and credit bureaus. Contact CALPIRG for information on any pending state or federal legislation.

**Don't give in.** Finally, do not pay any bill or portion of a bill which is a result of identity theft. Do not cover any checks which were written and/or cashed fraudulently. Your credit rating should not be permanently affected, and no legal action should be taken against you. If any merchant, financial institution or collection agency suggests otherwise, simply restate your willingness to cooperate, but don't allow yourself to be coerced into paying fraudulent bills.

## RESOURCES

### Credit reporting bureaus

**Equifax:** P.O. Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374-0241. Report fraud: Call (800) 525-6285 and write to address above. Order credit report: (800) 685-1111. Opt out of pre-approved offers of credit: (800)-556-4711.

**Experian (formerly TRW):** P.O. Box 1017, Allen, TX 75013. Report fraud: Call (800) 301-7195 and write to address above. Order credit report: (800) 682-7654. Opt out of pre-approved offers of credit and marketing lists: (800) 353-0809.

## **Identity Theft**

---

**Trans Union:** P.O. Box 390, Springfield, PA 19064. Report fraud: (800) 680-7289 and write to Fraud Victim Assistance Division, P.O. Box 6790, Fullerton, CA 92634. Order credit report: (800) 916-8800. Opt out of pre-approved offers of credit and marketing lists: (800) 680-7293.

Remember, if you have been denied credit, you are entitled to a free credit report. If you are a victim of fraud, be sure to ask the credit bureaus for free copies. They will often provide them. Starting October 1997, free annual credit reports for victims of identity theft will be required by law.

### **Social Security Administration**

Report fraud: (800) 269-0271. Order your Earnings and Benefits Statement: (800) 772-1213.

### **To remove your name from mail and phone lists**

#### **Direct Marketing Association**

Mail Preference Service, P.O. Box 9008,  
Farmingdale, NY 11735.  
Telephone Preference Service, P.O. Box 9014,  
Farmingdale, NY 11735.

### **To report fraudulent use of your checks**

CheckRite: (800) 766-2748  
Chexsystems: (800) 428-9623  
Equifax: (800) 437-5120  
National Processing Co.: (800) 526-5380  
SCAN: (800) 262-7771  
TeleCheck: (800) 710-9898

### **Tenant screening companies**

This list is intended to be a sampling of tenant screening services, many of which are members of the National Association of Screening Agencies, a group of screening agencies that share information on tenants across the country. {<http://www.n-a-s-a.com>}

Identity theft victims should check their credit bureaus closely for possible inquiries by a tenant screening company. Identity theft victims who have reason to suspect that someone has used their name to rent property should check with local tenant screening agencies (listed below and in the local yellow pages under "tenant screening") to make sure their names are not wrongly listed as bad tenants, i.e. with eviction judgments or other negative information.

Tenant screening companies are considered to be credit reporting agencies under federal and many state laws, and consumers should have the ability to request a copy of their report and dispute any fraud or inaccuracies.

Accufax, 5801 East 41st Street, Suite 800, Tulsa, OK 74135 918-627-2226 800-256-8898

Ace Information Services, Inc. PO Box 988, Longwood, FL 32752 407-331-4150 800-877-1223

American Tenant Screen, Inc. 131 North Narberth Avenue, Narberth, PA 19072 610-664-2323

Amrent, Inc. 3000 Wilcrest Drive #164, Houston, TX 77042 713-266-1870

Creditor's Exchange, 2024 Swift North, Kansas City, MO 64114 816-221-1838

National Tenant Network, PO Box 1145, Lafayette, CA 94549 510-284-1204

## **Identity Theft**

---

Puget Sound Credit Screening Co., PO Box 111088, Tacoma, WA 98411 206-472-7336

Rental Research Services, Inc. 11300 Minnetonka Mills Road, Minnetonka, MN 55305  
612-935-5700

Rental Research, Inc., 30504 Pacific Highway, S. Federal Way, WA 98003 206-941-4010

Rental Services, Inc., 10050 Ralston Road, Arvada, CO 80004 303-420-1212

Renter Index, 14232 Marsh Lane #46, Dallas, TX 75234 972-484-3093

Resident Evaluation Service, Inc. 2755 South Locust Street #209, Denver, CO 80222  
303-758-8579

Resident Research Corp., 49 South Franklin Road, Indianapolis, IN 46219 317-895-0335

TenantCheck (serves middle-Tennessee area) (800) 781-0155

Tenant Record Center, Inc., PO Box 11892 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33339 305 561 -8839

Tenant Screening Credit (800) 523-2381

Tenant Screening Services, Inc., 7625 West 27th Street, Suite B, Tacoma, WA 98486  
206-565-9090

The Info. Center, Inc., 940 North Street Extension, Feeding Hills, MA 01030 413-789-0435

The Information Source, S. 9 Washington, #515, Spokane, WA 99204 509-624-2229

The Registry, Inc., 11140 Rockville #1200, Rockville, MD 20852 301-881-3400

The U.D. Registry, Inc., PO Box 9140, Van Nuys, CA 91409 213-873-5014 800-321780 Con-  
sumer Relations 10:30am-noon; 2-4pm.

### **Other useful resources**

#### **Federal Government Information Center:**

Call (800) 688-9889

for help in obtaining government agency phone numbers.

**CALPIRG**, 11965 Venice Blvd., Suite 408, Los Angeles, CA 90066. Phone: (310) 397-3404.  
Hotline: (800) 5334449. Web address: <http://www.pirg.org/calpirg>.

**Privacy Rights Clearinghouse**, 5384 Linda Vista Rd. Suite 306, San Diego, CA 92110. Phone:  
(619) 298-3396. Web address: <http://www.privacyrights.org>.

### **YOUR RIGHTS UNDER THE REVISED FEDERAL FAIR CREDIT REPORTING ACT**

The federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) is designed to promote accuracy, fairness, and privacy of information in the files of every credit bureau (or Consumer Reporting Agency--CRA). The law was significantly amended by the 1996 Congress, and took effect Sept. 30, 1997.

Most credit bureaus gather and sell information about you--such as if you pay your bills on time or have filed bankruptcy--to creditors, employers, landlords, and other businesses. You may not know that check verification companies and tenant screening firms, as well as the Medical Information Bureau, are all credit bureaus. You can find the complete text of the FCRA, 15 U.S.C. 1681-1681u, and helpful fact sheets, at the Federal Trade Commission's web site (<http://www.ftc.gov>). The FCRA gives you specific rights, as outlined below. You may have additional rights under state law, especially to obtain free credit reports. Contact your attorney general for more details.

**You must be told if information in your file has been used against you.** Anyone who uses information from a CRA to take action against you--such as denying an application for credit, insurance, or employment--must tell you, and give you the name, address, and phone number of the CRA that provided the consumer report, plus disclose your right to a free report after denial.

**You can find out what is in your file.** At your request, a CRA must give you the information in your file, and a list of everyone who has requested it recently. There is no charge for the report if a person has taken action against you because of information supplied by the CRA, if you request the report within 60 days of receiving notice of the action. You also are entitled to one free report every twelve months upon request if you certify that (1) you are unemployed and plan to seek employment within 60 days, (2) you are on welfare, or (3) your report is inaccurate due to fraud. Otherwise, a CRA may charge you up to eight dollars, unless you live in a free or low cost report state. If you live in Vermont, Massachusetts, Georgia, Maryland, Colorado or New Jersey, you can obtain a free credit report annually on request. In Maine, credit reports are \$3 and in Connecticut, the cost for the first report requested in a 12-month period is \$5.00 and \$7.50 for each subsequent report. Of course, if denied credit, you can request additional free reports under federal law in these states.

**You can dispute inaccurate information with the CRA.** If you tell a CRA that your file contains inaccurate information, the CRA must investigate the items (usually within 30 days) by presenting to its information source all relevant evidence you submit, unless your dispute is frivolous. The source must review your evidence and report its findings to the CRA. (The source also must advise national CRAs--to which it has provided the data--of any error.) The CRA must give you a written report of the investigation and a copy of your report if the investigation results in any change. If the CRA's investigation does not resolve the dispute, you may add a brief statement to your file. The CRA must normally include a summary of your statement in future reports. If an item is deleted or a dispute statement is filed, you may ask that anyone who has recently received your report be notified of the change.

**Inaccurate information must be corrected or deleted.** A CRA must remove or correct inaccurate or unverified information from its files, usually within 30 days after you dispute it. However, the CRA is not required to remove accurate data from your file unless it is outdated (as described below) or cannot be verified. If your dispute results in any change to your report, the CRA cannot reinsert into your file a disputed item unless the information source verifies its accuracy and completeness. In addition, the CRA must give you a written notice telling you it has reinserted the item. The notice must include the name, address and phone number of the information source.

## Identity Theft

---

**You can dispute inaccurate items with the source of the information.** If you tell anyone--such as a creditor who reports to a CRA--that you dispute an item, they may not then report the information to a CRA without including a notice of your dispute. In addition, once you've notified the source of the error in writing, it may not continue to report the information if it is, in fact, an error.

**Outdated information may not be reported.** In most cases, a CRA may not report negative information that is more than seven years old; ten years for bankruptcies.

**Access to your file is limited.** A CRA may provide information about you only to people with a need recognized by the FCRA--usually to consider an application with a creditor, insurer, employer, landlord, or other business. Only Vermont law requires your consent to access your report.

**Your consent is required for reports that are provided to employers, or reports that contain medical information.** A CRA may not give out information about you to your employer, or prospective employer, without your written consent. A CRA may not report medical information about you to creditors, insurers, or employers without your permission. An employer considering adverse action must show you the report.

**OPT-OUT! Choose to exclude your name from CRA lists for unsolicited credit and insurance offers.** Creditors and insurers are allowed by law to use credit reports to generate misleading junk marketing mailings. These "You've been pre-approved" letters have been implicated in theft of identity scams and also often make promises that the offerors don't have to keep. However, the law also says such offers must include a toll-free phone number for you to call if you want your name and address removed from future lists. If you call, you must be kept off the lists for two years. If you request it in writing, complete and return the CRA form provided for this purpose, and you must be taken off the lists indefinitely.

**Contact the big three bureaus to opt-out:** Experian: 800-353-0809; Trans Union: 800-680-7293; Equifax: 800-556-4711. The new law also gives big banks the right to share your credit report and other information with "affiliates." Your mutual fund may be owned by a bank that will make a credit card offer to you, for example. Those banks that desire to take advantage of "affiliate-sharing" must send you a one-time offer to opt-out. They're not required to have toll-free numbers. Opt-out. Shop around when you need financial products.

**You may seek damages from violators.** If a CRA, a user or (in some cases) a provider of CRA data, violates the FCRA, you may sue them in state or federal court.

**Credit Doctors:** Credit repair doctors are strictly regulated under the new law. Their promises that they can "change your social security number" to hide your negative credit background are illegal. Don't give credit doctors your money. Use it to pay your bills and re-build your credit.

**WHERE TO COMPLAIN:** The FCRA gives several different federal agencies authority to enforce the FCRA. If your complaint is about a credit bureau, department store, credit repair doctor, or other noninsured financial institution, complain to the Consumer Response Center, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580. Telephone: 202-326-3761.

Complaints about financial institutions (banks and credit unions) are handled by one of several agencies. If you're not sure which is your bank's primary regulator, call your bank and ask. (The FTC will forward mix-mailed complaints.) Send a copy of all complaints to your state Attorney General, who also has jurisdiction under both state and federal laws.

UPDATE-----UPDATE-----UPDATE-----UPDATE-----UPDATE-----UPDATE

Effective October 30, 1998, theft of identity is now a federal crime against an individual, thus giving the victim standing to press law enforcement to prosecute cases and to seek restitution. The FTC is obligated under the law to assist complainants. The Congressional delegation from Arizona was instrumental in pushing Congress to produce legislation similar to the state's.

## Chapter V

# USING A MAIL FORWARDING SERVICE

A mail drop is a private business that receives mail on your behalf, and handles it according to your instructions. They operate with the full knowledge and cooperation of the Postal Service, yet provide many more services and convenience which the Postal Service does not offer. Indeed, the principal reason mail drops even exist is because the Postal Service has never chosen to be fully responsive to public need for postal convenience and security. In the early Seventies there were numerous instances of people being on waiting lists up to a year just to obtain a post office box!

Mail drops are also known by other names, such as Mail Forwarding Service, Remail Service, Mail Receiving Service, the central purpose being that they will receive your mail from the post office and make it available to you as you require. The official attitude of the Postal Service is at least ambivalent, since these businesses gladly handle mail, which would otherwise present "problems" for postal employees. Today these are perhaps as many as 5000 mail drops in the U.S. alone, most offering a wide selection of services for which their customers are more than willing to pay.

### WHY USE A MAIL DROP?

---

Read the following story:

*"My name is Bruce B. and I want to tell you a true story that could save your life as well as your loved ones. Last New Year's Eve my girlfriend and I were on our way to dinner when we were followed by a thug in an old car who thought I had cut him off. He followed us to the restaurant and pulled into the parking lot behind us. Frankly I was a little scared. There are lots of nuts around these days. I saw him write down my license plate number and as he sped off he shouted, 'You'll hear from me real soon!' Unfortunately it is too easy for a street scum like this to obtain my address. But little did he know I receive my mail at the Hollywood Mail & Message Service.*

*"Having your home address on your driver's license or vehicle registration, not to mention your checkbook can be dangerous. Protect yourself. Don't become a victim! Women are especially vulnerable, protect yourself from potential stalkers. But everyone should protect his or her privacy for safety. Believe me I know all about privacy and protection... I'm a private investigator."*

*Bruce B., Private Investigator, Los Angeles*

---

The above story illustrates a primary reason for using a mail drop, namely **PRIVACY**. Personal privacy affords protection from others who may seek to take advantage of you or threaten you in some undesirable manner. Other people do not have to know all about your life and affairs (despite the idiocy practiced on TV talk shows), and you **CAN** do much to protect yourself from snoops and criminals. Consider the following ways a mail drop can serve you, as well as offer benefits you might not otherwise have thought possible.

### CONVENIENCE

At most mail drops you can call in to see if you have received mail for the day. You can buy stamps, ship parcels via UPS (and other carriers), receive parcels from just about any carrier, and likely never have to stand in a line. If you travel often or are gone for periods of time,

## Using a Mail Forwarding Service

---

the mail drop will hold your mail, or remail it to you at addresses you designate, whenever you choose. Many retirees actually travel continuously, as do some salesmen, and they use mail drops as their "permanent address." Many mail drops also offer 24-hour access to boxes, and operate public fax service as well. They typically have copy machines, and can assist with packaging for shipping via UPS and others.

### SECURITY

Mail drop customers can avoid theft and tampering with their mail, which happens unfortunately too often in "public" mailboxes at apartment complexes, even quiet suburbs. Thieves seem to know just when important checks, banking data, and credit card mailings are due to arrive in the mail, and help themselves to it. Until recently the Postal Service blithely accepted "Change of Address" forms by mail, which enabled scammers to divert people's mail long enough to steal most of their financial data and perpetrate massive banking and credit card fraud.

Today the Postal Service does notify both addresses before completing the change of address, at least alerting potential victims in advance. Once mail has been received at a mail drop, however, the Postal Service will no longer forward it or recognize a change of address. Your mail STAYS at the mail drop, to be handled according to YOUR instructions. Your mail is SAFER at a mail drop.

### PRIVACY

The outside envelope or covering of each piece of mail reveals a lot of information relating to the person to whom it is addressed. The FBI and other postal snoops often conduct what they call "mail covers" when they begin to investigate a possible target. They simply go to the post office and arrange to have all the mail addressed to a particular name and/or address recorded or photocopied with respect to the return address. That list of return addresses can quickly reveal most of the people and firms with whom the subject conducts business—a shopping list of places to go and people to see.

This form of surveillance is legal since, technically, the mail never leaves "the custody" of the Postal Service. The investigator learns personal information relating to reading preferences, organization or group affiliations, banking and financial relationships, personal contacts, and any other possible reference which can be discerned from the outer covering. Not bad for sorting through some "ordinary" mail...

We include this, not because you may be a target of investigation, but because ANYBODY can do the same thing simply by having access to your mail. So why give them the opportunity? A mail drop can keep sensitive mail away from inquiring minds.

Any mail drop worth the name will allow you to use code names, sometimes for a small extra charge per name, per month. If a mail drop will not allow code names you definitely don't want to use them. This would be a clear-cut indication that the operator was a cowardly pinhead who would roll over the instant any investigator walked in the door. He's the kind who would sell out his own mother for lack of last month's rental on the box.

Correspondence, which you do not want those around you to discover, can be sent to a mail drop. People involved in a divorce, child custody matters, and private business concerns are all natural candidates for the services of a mail drop.

Public figures, celebrities, and wealthy individuals have long used a variation of a mail drop by having their correspondence directed to their attorneys and accountants, typically under fictitious names. People who enjoy exotic, pornographic, or otherwise "scandalous" material wisely have their correspondence and purchases mailed to private mail drops, again, using code names. Postal carriers are very aware of mailings of this nature, so why not add them to the list of people who don't deserve to know of your private enjoyments?

People in debt who fear the imminent arrival of collectors can buy time and space by using mail drops. Their debts may not disappear, but the harassing will take place in a much more neutral arena.

Other users elect to make a mail drop their official "residence" for tax purposes, selecting states that have much lower income and sales taxes. (Nevada and Texas impose no state income taxes.) Likewise, auto insurance rates can vary dramatically by state, and a careful use



## **Using a Mail Forwarding Service**

---

of a mail drop can secure much lower rates. This would be especially useful to people who travel constantly. They are in a position to declare virtually any state their legal residence and benefit from whatever tax and insurance differentials might exist. The continuous use of a particular mail drop in the state they select will be proof enough of "residence."

### **BUSINESS**

Many businessmen prefer to receive their mail early in the day. Mail drops provide this since they can arrange "caller service" at their local post office and pick up all mail for the day, usually by 9AM. It doesn't take them long to sort their customers' mail, and clients can even call in to see if any has arrived.

In most businesses there are practical needs that require mail privacy: possible sale of the business; "secret" trade research; solicitation of prospective new employees; inquiries about possible relocation of the business; using "blind" ads for information, hiring, market research, etc. Devious bosses might "churn the water" by running blind ads certain types of employees to see if any of their current employees is eager to leave for better pastures.

Startup businesses can take advantage of "prestige" addresses by using certain mail drops. Home-based businesses can avoid hassles with local zoning and licensing requirements by using the street address of a convenient mail drop. (Most localities will not issue business licenses to a residential address.) Businesses that want to expand their "horizons," can use mail drops in major cities to show they are "big-time," or mail services overseas to show they are now "international." An address CAN convey much meaning, especially when those communicating never meet.

### **FINANCIAL PRIVACY**

The address of a mail drop in a distant city can be the "base" for opening secret bank accounts, creating dummy companies for billing purposes, or for setting up secret accounts for investing discreetly. Foreign mail drops can be used for the same purposes, with the added benefit of being beyond the reach of the IRS and FBI. When foreign ID is used to open accounts offshore, those accounts are assumed to be of that "nationality," and will not be revealed to U.S. agents seeking information about "Americans."

### **CRIMINAL ACTIVITY**

The hot targets of U.S. law enforcement today are drugs, pornography, and money laundering. People who use mail drops to further these activities will receive no help from the services. Indeed, most operators are quite sensitive to potentially criminal mailings and will alert local authorities in a hot second. Anyone doing crime can only expect the consequences. Mail drops will not knowingly put themselves in the position of "aiding and abetting," so be advised.

### **NEW IDENTITY**

The use of mail drops in creating new identities is invaluable. They can help create total separation between the old identity and the new. They can also assist in helping establish the "age" of the new identity by serving as a conduit for old school and employment "records."

People who want to take on a new identity in the future can take their time and begin compiling their "history" in advance of the time they wish to slip totally into the new identity. The one major requirement for this task is that they KEEP THEIR MOUTHS SHUT. Arranging for a mail drop to retain sensitive papers under a special code name is a very discreet way to ensure ultimate success.

### **WHAT A MAIL DROP CAN DO FOR YOU**

The following list of services should give you a broad view of what most mail drops offer their customers. While some have kept somewhat to the obvious business of mail receiving and handling, many others have expanded into areas of special interest to small, startup businesses. See what they might offer you.

- No waiting time for a private mailbox.

## Using a Mail Forwarding Service

---

- You can use their street address as your own.
- You can use code names, or your business names to receive mail.
- You can call the mail drop to see if you have any mail (and they will likely tell you where it's from, if you ask).
- You can access your mail 24 hours a day at most services.
- You can receive and ship via UPS, FedEx, and other shippers.
- You can have your mail forwarded (or kept) as you require. This means even remailing under another name if you request it.
- You can keep your actual residence secret, since the mail drop is not required to reveal it to non-law enforcement agents. If you use a Post Office box for commercial purposes, however, the Postal Service WILL reveal it to anyone who asks, even if it is your residence. Some people will use their prior residence (or even a fictitious one) when setting up service at a mail drop—just in case. The truly cautious will use the address of some other mail drop.
- The Postal Service requires Form I583 (**Application for Delivery of Mail Through Agent**) to be used by mail drops and it asks for two forms of ID. While we do not suggest using fake ID, it could be used since the application is never "checked out." One copy goes to the Post Office and the other stays with the mail drop. ONLY if the customer becomes the target of a criminal inquiry will the information on the application be reviewed. New rules effective April 1999 require the presenting of a photo ID by the applicant to open or renew service.
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** For the application to be accepted, the "home (or business) address" will have to be the same as that shown on the drivers license, which can actually be a P.O. Box, other MFS, or out-of-state. If the indicated address matches the ID, the Postal Service considers this "verified." The MFS can also accept applications from a distance, but the signature will have to be notarized.
- Having a distant mail drop remail your letters from their location can give correspondents the idea that you are out of the area, perhaps on an extended vacation. If they are mailed from a distant foreign country, you could create the notion that you may never return...
- Mail drops can serve as a form of "safe-deposit" since you can mail to yourself and instruct them to hold all mail until further instructions.
- Many mail drops also have sideline businesses that can be useful to their customers: Locksmithing and key duplication; Accounting and tax services; Passport photos; Office supplies; Packaging and shipping supplies; Gifts and postcards.
- In situations such as divorce and change of identity mail drops can offer the advantage of having time and space—in advance. Planning for the "event" is easier when correspondence remains secure and arrangements are made without the pressures of a crisis. Further, the step into a new identity or lifestyle is much easier when such matters as bank accounts, trusts, title to property, and background data have been secured in advance.

### HOW TO FIND A MAIL DROP RIGHT FOR YOU

Here is a checklist of considerations for choosing a mail drop for your mailing and privacy needs. Some of the items may not pertain to your situation, but you should realize most are intended for your own protection. Consider them "good form."

- Your local Yellow Pages may list other mail drops besides those in our Directory. We have confirmed the services of all the mail drops listed in our Directory, but there are new services starting up all the time.
- Private mail drops do charge more for their service than the Post Office, but you have already discovered the many shortcomings of a simple P.O. Box.
- If the operator of a mail drop will not let you use code names or a variety of business names, end the conversation and look for one who will. You CAN use code names, and they are legal. Technically, anything addressed to your address is YOUR mail.
- Use only mail drops with street names that you can use as your own. If they operate only out of a P.O. Box, what's the advantage?
- If it suits your purposes open the account with a fake name and address, backed up with fake ID of course. This is easier to do than you might imagine. If you are applying from a distance, the application will be handled by mail or fax, all the easier for supplying the requested ID.

## Using a Mail Forwarding Service

---

- Pay for services in cash, certainly not your personal check. If you mail in the fees you can use Postal money orders (the cheapest and most anonymous), and write in only the payee (mail drop) name. Keep the receipt should it be needed.
- Choose the physical location of the mail drop with an eye out for a possible "stake-out." Can someone easily observe all comings and goings? Visit the box at odd hours, never on a schedule. Choose a service with a 24-hour lobby. When approaching and picking up your mail, BE OBSERVANT. If someone seems to be just standing around, and that bothers you, it might be best to come back some other time to get your mail.
- Be wary of strange-colored or -shaped packages, and certainly anything you were not expecting to receive. These may be "decoy" items that a snoop has sent you to enable him to identify you and track you. You NEVER have to sign for any mail unless you want to do so. Unclaimed, it will be returned to the sender.
- The location of the mail drop should offer lots of open parking, easy access and an "open" exposure such that you could drive by first to see if anything seems unusual or potentially threatening. Pick up your mail fast and leave. Never "hang around" reading your mail.
- Select a mail drop that has been in business for several years at least. All the services listed in our Directory have been in business five years or more, and are likely to remain in business. You do not want important mail stamped "Unable to Forward" because some fly-by-night operator became tired of the business.
- When you do have occasion to have direct contact with the operator, ALWAYS be polite. Problems and misunderstandings can arise in any relationship, but the operator will extend himself (actually there are lots of women in this business, too) in your favor if he already knows he will have your cooperation and understanding. Kill 'em with kindness...

### HOW TO SET UP AND USE YOUR MAIL DROP

Do not apply in person, if possible. Use a telephone from a public place for inquiries. Use an alias if you like. Avoid any connection between your actual address and telephone number and the new address of the mail drop.

Do not apply for credit using the address of a mail drop. These addresses are known to creditors, and such applications will be "flagged". Even more important, do not have existing credit accounts listed ("additional address") under your new address. These are reported on your credit report, and are a quick read for any investigator trying to find you, or look into your affairs.

Retrieving your mail can be risky, potentially dangerous to your privacy. Use care and planning before arriving at the mail drop. Do not fall for ruses suddenly sprung on you by a "stranger" at the mail drop, or in the immediate vicinity. There would be a great chance he is an investigator. IMPORTANT: There are women investigators these days, too, and they can be especially convincing. If you are approached by such a person, DON'T retrieve any mail or indicate that you have a box there. YOU have a ruse, too, such as you just needed to buy some stamps...

Be aware of any odd packages, unexpected mail, or notices that you have "Certified," "Registered," or "Receipt for Merchandise" mail, for which you would have to sign for delivery. You might ask to see the items, but unless you are expecting them, you have the right to refuse the mail and have it returned "Unclaimed" to the sender. An investigator trying to tie you to the address will use inexpensive ruses such as these to "prove" you use the address.

When you do receive unexpected mail, the first question you should ask yourself is "how did they get my (code) name and address?" If it appears to be random, bulk mail (look at the postmark and indication of what postage was paid) you can treat it as ordinary advertising material. If it came First Class, look out. Somebody already knows more than you might want him or her to know. Be especially aware of any letters offering some kind of "too good to be true" proposition. Cops use these to catch parole violators, etc., by telling the lucky recipient he has won some fantastic prize, or inherited a large estate from an unknown relative. Don't take the bait.

You can always consider using a second mail drop as another barrier between you and your correspondents. Mail drops will forward your mail as you request, even out of the country. You just have to pay postage and their fees. People who want others to think they have de-

## Using a Mail Forwarding Service

---

parted for good will use a foreign mail drop as their known "forwarding address." This mail drop will then be instructed to remail any items back to the second mail drop, likely still near home. Foreign mail drops tend to be very protective of their customers' needs for privacy and discretion, and will cooperate accordingly. There are many variations on this theme, but the idea may appeal to you, and you will be able to arrange service to suit your needs exactly.

As soon as possible you will want to "test" the mail drop by mailing various items to yourself to see how they handle the mail. If you are asking for special handling, such as forwarding overseas, holding the mail, or remailings under new code names, you will want to be sure they are following your instructions reliably.

Be a good customer by paying on time and not getting involved in conflicts with the operator. They tend to remember nasty people very well. If you are using a foreign drop as a cover it would be prudent to make any transactions "match" your address by using foreign money orders, postage, etc. The operators of foreign drops are VERY accommodating, and will be able to do this for you.

Remember that the purpose of using a mail drop is to keep your personal affairs private. Be alert for possible intrusions, and don't ignore them. If you start to smell doggie-poo, maybe there's a dog nearby.

### **SPECIAL NOTE ON MAIL BOXES, ETC.**

Do you like McDonald's? Do you like knowing that your Big Mac and fries will always taste the same no matter which McDonald's you choose? If you do, the mail drop for you might be one of the more than 3,000 locations of MAIL BOXES ETC. These franchised services can be found in probably all the larger towns in the U.S., and will be easy to find in both the White Pages and Yellow Pages of local telephone directories.

Should you select a Mail Boxes Etc. to handle your mail you will find that they typically provide a full range of services, and have a full shop of additional items to sell you or otherwise assist with your mailing and shipping.

The franchises for Mail Boxes Etc. are the most expensive to obtain, and undoubtedly require certain levels of "cooperation" with headquarters. While we don't want to infer that this chain of mail drops is in any way unacceptable to our readers, it seems only fair to question how much "independence" and "independence of mind" the operator of such a franchise is capable of exercising, especially in areas of discretion with customer policies. It has always been our observation that the larger the organization, the more rigid its rules. And conversely, the smaller the organization the more flexible in meeting unique customer demands. Don't forget: the LARGEST mail service is the U.S. Postal Service, and we know how flexible they are...

### **IMPORTANT UPDATE, 1999**

The US Postal Service announced a number of important policy changes affecting MFS operations, effective April 26, 1999. Some of these apply directly to you, the customer, and we need to detail them for you. The basic thrust of the new rules is ostensibly to make users of MFS services more "visible," that is, less able to "hide" behind the address of an MFS. Let us explain the most important new regulations.

First, all new and continuing customers will have to complete a new Form 1583—with ID—within 60 days of April 26, 1999. Customers who are "away" can submit notarized forms. The purpose is to "revalidate" customer names with ID. So long as the person submitting, and signing, the 1583 can show ID tied to the home or business address shown on the 1583, he can also include other names to receive mail. A copy of the 1583 is kept at the MFS and another is submitted to the local post office. If any changes are later made, a new 1583 will have to be completed. The only "verification" is by determining if the ID address and that shown on the 1583 are the same. The post office doesn't care if the addresses are out-of-state, post office boxes, or those of another MFS. Just match the ID, folks.

## Using a Mail Forwarding Service

---

Secondly, customers will have to use a prescribed format for their MFS address. There will be only one allowed designation of this address, and only a six month time limit to comply. By October 26, 1999, all MFS mail will have to be addressed as follows, or ***it will be returned to sender.*** Your address will have to read thus:

Your name, PMB #123		Your name
Street address (of MFS)	or	PMB #123
City, State, ZIP		Street address (of MFS)
		City, State, ZIP

The incorrect way to format this address would be:

Your name  
Street address (of MFS), PMB #123  
City, State, ZIP

Finally, the Postal Service is requiring that MFSs be responsible for customers' mail for six months after service is ended. After six months mail can be refused if it is returned to the Postal Service the next day. So what happens to your mail during the six months after your service is terminated? First, the MFS will not be required to forward it to you, but neither can it return it to the Postal Service. It would seem that the burden will be on you to "bail out" any mail you might receive during this time by arranging with the operator for delivery, which at the very least will include additional postage for forwarding. If the customer fails to claim the mail after six months, it would seem that the operator will simply return it to the Postal Service marked,

**Undeliverable  
Commercial Mail Receiving Agency  
No Authorization to Receive Mail for this Addressee**

### SO WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ...?

Under the new regulations users of MFSs will have to add the "PMB" designation to their addresses whether they like it or not. This will probably not inconvenience those customers who simply want an address to receive ordinary mail, and don't need to rely on the MFS address for privacy or security. The "problem" now with the MFSs is that they act as your AGENT, and are thus subject to whatever the Postal Service demands of them. They will not be able to help you avoid the "PMB" on your address.

If you want to avoid this open declaration of your "non-address," you need to consider other options. Here are some possibilities.

1. The simplest way to redirect your mail would be to put "care of" (c/o) after your code name and use the name and address of a cooperating friend, relative, business or other entity that already receives mail at an address convenient to you. The biggest objection to this practice is that the person could be put on the spot by someone inquiring about your code name. If you used this technique, at least provide the person with a good reason why you need to have your mail left there, such as always traveling due to your work (sales, musician, military, etc.).

2. You could avoid the PMB designation all together by using a foreign MFS. Have your mail sent out of the country under your code name, and instruct the foreign MFS to send it to you inside a new envelope addressed to your regular name and address. You will find that foreign services, often called "accommodation" services, are very reliable and discreet, and will follow your instructions precisely.

## Using a Mail Forwarding Service

---

3. Since you do not want to have your code name associated with your home address, what you need is another physical address. The easiest would be to make arrangements with a company in your area offering "mini offices." They are sometimes called "secretarial services" as well. Besides offering the availability of actual office space (not much!), a "conference room," telephone/faxing services, and even an on-location live secretary, these companies provide you with a **mail box** at which you can receive mail. These companies are not MFSs because they do not pick up your mail for you at the post office. Rather, the local postal carrier has to trot over to your location and bring the mail to you—at the street address, and in whatever name happens to go with the box you are using. Of course these services are going to cost more than the MFS, but if your needs are great enough, they can indeed provide the privacy and security you need. And don't forget, since you will be a "company," the names can be as numerous and changing as you wish. If the mail is addressed to that location, the Postal Service will deliver it—with no "PMB."

## Chapter VI

# LIVING WITH NEW ID

We choose to use new ID for reasons like privacy, security, and even a chance to "start life over." Having a collection of convincing new ID cards and related documents is a very nice undertaking, but actually using your new ID also means *living* with it. Once you decide to create and adopt a new identity, you then have to "put it into practice."

Your new identity will not remain a static or fixed concept, but rather an on-going and continuous building of relationships in all aspects of your personal world. Your residence, communications, livelihood, personal and real property, financial activity, and even friends and acquaintances will reflect the imprint of your new identity—as you choose to use it.

At the heart of this process is your attitude. You must be completely motivated to use your new identity. You must want your new identity to be used and accepted unquestioningly for the purposes you choose. To expose yourself as possibly "not the same person" you claim to be can invite all kinds of unwanted questions. Your motivation for using new ID should be to make your life more pleasant and potentially profitable, not the source of new disasters. You must be committed to your new identity, and committed to making it work.

Adopting a new identity will become a form of personal discipline. You must become "conscious"—as in "wide awake"—for any and all situations in which your identity could be questioned or compromised. Your attitude will be that, of course, you are who you say you are: "just check my ID." You will not want to be confrontational, however; as this would only encourage more doubt and further inquiry. It will be much better to have ordinary, everyday answers offered with the assumption your identity is not in question. You're just another person going about his business...

Sometimes people (especially Americans) are nosy almost to the point of rudeness. They want to know where you're from, where you went to school (and how far), who you work for (what kind of work you do), and, in the South, "who y'all kin to?". You can expect other questions relating to your income, religion, possessions, interests, hobbies, sexual preference, and marital status, etc., etc. Most people probably think it's OK to ask such "conversational" questions, thanks to trash TV and radio, but the answers can give others far too much information about you. People will expect answers, naturally, so have them ready. Just don't give them the answers they expect. Here's how to do it:

It would be in the best interest of your new identity not to be very interesting at all. Construct a background of standard answers that will discourage further questioning. Be vague: "I'm originally from west Texas, but most of my family's back East. Be self-effacing: "I tried college, but it just wasn't for me." Turn the table: "Work? I sure could use a job. You know anything in construction?" Money: "Hey, I've been broke for years." Family relationships: "Yeah, I've got a half-sister, but she never writes." Religion: "Sunday's are for football." You get the idea. Be modest, never boastful. Have answers that leave the conversation dead in the water. Finally, never try to appear "superior" to the person doing the asking. Just "kill 'em with kindness." They will go away priding themselves on how superior they are to you, and glad they won't have to include you in their life. Be imminently forgettable! In the words of one of my Southern relatives, "You can tell the truth, boy...just don't tell everything you know."

For the balance of this chapter we will cover other "problem areas" of putting a new identity into practice. We have gained much insight over the years from hundreds of readers who generously shared their experiences with "paper tripping", and we are including many of them here. But please don't regard our solutions as the only ways to handle these situations. We would hope that our readers will continue to inform us of additional techniques they find successful, as well as how they deal with problems not mentioned here.

### MEDICAL RECORDS

Health care in the U.S. offers almost "free market" opportunities for new identity. Unlike the nationalized systems in most modern countries, U.S. health providers compete in a fragmented community of independent doctors, hospitals, clinics, trauma centers, and research facilities. Insurance companies offer scores of competing plans for coverage, with "government" involvement only an adjunct to the system as a whole.

The "Big Brother" of medical care is the Medical Information Bureau (MIB) just outside Boston. Their database contains the health histories of at least 15 million Americans, which are accessed by some 600 insurance companies, who use them to underwrite individual life, health and disability policies. The information in these files comes from *insurance applications submitted by individuals*, and is kept for seven years. The MIB never checks for inaccuracies; the only way you may find out about an inaccurate record is if you are denied coverage. You can now get a free copy of your MIB report if you are denied insurance coverage, in part, because of an MIB report. The MIB can be reached at P.O. Box 105, Essex Station, Boston, MA 02112. Telephone: 617-426-3660.

When you need medical care and will be using your new identity, here are considerations you will want to keep in mind:

The MIB does not file your records by Social Security Number (surprise!). They create their own filing system to identify records. (EXPLAIN, if info available)

When you go to a doctor's office for the first time you are typically asked to "fill out some forms", which will provide the doctor with information regarding your health condition/problems, etc., as well as "billing information" so he can be assured of payment. You can use your new identity with confidence, since no proof will be demanded. Whatever drivers license number and/or SSN you give will be fine. Since you will not likely have insurance (yet), inform them that you will be paying cash, but that you would also like to receive whatever "cash discount" they can provide. You might allude to "shopping around" for better insurance, and, by the way, could they recommend a good plan/company, etc. They might feel extra sorry for you when you tell them that you lost your group coverage when your last employer moved the company to Brazil.

Watch out for waivers. Read them before signing. Doctors (and insurers) frequently seek your permission to release your medical information. If necessary, inform the doctor that you are willing to pay directly for his services in order that your information remain confidential in his files. He should get the message, and will take steps to safeguard your privacy.

Be wary of free screenings for cholesterol level, blood pressure, osteoporosis, etc. Information you give will likely end up in the hands of businesses looking for your health care. Ask who has access to the results. If you don't like their answer, decline the offer.

An unexpected visit to an emergency room or hospital stay will result in a more intensive inquiry about how you intend to pay for their services. If you do not have insurance, you can tell them it will be a "cash account", and that you will make arrangements later with the cashier. If you're an illegal alien, or recent immigrant on welfare, no problem; they know you won't be paying, and that they can tap various outside sources (taxpayers) for payment, which they are very used to doing, thank you very much.

If you have insurance in your new name, great. We recommend getting an individual policy as a great contribution to your new identity. No verification of your identity will be made other than to see if you are already on file with the MIB, which you won't be. To the insurance company and the MIB, you are just a new customer. The agent may ask for your SSN and drivers license, but they will not be verified. The SSN you provide in this situation can be your made up number (see chapter on SSN), and you can just recite your license number and expiration date.

### SCHOOL RECORDS

Let's assume your school years are now behind you, and that you completed your high school program, went on for a Bachelor's degree, perhaps even an advanced degree. You might want to have your transcripts and/or credentials issued in a new name, if not now, perhaps at a later date "just in case..." You obviously want to know if this can be done, but never heard of



anyone's doing it. Rest easy. You won't have to take all those courses over again, just to get your papers in a new name. There are better, easier ways to go. Let's look at the possibilities.

First, if you never did finish high school, you would be doubly remiss if you didn't take advantage of the GED program available at over 3,000 testing centers in the U.S. and Canada. Any local high school "front desk" can get you the details. By passing five tests you will obtain the equivalent of a high school diploma, readily accepted by 93 percent of colleges and universities, and over 96 percent of all employers. The name attached to your GED can be any that you wish to present with a minimum of ID, which can be obtained by mail from sellers listed and displayed in our book, I.D. by Mail, \$19.95 from Eden Press. There are also firms listed which offer blank GED forms (as well as blank diplomas, degrees, etc.)

While we're on the subject of blank school certificates, I.D. by Mail actually offers many possibilities, from strictly blank forms which you can complete yourself, to custom-designed and "filled-in" diplomas, degrees, and other credentials—any name, any school. These can make impressive wall decor, and can also serve to add background to your alternate ID. Their only limitations are when someone decides to use them in a job application, and the employer seeks verification from the school. Big problem? Well, maybe yes, maybe no.

First, many employers never do verify school records. Inertia plays a part here. Employers simply make judgment calls about applicants. If they seem motivated and act the part, they get the job. Employees who behave unscrupulously, cause problems, and force the issues of proper background and preparation are the ones who get "checked out"—prior to firing.

Another reason employers skip verifying education records is the sheer multitude of schools, literally thousands of possible institutions which they would have to contact. Frankly, there are more important concerns on the minds of management in general and personnel in particular. If the applicant acts like a college graduate and communicates like one, then he probably is one.

Personnel managers are typically pretty savvy about people, and will be looking for small signs that indicate the qualities they are looking for and expect in potential employees. If you can communicate on at least the same level as the personnel manager, he will assume you are also on his level (suitably educated). If some obviously mispronounced words or an ungrammatical sentence comes out of your mouth, and you're claiming a BA from State U., you'll never know why the interview ended so abruptly....

The other side of the coin, however, is that schools are overwhelmingly cooperative with employers who inquire about former students' records, attendance, degrees, etc. They have a vested interest in seeing that their students gain employment, and consider such inquiries as coming from friends, not enemies. Over 78% of post-secondary schools will verify attendance and degrees, and most of these will do so over the telephone when supplied with the appropriate identifiers. About 85% will provide an exact transcript when the school's guidelines are followed. But so many employers never bother to ask..!

But back to our original concern, getting your records in a new name. It would be fair to say that colleges and universities are almost never asked to reissue diplomas, degrees, and other credentials in new names. (Why would "successful" college graduates ever want to do a thing like that...?!!) But just because something is supposedly unheard of doesn't mean that it can't be done. In fact, if you have the record at their school and you have a compelling reason for your request, they will accommodate you and provide the documents you request. You can present evidence, for example, of a legal name change along with whatever "story" you think appropriate, and they will comply. You just have to ASK FOR IT. And don't be put off by some low-level, twerpy clerk in the Dean's office, either. As an alum, you have certain rights and expectations which the school must recognize, and the Dean himself isn't too busy to help, if need be. The Good Book says, "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be open unto you." A little attitude helps, too!

The school will be concerned first that you are indeed the person in the records. They just can't have people popping in off the street copying other people's records in new names. You obviously will be able to identify your old self, but you will have to prevail in your effort to convince them to identify your old records in your new name. Different schools will handle this request in different ways. Some might insist on an attachment of some kind to the old record. They will most certainly link the old and new records in their files, along with whatever

documentation/justification you give them. Other schools may prepare new records entirely, without any mention or notation regarding the old name.

In your request you will naturally insist that any future inquiries regarding your records be answered only in your new name. The clerk or official who handles your application for change of name will probably need some educating on the matter, but your serious demeanor and convincing story should get full cooperation. Here's a story we know worked very well, because it's true.

A frightened wife of five years was separated from her abusive, vindictive husband, who also happened to be a prosecuting attorney in a large Southern city. She had an advanced degree in nursing, and was qualified to work in any hospital she chose. Several times she tried to relocate, but her husband made it very obvious he could always track her down, and with the most intimidating of "messages." It got to the point she could no longer keep a job yet needed to support herself. Her profession paid very well, but she needed to get away, completely, to work in a safe environment. She was advised to change her name legally (but without public notice) and secure a new SSN, which she was able to do. (See our chapter on Social Security Numbers.) She was also told to take this information to the university where she studied and trained and request that they reissue her degree and credentials in her new name. The school was only too happy to oblige, and did exactly as she asked. She removed herself from constant danger, and is now back working in her chosen profession.

Your school undoubtedly doesn't reissue degrees and documents in new names every day, but that is no reason they can't do so in your case, NOW. They will want a believable story, of course, but you will make the job easier for them if you can show that you are already functioning under the new name. It's the same old story: give them the paper they want, and you'll get the paper you want. If they can see your case in the light of helping a former student avoid a life of diminished expectations yet now make a turn for likely success, they will assist you—just ASK!

Finally, perhaps you never completed your college work, or left after discovering college "just wasn't for you." Some years later, however, you discover that a lot of doors are really, truly closed to those without at least a Bachelor's degree. The problem now, though, is that you can't take the time off to go back to regular classes and there's no way you could spend the next three to five years pursuing the degree you want. Again, relax. There is a great solution, and hundreds of legitimate colleges and universities are willing to help you.

Now you can earn a Bachelor's, Master's, MBA, Doctorate, even a law degree without ever taking a single traditional course, and in most cases without ever visiting a college campus. The book you will need is BEAR'S GUIDE TO EARNING COLLEGE DEGREES NON-TRADITIONALLY. People are earning degrees on the basis of equivalency exams, correspondence, or credit for work and life experience from over 650 schools and special programs. You can do the work at your own pace and at your personal convenience, and under any name you choose to use on your application. This large book (current edition, 336 pages) will have the answers you need to gain a college degree quickly and easily. It is available from Eden Press for \$27.95. Eden's Privacy Catalog also lists eight other college degree-related books, any of which could help you advance your career with a college degree—in your new name, if you wish.

### LEAVE NO TRACES

Probably the most private person in America for the past twenty years was Ted Kaczynski, the Unabomber. He had no car (no driver license/motor vehicle records), no job (no IRS/employment records), and no computer (no movements/interests on the Internet). He lived essentially as a hermit, with charitable support from his family. He was so private, the FBI never found him...

None of us needs to live so "deep cover", but there are many actions we can take daily that will secure much needed privacy for our lifestyles and personal identity. The entire world does not need to know everything you possess or enjoy doing, so why make them privy to it? Ultimately the only way to protect your personal information is to leave no loose ends, no leads, no traces that can come back to you.

## Living with New ID

---

The modern world works best when it is unthinkingly and remorselessly stripping away your privacy. Throw sand into the gear box by using phones other than your own when calling numbers with 800 and 900 prefixes. This will nullify a company's or list compiler's efforts to retrieve your home or business telephone number for later callback, at dinnertime, of course.

If you must have bank accounts, spread them around, and keep them modest in size. Don't use mail drops to receive any banking statements, etc. Instruct your bank(s) to hold all materials for your personal pickup. This will help prevent a "mail cover" from discovering your banking connections.

(PRIVACY NOTE: Minnesota has toughened its law on child support, requiring all banks to report quarterly the SSN, address, and "all account information" of any non-custodial parent owing child support. The practical effect of this is that the state's banks are now simply supplying a list of *all* account holders with their identifying numbers. Where this information ends up and how it is ultimately used should be of concern to anyone having a bank account in the state of Minnesota. Sounds like easy pickin's for any snoop worth his fake ID.)

If you secure a new SSN, change to a new name, and completely alter your date of birth, you will be able to open a checking account, etc., that will be untraceable to your old identity. Observe the operating precautions above, however, to maintain a high level of privacy. You could also give the bank a completely fictitious address. Why? Again, you don't want banking material arriving where you live or decide to receive other mail. If they DO send you something, it will come back to them marked "No Such Address, Return to Sender." Should they ever question you at the bank (where you pick up your statements) why your mail was returned to them, you can inform them bluntly that they were asked not to mail anything in the first place. Your activities keep you on the move a lot, and you don't like to have mail lying about for others to peruse, period. Kindly do as I have asked, OK?

Open your personal account with a blank money order, which you can purchase virtually anywhere with cash. Write in your new name, endorse it, and you have your opening deposit, which the bank will be only too happy to accept. The bank will require ID such as a drivers license or state ID card, but this is something you would have already taken care of prior to opening any accounts. Be strictly business with the bank clerk, and avoid making yourself memorable through unusual appearance or loud chatter, which bankers interpret as "nervous", which in turn means suspicious. The banking world functions best at the level of 5 mg. Valium, and anything more lively is not appreciated.

If you want to open a "commercial" or business checking account, the bank will require paperwork showing your connection to the name of the business. This means filing what is commonly called a "Fictitious Firm Name Statement", or your "DBA" (Doing Business As). In most states the job takes about ten minutes. You don't need an attorney, you don't have to apply at the courthouse, and you don't have to wait a month before it's "official." Every county in the U.S. has a newspaper which is designated as one of "general circulation", and which makes a tidy sideline profit from publishing "legals", those very small print notices that run, typically, for four consecutive weeks, at the end of which "public notice" is presumed to have been given.

All you have to do is go to the advertising office of this kind of newspaper, and tell them you want to publish a DBA (or whatever they might call it in your state). The clerk will give you a simple form to fill out, and tell you the fee, usually between \$30 to \$50, for the four-week run of the notice and the filing of the notice at the county courthouse. The newspaper will do all this for you. You are done as soon as you pay them. You can immediately take your copy of the application to the bank, and they will accept *this* as proof of your fictitious business name. The newspaper will, of course, publish the notice in one issue per week for four consecutive weeks, and very likely mail you a set of the printed notices when completed, which you can save as "proof" of your DBA.

It's beyond the scope of this book to discuss the variations of business organization, but the statement for your DBA will ask whether your business is 1) a sole proprietorship, 2) a partnership, 3) a corporation, or 4) some other form of business organization, please specify. If you plan to run the business yourself, and you have no partners involved, you are a proprietor. Just you. For privacy reasons this is probably what you had in mind anyway, so just check the box that says "Sole Proprietorship." If you are going to use any of the other business organizations, you already know more than we need to include here, so be our guest!

Be advised that publishing your DBA will invite a flood of unsolicited mail from every possible source wanting to serve and sell to your new business. You will want to list your mail drop or other non-residential address as your address on the DBA application.

Back at the bank your commercial account will be opened in the name of your proprietorship, but with your choosing what is actually printed on the check. Shall we explain? When you filed your DBA you made a statement that John Allan Williams (you), an individual, is doing business as "The John Williams Company", "J. Williams & Associates", "John Allan Co.", "Happy Movers", "The Bug People", "Pepe's Tacos", or even "Felicia Compradora y Asociados." There are two points here: 1) with almost no restrictions you can call your business anything you want. You can't call yourself a corporation, however, and you wouldn't want to appear to be some already-known company. 2) Most DBA applications will allow you to list several business names and you should automatically do this, since it gives you the option of choosing which one you might want on your checks. One of the "fictitious business names" could simply be an ordinary personal name, too, just to throw off the curious. This, in turn could be the name you select to have printed on your "business" checks. Convoluted and confusing, true, but a few giant steps towards greater privacy and security. Your (new) ID might show "Jason Anderson", but your (commercial) checking account will have the (seemingly personal) name of "Joaquin Armani." And since "Joaquin Armani" seems a non-U.S. type name, the signature could be the kind of stylized splashes Europeans make purposely unreadable. The bank would know the signature as that of Jason Anderson, but recipients of the check might easily assume it reads Joaquin Armani...

Your primary purpose for opening and maintaining a checking account, whether personal or commercial, is probably to be able to deposit and/or cash checks you receive. If you are in fact running a small business you might also be getting lots of small checks, and a commercial checking account obviously makes sense. If you need to write a lot of checks, these accounts are also convenient. But if you don't need to write many checks, or seldom receive them (except for paychecks, perhaps), you could very well get along without a checking account. Pay by cash or money orders. (Today's typical banking charges make some of the low-cost money orders actually cheaper than checks!) If you receive a check you need to cash, here are three possibilities: 1) Use a check-cashing service, even though their fees seem a bit high. They usually have a "no questions asked" policy, and they often provide very convincing photo ID cards to regular clients, too. 2) Endorse the check and use it as full or partial payment to a third party. "Shift the heat," so to speak. 3) For large checks, send the endorsed check to the bank on which it is drawn with written instructions that they provide you with blank money orders, less fees, to be mailed Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested. If they balk at not filling in the payee, tell them that you do not yet know for what purpose you might use them.

Even though you maintain good privacy and security for your banking in alternate names, you should always be observant about the checks you receive and deposit. If someone were trying to penetrate your banking habits for some reason, he might send you a check, unsolicited, and wait for you to send it through for collection. Once he received the canceled check, he would be able to connect a few things to your new name(s), and possibly begin a closer surveillance. If you receive an unexpected check from some unknown source, and you think the above is a possibility, you could do at least three things besides put it through your account: 1) Send it to the issuing bank and ask for payment by money order; 2) Use a check cashing service you have never used before; or 3) Drop the check on the floor of a bus terminal and let human nature take its course. Someone else will know what to do with it...!

Avoid the "frequent shopper" cards that track every item you buy. The small discounts you might receive in the process are more than offset by the target-marketing edge the promoters gain in collecting and cross-tabulating your data to attack you later from some unexpected angle. Just say NO. This process is analogous to what trash-pickers can learn about your habits. In this new version, however, they know all about you before you even leave the store.

Good form requires that you never tell others where you live, exactly. Why should you, unless you expect them to visit you? A vague reference to "in town", "out in the country", "about six miles from here", followed by a wistful "but I'm thinking of moving soon" will tell them a whole lot of nothing. You can always turn the table and ask them where *they* live, no?

Your car should never be registered in your own name, whatever it is. It is possible to have it registered to a company name, foundation, trust, or your rich "uncle" who simply wants you to use it while he's away on business. There are even private firms that will take care of all the paperwork so you don't have to waste your time in line at the DMV. They can advise on other possible wrinkles, too. You will most likely have to obtain whatever level of liability insurance your state of registration requires, but this is only prudent. Having your insurance papers "in order" answers a lot of questions in situations where you don't relish giving a lot of answers.

A very clever variation of this maneuver is what our good friend, "Boston T. Party" suggests in his marvelous book, Bulletproof Privacy. In a nutshell, arrange to have the car registered in a foreign country (preferably *not* Canada or Mexico), using an alias, of course. Be sure to have proper insurance papers, too. While this might seem like a big red flag, it would also deter a lot of cops from even asking, for fear of seeming a tad ignorant of foreign auto registration, etc. Just don't drive like an idiot, be polite if stopped, and have a very engaging story to explain "why the foreign tags..?" Couldn't you be "on sabbatical" from the American University at Garmischpartenkirchen, in the Bavarian Alps? Cars are very expensive in Europe, officer, and it's all I can afford just to ship this one back and forth. He may envy your presumed international lifestyle, but will go away smug that he drives a better car than you do.

If you are "disappearing" from an old ID into a new, you will not be taking your old car with you, certainly not if it was registered in your old name. Plan to sell it for cash to one of the many commercial cash buyers who will never remember who you are, uh, were. They can take it off your hands in minutes, and you will walk away with cash money. It would be best if you can purchase your next car for cash, and you will probably gain a considerable price concession if you do. Have the private party make out a bill of sale in the name you are going to use for registration, per above.

At some point you may wish to secure a "hideout" for your sensitive documents, extra set of credit cards, spare cash, "spare" identity papers, or other very private items. This should not be your home or office, of course, but some place completely removed, and one that you would not normally need to "visit" very often. Possibilities: a self-storage unit; a private vault (*not* at a bank); a private garage (many people would be happy to store your "antique trunk" for \$100 a year, no questions asked); or a properly constructed underground vault in a place you could always access without undue attention. The book How to Bury Your Goods offers many ways to do this job right.

Mark Twain called the telephone "the Devil's trumpet." His sentiment still rings true in California where well over *half* of all residential telephone numbers are unlisted. Folks there just don't want to hear the phone ring. But before you consider that an unlisted number is any assurance of privacy, be aware that the giant General Telephone (GTE) recently published and distributed a directory to telemarketers that contained at least 50,000 unlisted California residential phone numbers. The directories were recalled, but not without lots of negative publicity and outspoken criticism from police officers, crime victims, psychiatrists, and the general public, all of whom have good reasons for keeping their telephone numbers "private."

This may seem almost academic to our readers who will likely not want to have *any* telephone number tied to their identity. And, indeed, why should they? There are so many options these days for using the telephone without giving away your identity, it shouldn't even appear to be much of a problem. For starters:

1. Use the phone listed under someone else's name, in case you are renting a room, etc.
2. Use a nearby pay phone. Change/rotate the phones you use.
3. Use calling cards for prepaid calls. Change cards when used up. Never have them "recharged." Good ole Tim McVeigh was tracked because he didn't change cards.
4. Pay a cooperating person to add your own voice mailbox to his number, so you can receive messages.
5. Hire an answering service, which, by the way, can also provide some other handy services. Just ask them.
6. The nice folks at 7-Eleven are now offering telephone service for people who have totally made bad names for themselves with the regular phone companies. The fees

## Living with New ID

---

are "up there", but it's essentially a "no questions asked" arrangement. Pay in advance, any you get a phone.

Bottom line: Don't think for a six-second increment that you can't make arrangements for telephone service that will fit your needs for security and privacy. There are other possibilities related to computer services, which we will watch develop further before commenting on them. Be aware that the telecommunications world is changing very fast these days, and that very likely some totally new ways to "make a phone call" will become available, ways that will enable you to keep your identity separate from your phone records.

Finally, NEVER give your name and address to some casual solicitor, "contest", "sweepstakes", or any other promotion. You're just setting yourself up for intrusions and unwanted inquiry down the road. And you never know who will be doing the asking! If you do "sign up" for some activity, like a charity walk, use a fictitious name you will recognize later. In the world of amateur running, there is a group known as the Hash House Harriers who ALWAYS use fanciful "running names" at their gatherings and events. They see themselves as "drinkers with a running problem", but their only "real identity" is running. Works for them..!

### ON THE JOB

Most people in the U.S. have a "job". They work for someone they have to call "the Boss". Even though they may not like the boss, or the company he represents, they have (in the Biblical sense) "sold their souls for wages," and will have to do as they are told while on the job. For many employees their job IS their identity, so much so, that when they leave, get fired, or retire, they "don't know what to do with themselves." It's as if they have lost their identities...How strange!

But then, working is such a central part of our lives, that our trades and occupations DO very much "identify" us to others. NOT to have a job makes one almost suspect to others. People who do not arouse such suspicion, of course, are students, housewives, retirees, the very rich, the poor and self-employed entrepreneurs. Everyone else is expected to work or at least have the appearance of working. Even in the criminal world, hoods and operators make efforts to appear being "gainfully employed."

So you want to get a job, but now with a new identity? Unless the job requires a security background check, it should not be too difficult. Use the address of your MFS as your residence, and your voice mail number as your telephone. No one will know the difference. Personal references are almost never checked out. Gaps in your employment history should be "covered" by extra schooling or a cooperative friend or relative who was your "employer." Do not provide your SSN until and unless you are hired. Be firm about this, explaining that you will provide it upon being hired. Tell them that you do not want your SSN to be known by anyone other than those with a legitimate need for it. *(See the chapter on Social Security Cards for much more information, which might prove useful in this area.)*

The federal government has recently expanded "new hire" reporting requirements nationwide with implementation of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. States now have the New Employee Registry program that requires employers to report all newly hired employees within twenty calendar days of starting work. This centralized "confidential" system will be used by state and federal agencies to locate parents who are delinquent in their child support payments, as well as aid in reducing overpayments of unemployment insurance, welfare, Medicaid and food stamps.

**IDEA:** If having yourself registered as a "new hire", with all the "confidential" benefits of having your SSN circulated around the country, somehow bothers you, maybe it's time to opt out by becoming your own boss. Start your own business, and say goodbye to the boss-man forever. Think about it. Eden Press offers many fine publications for finding and starting your own business. The world of the independent businessman—and woman—has much to offer in terms of opportunity and privacy.

## Living with New ID

---

In the U.S. employers generally set their own standards for how far they can pry into their workers' lives. Court rulings have given companies fairly broad authority to monitor such things as phone conversations and E-mail, to run pre-employment psychological tests, and to check on drug use, both illegal and prescription. The theory is that the employees are answerable to their employer, and that the employer is in turn responsible for their actions while on the job. If you have to work for "the man", expect no privacy and you will not be disappointed.

All of which is not to say that your life is an open book to your employer and co-workers. Don't forget that most of what they will ever know about you is what you choose to share with them. Simply watch what you say at all times. If you ever wonder about what effect your speech or comments might have on others, stop and imagine how your remarks might sound if they were being repeated in court before a jury. What would they "reasonably" think...? We Americans love to brag and compare, but it can't always hurt just to keep your mouth shut. Talk about something that takes attention away from you.

Let the other person do the talking, nod affirmatively throughout the "conversation", and he will think you are the most interesting person he's ever met.

The American workplace is using more and more technology to identify employees. Barcode scanners reading strips of numerical information on badges, fingerprint identification, voice-recognition, even DNA testing and profiling allow employers to **CONTROL** their employees. The boss wants to be sure you are where you're supposed to be, that you're not away too long, and that you're busy all the time in between. They are also becoming interested in knowing about your allergies, possible predisposition to catastrophic illnesses like cancer, and even a propensity towards violence. A lock of hair, fingernail clippings, and other DNA samplings from your body will become a kind of "ID" employers will depend on to maintain profitable, safe workplaces. Or so they say...

Big Brother is truly "in your face" in the workplace. Companies can do things routinely to their employees that would be illegal in other settings. Drug testing? Legal anytime they want to check. On-the-job surveillance? Just as legal. E-mail monitoring? Compulsory searches? Restrictions on dating employees of competing firms? The employer calls the shots. Privacy is not an issue in the workplace, since it doesn't (legally) exist. The only recourse put-upon employees have found useful is making claims under the heading of "harassment," which is another topic all together.

Want to be "invisible" to the boss? Don't abuse the company phone with too many personal calls. Take anything personal home at night, especially any journals, datebooks or lists of grievances. (If the boss finds these, they can be confiscated.) Consider the computer strictly a company tool, and never use it for personal files or communications. Whatever an employer finds in his computers is fair game. Know in advance how privacy-sensitive the employer is; see if he has had run-ins over privacy issues. If you file workers' compensation claim, you can count on being investigated, which can include any confidential counseling sessions you might have attended as an employee.

### YOUR RESIDENCE

We all have to live *somewhere*. If we spend at least a third of our day on the job, we probably spend over half at our residence, our "home." It becomes almost automatic that we are "identified" by where we live, whether we like it or not. We will most certainly have neighbors, who will eventually get to "know" us. (Even the Unabomber had neighbors; they just didn't get to know him very well.)

Establishing a new home while using a new identity, however, presents many challenges. This general topic could probably be an entire chapter, but we need to illustrate a number of possibilities and considerations. Everyone, of course, has his own preference for style of living, need for relative privacy, and ability to make changes when necessary. The ideas we offer here are by no means meant to be applicable to everybody, nor are they meant to be a complete list of options. Just consider them "possibilities" that might prove useful, now or later.

If you're really at "rock-bottom" the most private and least expensive way to establish a new residence is to rent a room in a private home, preferably from a homeowner, not a lessee.

Typically, you will be in a somewhat quiet neighborhood, the utilities will already be covered in your rent, and you could probably order voice mail on the landlord's existing telephone number. You will also have "all the comforts of home" with access to kitchen and living areas, even your own bathroom. The primary concern of the landlord will be that you pay your rent on time, in full, and that you're not obnoxious. The local newspaper will carry classified ads under "Rooms for rent", "Rentals to share", etc. The biggest disadvantage to this arrangement is that of personal contact with the other resident(s). But a lot of that depends on you.

Larger urban areas with extensive suburbs are perhaps best from the privacy standpoint. They may not be the least expensive, but you will have a much broader selection of neighborhoods and room availabilities. Rural areas, ironically, offer much lower-cost room rentals, but far less privacy. The locals will soon enough "get to know ya." Ask anyone who's lived in the country or a small town.

Any town with a college or university will offer many opportunities to rent a room or share an apartment. Landlords are used to students "coming and going", and won't look at you twice if you have the cash needed to cover their move-in charges. Students these days come in all ages, too; if anyone should even ask why an "older" person is now going to college, just indicate you're finally going after that BA or advance degree you always wanted to get. An irregular schedule won't arouse suspicion either.

If you are going to **RENT** property under a new identity, you will have better luck renting directly from the owner. If you are applying for an apartment or part of a fourplex, for example, there's a great likelihood the manager will go for a credit check through one of the tenant-screening companies (see Chapter 2). While there won't be anything negative in your report, neither will there be anything in depth, which could appear equally bad. It would be sure to invite questions. An individual landlord will be pleased with a pleasant tenant bearing first and last, plus necessary deposits, in cash.

Another possibility for renting is to have a cooperative friend or relative rent in his name, particularly if you want to rent where tenant screening is likely to occur. Since these rental situations will be less "personal", it will also be easier to maintain that you are only house-sitting or holding down the fort until your friend returns from his job assignment in Saudi Arabia. Your obligation will be to make sure the rent is always paid on time, and that the wrong kinds of questions never have to be asked. If your friend is able to rent the place for you, there should be no problem arranging utilities, either. Again, just don't jeopardize your situation by not paying the bills. A friend you stiff will no longer be your friend.

If you already **OWN** a place to live, you might want to consider transferring ownership to a trust, from which you could lease or rent under any name you wish. You would want to consult good legal help to arrange the proper trust, but it would be well worth it. The trust could be domiciled in one of the more privacy-oriented states like Nevada or Delaware, or at least under terms that would keep your name hidden. Real estate records are the first watering holes of snoops and troublemakers looking to sue on the slightest pretext. Get your name off these **public records** and start living behind a trust, the terms of which are **private records**. Wealthy individuals and celebrities have long utilized trusts and other property-owning arrangements to isolate themselves from trash TV types and their near relations, the contingency-fee lawyers.

If you want to **BUY** a home or other property on which to live, you would be well advised to work through a competent attorney who will not only be able to maintain your anonymity throughout the negotiations, but also establish the form of ownership (likely a trust) that will secure your long term security and privacy. This is one of the ways potential targets of lawsuits make themselves "judgment proof." When the day arrives for you to move to your new digs, you will simply be the caretaker, "poor second cousin", or other lowly type merely staying there until the new owner concludes his just-extended, two-year teaching commitment at the University of Leipzig. (If it ever became necessary to explain why he never comes around, it's only because he's being considered for full professorship, and needs to be available for review at any time.)

A final consideration regarding residence is how to handle "moving day." Ideally you should not use movers at all, but do as much of it as possible by yourself. Why? "Loose ends", remember? Avoid any connection between your last place and your new one, and this would include individuals who *could* make that connection. Moving companies keep records, and would have little incentive past a twenty-dollar bill to tell any-and-all where "so-and-so" went,



## Living with New ID

---

from-and-to. Rent a truck, use casual labor, sell off the big stuff, but keep the moving project under your personal control. If you really want to be slick, move in unnoticeable stages so those old neighbors have no idea you've even left. Explain any "obvious" signs by saying you are getting newer models of the items you are presently giving to your impoverished, newly married nephew and his paraplegic wife.

### YOUR NEW LIFESTYLE

If you have gone to all the trouble to change identity, have made a successful move, and now want to "start life over," you probably have a good reason. With the best of motives, however, the new direction in your life will not be a good turn unless you avoid the situations and problems that led you to the decision in the first place. Let me explain.

If you found yourself always seeming to attract the wrong kind of people and they perhaps found it easy to involve you in various less-than-honorable schemes, and now you want to leave such vexations behind, it will take more than a change of identity for you to succeed. Let me say this more directly: *people who lead criminal lifestyles will continue to face the hazards of getting busted regardless of their ID.* The ID won't save them, period. Of course some operators will find that changing ID is a quick way to even faster crime, but it will be their criminal behavior that busts them, not their ID.

The other side of the coin IS a chance for a new life. Your reason is probably that you want to live quietly and privately, without the problems you had before. Your use of a new identity will enable you to get certain people off your back and out of your life for good. You will be able to avoid situations that threatened your property, your safety, and even your freedom. Once you resolve to use your new identity for improving your life many problems will disappear, but **ONLY IF** you make some changes in your lifestyle that will lessen their chances of recurring. Let's be specific.

The hallmark of your new lifestyle is adopting what we call "low profile." This means not getting yourself noticed by people who would be bad news in your new life. Don't call attention to yourself by wearing flashy clothes, obvious (good) jewelry, and a haughty attitude. Live in a truly ordinary, undistinguished neighborhood. Your car should be no more than average for your surroundings, at least a few years old, but "clean" (dented rust-buckets are noticed). Do your socializing away from your residence; you don't need to expose your new life to the curious, who certainly *will* have questions. Adopt a new hobby or pastime that will in turn expose you to a new social element. Avoid any and all confrontations with neighbors; be friendly, but not necessarily sociable. If you enjoy unusual, exotic entertainment, either watch it on video or travel to it. If you've always been a local barfly type, make a turn for better health and join a biking or running club (these folks drink, too, but in a very different environment!).

Are you getting the picture? Analyze your personal traits, interests, and habits for characteristics that would easily identify you in the minds of others. Try to eliminate those that have tended to bring you grief in the past. Focus on those that will contribute to making your new identity truly more enjoyable. This is your chance to create a "new you", so make it a worthy effort. The ideas we mention here are meant to stimulate your thinking. Look at yourself in terms of the "old you" and the "new you" and you will definitely come up with other ways to change and improve your personal lifestyle. These changes will in turn give real life to your new identity. And who can say, maybe these are the very changes you always wanted to make, so now you **CAN**.

### PARTING THOUGHTS on Living with New ID

It's 2AM and you've decided to take a walk down Main Street because you're having trouble getting to sleep. Not too many people are out this time of night, and you're enjoying the quiet walk along the different storefronts. Suddenly a police car pulls up and two police officers jump out and approach you. "Hey buddy, what are you doing around here this time of night?"

## Living with New ID

---

You want to be cooperative but you're irritated that your quiet walk has been interrupted. "I'm just out taking a walk," you reply. The policeman continues the questions, asking for your name and address. You are now feeling uneasy and ask, "Why do you want this information?"

"Because I want to know who you are and where you live," the officer replies, "and if you don't identify yourself we'll have to take a little trip downtown until we find out who you are and what you're doing around here this time of night! There have been some burglaries and drug traffic along here, and you look a little suspicious to me."

### ***What would you do at this point?***

May the police officer arrest you and put you in jail because you refuse to say anything?

Is it a crime not to answer questions?

Does the state have the authority to enact a law which requires citizens to provide identification upon request by a police officer?

The U.S. Supreme Court has spoken on these issues in the following cases:

In Brown v Texas, 443 US 47: "The application of Texas Penal Code to detain appellant and require him to identify himself violated the Fourth Amendment because the officers lacked any reasonable suspicion to believe appellant was engaged or had engaged in criminal conduct. Accordingly, appellant may not be punished for refusing to identify himself, and the conviction is reversed."

In Kolender v Lawson, 461 US 944, (1983): "Merely to facilitate the general law enforcement objectives of investigating and preventing unspecified crimes, states may not authorize the arrest and criminal prosecution of an individual for failing to produce identification or further information on demand of a police officer."

"In sum, under the Fourth Amendment, police officers with reasonable suspicion that an individual has committed or is about to commit a crime may detain that individual, using some force if necessary, for the purpose of asking investigative questions."

"They may ask their questions in a way calculated to obtain an answer, but they may not *compel* and answer, and they must allow the person to leave after a reasonably brief period of time *unless* the information they have acquired during the encounter has given them probable cause sufficient to justify an arrest." (*Emphasis ours.*)

Other cases such as Terry v Ohio, 392 US 188, and Dunaway v New York, 442 US 200 give additional information concerning the protections provided citizens as well as the restrictions upon law enforcement under the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution.

### **REMEMBER:**

There is no requirement anywhere in the U.S. to carry identification on one's person. And the U.S. Supreme Court has expressly said that for a government official to demand ID from a law-abiding citizen is unconstitutional. Kolender v. Lawson, above.

The State of Michigan passed a law requiring photo identification in order to vote. The State Attorney General ruled that it was unconstitutional and "violates the equal protection clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment. The right to vote is our most precious right. For the poor, those who do not drive—especially the elderly, the handicapped and those who, for whatever reasons, do not possess a picture identification card—this requirement imposes economic and logistical burdens." He based his opinion on Supreme Court cases invalidating unnecessary burdens on the right to vote.

Finally, do these rules apply when you want to board a commercial airliner? *Probably not.* The Federal Aviation Administration says that it issued a directive in 1995 requiring airlines to ask for government-issued photo ID from all passengers but also to provide alternative security measures if a person declines to present ID. But the directive itself remains secret. Most airlines say (incorrectly) that the FAA requires them to make a photo ID a condition of boarding a plane. Some airlines will admit that the requirement results from their own policies. And other airlines will provide alternatives for passengers who decline to present ID or do not have it.

## Living with New ID

---

The solution? Call the airline in advance for their rule(s) on ID for boarding. If you have to go "up the ladder" to get a satisfactory answer, make a note of the conversation, the time, and name of the official whose response you will then be able to quote to a perhaps disbelieving ticket clerk. You may want to inform the official you are aware of the FAA directive, and that for personal security reasons you never carry ID on board an airplane. (You were once on a hijacked flight in the Middle East, during which ID was demanded...) A polite, but firm attitude will likely gain the cooperation you seek.

Of course you may also want to "hide a pebble among pebbles" by using a good quality photo ID based on your Level One ID. See the chapter on "Making Your Own ID" for ideas along this line. In other words, since the airlines are *expecting* a photo ID, give it to them. Just don't use your Level Two ID. The clerks are presented all kinds of photo ID—literally from around the world—and if yours "looks" like a government-issued ID they won't look further. Really, this "ID requirement" is about as useful as the thumbprint you leave at the bank. But the reason they want the photo ID? They're looking for terrorists (I), who, we are to presume, would never present ID before blowing up a plane. They must have some truly great minds at the FAA.

The Department of Transportation has made a requirement of American passengers on overseas flights that they supply the name of their next-of-kin to be notified in case of a crash. The airlines are not supposed to use this information for other purposes, such as marketing, but it won't take long for them to circumvent the rule. To test it yourself, make up a fictitious "relative" whose name you will instantly recognize should it ever be contacted by an airline or other solicitor. Your private mailing address will suffice for your "uncle's" residence...

## Chapter VII

# FINGERPRINTS & CRIMINAL RECORDS

Over the years we have received many an anxious letter asking what to "do about fingerprints." The fear behind these inquiries is that Big Brother might someday pop out of the bushes, demand your fingerprints, discover you have a "record," and march you straight to jail. The premise in this thinking is that the fingerprints alone will be your undoing.

Well, folks, please relax. Fears are often unrealistic and can lead to counterproductive thinking. The subject of fingerprints arouses paranoid feelings most likely because they have been traditionally associated with the FBI and its focus on criminal investigation. True, arrestees and inmates are fingerprinted at various junctures in the "criminal justice system," and their fingerprint cards matched against FBI master files. Their records and identities are confirmed based on their "FBI Number," which is determined by how the FBI "classifies" their fingerprints.

But the attitude—among many inmates, at least—that they were busted because of their fingerprints is nothing more than a case of blaming the messenger for the news. The reality is they were busted because of alleged or observed criminal activity. Individuals who engage in criminal activity can reasonably expect to be arrested—and fingerprinted—at some time in their careers. They should consider their fingerprint-based records mere certification of their chosen profession!

For the rest of us fingerprinting should reflect a different meaning. First, most people are never *truly* fingerprinted. To be fingerprinted "officially" is to have your prints put onto an "FBI card," and subsequently classified by the FBI. The FBI accepts only "full sets" for classification. To make a full set requires that each finger and thumb (last joint only) be "rolled" separately, and then a "flat print" of each set of four fingers placed together. Anything less is not accepted for classification, and will not generate an FBI Number.

The fingerprint records acquired by various state licensing boards and "kiddie protection" programs are virtually worthless from the law enforcement standpoint. They remain "in the file" as part of an original license application and are not entered into some master file or database. Why? Again, they have not been "classified" and the FBI does not want them.

To illustrate, the thumbprint required by the states of California, Georgia, Hawaii, Colorado and Texas is simply collected at the time of application or renewal of a drivers license. It is not analyzed or checked against any master file, because no such file exists. This practice is on the same level as banks and check-cashing services demanding a customer's thumbprint on a check before they will cash it. The only possible purpose is **psychological deterrence**, which, practically speaking, is a turn-off for honest customers but no deterrent at all for professional criminals. In fact, the latter actually *welcome* the practice since the establishment is now relying more on the thumbprint than on closer observation of the check-passer.

The fairest observation we can make about fingerprinting is that if you are not a criminal pursuing a criminal lifestyle, you have nothing to worry about. Criminals get busted because they commit crimes. Their records follow them around based on "rap sheets," which are based on FBI Numbers, which are based on fingerprints.

The non-FBI fingerprint practices and files can be considered functionally "dead." They don't go anywhere and cannot be accessed for related records. At best they offer only the warm feeling that "something is finally being done about crime...!"

And last, if you *do* have criminal records and you've decided to adopt a new identity, you will avoid the records hassle by avoiding any future fingerprinting. Access to criminal records is gained primarily by name. If your new name is not found, you have no record. Only FBI prints would "prove" otherwise. For more on the subject of criminal records, see our listings in the chapter on Sources and Resources. You will be encouraged to learn how the system really works and what remedies are available.

For the balance of this chapter we will take an overview of recent developments on the subject of fingerprinting and how they might affect changes of identity.

## Fingerprints

---

One of New Jersey's most populous counties, Union County, has removed its funds from the state's second largest bank, First Union National Bank, to protest the bank's policy of demanding thumbprints from non-customers who attempt to cash checks. State Assembly Member, Neil Cohen, felt that the thumbprint demand violated individual rights, but that an outright ban was probably barred by federalism principles. He proposed instead that the county proceed on a community-by-community basis, and just deny First Union the County's business. "This is a complaint that crosses ethnic, economic, or gender lines. We don't know what's to become of those prints. We know the banks don't have any way of instantly checking prints, and, last time I looked, we took fingerprints in this country only after you do something wrong."

The cavalier attitude among banks, however, continues to be that expressed by Bank America in this typical notice to customers: "We may refuse to cash a check you have written to another person if that person is not an account holder with us and declines to be fingerprinted under the Touch Signature Fingerprint Program." Shall we suppose for a moment that fraud losses are now on the decline thanks to this innovative refinement in the banking principle of "knowing your customer?" Don't bet the farm on it. From what we've heard many customers find it insulting, and even threaten to close accounts. As for the check artists, they're laughing all the way to the bank....

The city of Anaheim, California, now uses a fingerprint scanning machine from Printrak International Inc. to discover within about four minutes if a suspect has a local (Anaheim only) police record, any past mug shots, and what is true identity is. Similar machines are now used in North Carolina and Louisiana, and about 15 other states. The same technology can be used to help solve old cases, too, once the fingerprints are entered. The high cost of the system, about \$500,000 a year is a bit stiff for most police departments, considering it is limited to local records only. Despite the "Gee Whiz" hype, however, almost all police records remain LOCAL records, and never leave the local jurisdiction. Further, these local jurisdictions are not linked to one another. An investigator would have to know first where to look before accessing some other database.

There is a three-month backlog in processing fingerprint checks at the FBI, where officials expect more than 14 million requests for checks annually. There are now some 1,000 laws that authorize fingerprint checks for an ever-widening variety of people: day-care providers, lottery workers, school janitors, nursing home workers, even tow-truck drivers, to name a few. Eleven states have started programs to scan the index fingers of people applying for welfare.

Despite these developments, however, the art and practice of fingerprinting is far from perfect, let alone exact. One in every 50 people has fingerprints that "don't work." Manual labor or exposure to chemicals can wear down the finger ridges of bricklayers, farmers, and factory workers. Women, especially of Asian descent, tend to have fine, hard-to-read fingerprints. The elderly may have cracked skin that changes their fingertips from week to week. Adding to this imperfection is the fact that 11 percent of all fingerprints submitted to the FBI aren't clear or complete enough to be classified and checked against prints on file. Better training of fingerprint technicians and use of scanners might overcome some of these deficiencies, but a less-than-perfect system will persist, nevertheless.

Promoters of fingerprinting technology and related biometric systems generating computerized identification (using retinas, wrist veins, palm print, etc.) are today as happy as pigs in mud. Gordon Dechman, president of FingerPrint USA, rhapsodizes, "If people understood how much they could save and what kind of protections they'd get, I'd think everybody would demand it." Advocates contend that fingerprinting is less intrusive or revealing than information already on a typical drivers license.

True, fingerprinting may be less "revealing" but that is not the real concern. Civil libertarians say more and more innocent people will arouse suspicion simply because their fingertips don't mesh with the machine. But perhaps, they might mesh too well. The problem with increasing use and dependence on biometric identifiers, such as fingerprints, is two fold:

- 1) When applied in a present instance, it certainly can lead to mistaken or "unknown" identification of totally innocent people. They become victims of a faulty process, suffering unnecessary suspicions when they are required to "prove" who they really are, or are not.

## Fingerprints

---

- 2) More ominous, however, will be the increased capability of instantly linking records and personal information with computerized biometric data. Would you really want a patrol officer to have access to non-driver related information? Do you think it would improve his performance to know about your bank loans, where you went to school, or that you're just recently divorced? You don't think these guys are curious...?

### CRIMINAL RECORD FILES IN THE STATES

According to "*Privacy Journal*" the states have been slowly but surely automating their criminal records so they can join the FBI's Interstate Identification Index (III). This system is designed so that arrest and conviction records on major offenders can be made available to police in different states through the FBI's computer network. Presently 35 states make their records available online, and five more are joining in 1998. Even now most states can access this data even though their own records are not yet available. The network now has almost 28 million records. All studies of the data have shown inaccuracy rates from 12 to 49 percent, and about half the records do not show whether the person was convicted or exonerated.

Still, the records are used by police nationwide, and in some states, by employers and licensing bodies. The FBI would like to decentralize the files and merely point inquirers to the state holding the record. By federal law, an individual has a right to a copy of a record on himself or herself in the Interstate Identification Index. If you want to check yours, use a Freedom of Information Act request addressed to the FBI.

For your information here are the states that have still not joined the III: HI, NE, KS, WI, LA, MS, TN, KY, WV, DC, RI, MA, VT, NH, and ME. Since some of these states will be joining in the near future, and if it is a matter that concerns you, just call your local police department and ask if they are now participating in the FBI's Interstate Identification Index.

### WANT TO CHANGE YOUR PRINTS?

There have always been stories about changing fingerprints through surgery, or at least altering them through the use of acid, abrasion or other destructive method. We have heard of people who have done this, but it's not a process we would recommend. Besides the danger and discomfort is the very real possibility that the results will inspire even greater interest in "who you really are." Think about it.

### FINGERPRINTS WHILE YOU WAIT

A better method—totally painless, cheap, and effective—is to create a new set of fingerprints (or just a thumbprint if needed). These prints will last only a few days, but they will be absolutely different from your real prints. They will not show up on any database with any connection to any record, period.

All you need is a bottle of "New Skin," a wipe-on "liquid bandage" for cuts and abrasions that cannot be covered easily by cloth or vinyl bandages. Most drug stores carry it with their other first-aid items. On clean skin this spray creates a tough, clear covering that will stay in place for several days, remain flexible, and allow the skin below to "breathe." It also doesn't dry immediately. The "tack- time" is about two to three minutes, during which you can perform some amazing magic on yourself. Here's the trick:

Let's say you would like to have a new print on your right thumb. First, make sure the thumbprint area is clean and dry. Then cover the print surface with a few strokes of the little brush that comes in the bottle of New Skin. (There is also a spray version of New Skin, but it will cover a lot more area than you want, and end up being a "mess.") Allow about two to three minutes for the New Skin to tack up, to the point where it is *almost* dry. Then carefully roll the print of another finger or thumb over the covered thumb, pressing slightly into the still pliant New Skin. The result is a *reverse* version of whichever print you rolled onto the thumb. Even if you have been fingerprinted a dozen times, this new print will never be identified with you. It would "classify" completely different and not be recognized as one of yours.

## Fingerprints

Here are some additional suggestions and observations about this handy technique:

1. You could do the same for all ten fingers by using either toe prints or the prints of another person for the second five prints. All prints will be reverses (even upside-down if you wish), so there's no chance they will be recognized. You will not be able to use the New Skin prints to create additional prints because the dried material would break down on contact with the fresh surface. Once set, leave them alone.
2. You can use an ink pad to "check" your new prints once they have set. Make an original print first on blank white paper, then make a second one with the New Skin print once it has dried. You should be able to see a very different print.
3. You might need to apply a second coat of New Skin to get enough "depth" for the new print to become distinct. Allow enough time for the first covering to dry before applying the second. The tack time will still be about two to three minutes, depending on air temperature and humidity.
4. Using a totally clean print to roll into the New Skin could be so "dry" that it actually picks up segments of the covering, creating tears. You might use a *light* oil to cover the print you are pressing into the New Skin, just enough to make it non-adhesive. Skin moisturizer and "body oil" will do the job, too.
5. If you need to re-do the print, wipe off the New Skin with fingernail polish remover and start over. The New Skin is completely clear and does not discolor the skin surface. It may "crack" in spots, but this will just add complexity to your fingerprint, and not be remarkable because many people do have scarring and cracks in their finger surfaces naturally.
6. We can thank the Watergate burglars for these techniques. They left their "fingerprints" all over the place, *intentionally*, knowing that no FBI searches would be able to identify them. These methods will work for you, too.

From  
**THIS**



**REPLACES  
ADHESIVE  
BANDAGES**



- Easy to use
- Economical
- Waterproof

To  
**THIS**





**NEW SKIN**  
ANTISEPTIC LIQUID  
BANDAGE  
NET 1 FL. OZ. (30ml)

**NEW SKIN** **LIQUID BANDAGE**  
BOTTLE  
NET 1 FL OZ (30ml)

## Chapter VIII

# BIRTH CERTIFICATES

We made the statement that all ID begins with a birth certificate. This is generally true because most people live only with the name they were given at birth. They later acquire a drivers license or state ID card, and perhaps a passport. People born since the late Eighties typically have an SSN obtained for them by their parents within the first year of birth. These documents form the basic group of ID. Additional ID comes in the form of school records, student ID, military ID, resident alien documents, and cards of all kinds—business, membership, even credit. Practically speaking all these items *function* as ID depending on the context in which they are used.

Birth certificates, however, don't really function as ID, but rather as the "breeder document" for everything else we call ID. When we apply for basic ID (drivers license, SSN, passport) it is indeed the necessary document, and is very much expected to be present in the application process. If you can present one, the clerk is happy, and a lot of questions are never asked. If you can't, the clerk will frown (this means no smile), and you will likely be referred to a supervisor who will relish sending you away empty-handed, without a hint of how he might otherwise have been of assistance.

If you are contemplating changing identity, or perhaps assembling an alternate identity for later use, you will find the process much easier if you have a birth certificate in the name and age you wish to use. In our previous books we mention a number of ways to obtain a birth certificate suitable for these purposes. We now want to enlarge upon this subject to present all the options in much greater detail. To begin, however, you need an understanding of how birth certificates are issued and made available to the public by government itself.

### THE OFFICIAL OVERVIEW

The recording of births and the issuance of certified copies of birth certificates are functions of the individual states, not the federal government. Each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and New York City (separate from New York State), establish birth records and issue copies of birth certificates based on their own laws and requirements. The only coordination among the states is through their interstate association, the Association for Vital Records and Health Statistics (AVRHS). There is no federal control or involvement of significance in state operations of their vital records offices.

The only federal involvement has come from separate agency concerns about the fraudulent recording and use of birth certificates as it affected specific aspects of their operations. Four federal agencies have, on a very limited basis, provided models, guidelines, training, and other assistance to state registrars: **Immigration and Naturalization Service** (Dept. of Justice), the **Passport Office** (Dept. of State), **Social Security Administration** and **National Center for Health Statistics** (Health and Human Services).

1) Since the passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, INS has concerned itself with the fraudulent use of birth certificates to obtain employment, holding employers responsible for suspect documentation by (supposed) illegal aliens. 2) The Passport Office has always been aggressive in pursuing document fraud by contacting appropriate vital records offices to determine document authenticity in suspected applications for U.S. passports. 3) The National Center for Health Statistics has been concerned with primarily *statistical* information recorded on birth certificates. 4) The SSA maintains contacts with state registrars to establish eligibility for benefits, and also oversees the Enumeration at Birth Program through which parents in almost all states can simply check off a box on the form used to generate birth certificates to obtain an SSN for their children at birth. This program is in response to a 1986 change in the federal tax laws that requires parents to include the SSNs of their children on tax forms if they were claiming them as dependents.



## Birth Certificates

---

When a child is born, birth and parent information is recorded on a birth certificate, sometimes called the birth record. In all states, birth certificates are maintained by, and cannot be removed from the state Registrar's files. Certified copies of birth certificates are produced and distributed either by state or local registrars, with seals and signatures unique to each registrar.

In addition to certified copies, certified *abstracts* of birth certificates are also issued to the public. Abstracts are documents which have selected pieces of information "abstracted" from the birth certificate, and are certified with the same seals and signatures used for certified copies. Abstracts and certified copies are different for each state and also for many local registrars. There is no standardized format or document quality specifications for issuing certified copies of birth certificates which is being followed nationally, and variation in format and document quality vary within most of the states and between the state-level and local registrars.

There are over 7,000 local registrars in the United States, roughly equal to the number of counties in the different states. Typically, initial documentation of birth information is filed by a doctor, hospital or other individual with one of these local offices, which then forwards the original to the state Registrar and keeps a copy in the local files. Other times the original is filed directly with the state Registrar and a copy sent back to the local registrar. There is increasing computerization of this process, making electronic birth certificates (EBCs) possible. By 2000 EBCs will account for at least 90 percent of all new birth registrations in the U.S.

In cases where there is a *delay* between the birth and the initial registration of that birth, all states have special rules for establishing the birth record. These rules do vary among the states, but generally, if the delay is one year or more, the birth certificate will be labeled "DELAYED", which would be visible on all certified copies produced from that document. Of course these delayed situations pose problems for the registrars in establishing authenticity, but they do occur and they can be accommodated, as we will show. Once a delayed birth certificate is recorded, it has the same validity as any other birth certificate, and can be used in any and all situations where a regular birth certificate is required.

All state-level Registrars issue certified copies to the public, but each state has unique laws governing the authority of the local offices. Most local registrars do issue certified copies on all births occurring within their jurisdiction. In some states, however, this authority is limited to six months to a year after the birth, after which the state Registrar assumes authority for issuance. In nine states and the District of Columbia all birth certificates are filed through the state Registrar, and only this office can issue certified copies. These states are "centralized": AR, HI, ID, KS, MD, MO, ND, VA, and WY.

Thirty-eight states offer "decentralized" issuance of birth certificates, with the number of offices authorized ranging from three in Delaware to over 1,500 in New York. These states also vary in how much latitude local registrars have in issuing certified copies, but the norm is that they can and will issue copies of all births recorded in their counties. A call before you visit such an office should advise you of any limitations.

Related to this practice is whether a state has open or restricted access to vital records. Thirteen states currently have open access, which means that anyone who can identify a record can get a copy of it, since it is regarded as public property. These states are CA, KY, ME, MA, MN, NE, NJ, NC, OH, SD, VT, WA, and WI. Thirty-six states *restrict* access to specific individuals or organizations such as parents, children, and courts.

Procedures for requesting copies of birth certificates are not standard for either open or restricted access states. Approaches used by the issuing offices are influenced by numerous factors, such as who is making the request, and whether the request is made in person or by mail. Most of the 36 restricted states make an attempt to identify the person requesting certified copies. Requests by mail (at least 60% of all requests) typically require that the person provide some kind of identifying information, such as notarization of the request, additional birth information facts, full name at birth, maiden name of the mother, father's name, and signature of the person entitled to receive a copy. None of these requirements is too difficult to overcome for someone who has done his homework. Requests in person are not too difficult, either, since registrars do not have automated equipment to obtain verification information on a real-time basis prior to issuing certified copies. "Out of state" ID works very well in this situation. The attitude of most registrars is to cooperate and serve the public, not turn requests into court cases.

## Birth Certificates

---

There is absolutely no uniformity in the production of certified copies of birth certificates in the U.S. Typically, local offices issue certified copies in accordance with local policies and resource capabilities. Copies may be produced by computerized methods, special printing machinery, or duplicating machines using a wide variety of papers, printing techniques, inks, official signatures and seals. And, despite changes in technology, previously issued certified copies remain valid.

Automation/computerization of birth records is coming only slowly, with about half the states maintaining automated records at the state level only. The recording and transfer of birth records is still a manual, paper-intensive process.

The states have had an agreement in place for some time, which encourages registrars to send notices of death to the state of birth so that birth certificates can be marked "DECEASED." The cut-off age is 45, but some states go ahead and mark all birth certificates, regardless of age, if the person was born and died in the same state. Currently matching across state lines is done only by mail or telephone conversation (really!). There is no interstate computer network or national data base(s) which would enable reporting or obtaining information across state lines. It's strictly hit or miss, mainly miss.

Finally, virtually all states send birth information to SSA for the Enumeration at Birth program. All states except Virginia provide SSA with death tapes on a monthly basis. This information becomes new "data entry" for SSA's Social Security Death Master File (also called Death Records Index). You will find full details on the "Death Index" in the chapter on Social Security Numbers.

### LEVEL ONE BIRTH CERTIFICATE

Do you really need a birth certificate for an assumed name that likes to get junk mail and enjoys getting on all kinds of new mailing lists? Probably not. But if it helped you "solidify" this alternate identity in your own mind, however, the idea could have some merit. Why not have a "piece of paper" that showed there really was a "James Lord Townsend"? Assuming you used the name over the years, and that a variety of records accumulated in this name, it might just be possible to adopt the name as a Level Two ID down the road. It could be an ace in the hole, so to speak. If you already had a birth certificate in this name, your own thinking would have given it enough "life" to adopt, at least for a while.

So what kind of birth certificate do you need here? It obviously won't be coming from a state Registrar of Vital Records, so you make yourself the registrar! There are blank forms available by mail from firms listed in I.D. by Mail, from Eden Press. You can fill these in with whatever information suits you. There are also sources of embossing seals that can add a finishing touch. Many registrars use rubber stamps for certification of birth certificates, and these can be ordered "custom made" from virtually any commercial source of rubber stamps. All they need is the wording and design you want. You tell them, and they will make it for you. Here are some samples of the kind of "art work" we're talking about:



## Birth Certificates

---

Another way to create the birth certificate of your dreams is to use computer-aided methods to design your own. You can use a scanner to take an existing birth certificate as a sample and modify it to suit your purposes. Or you can use one of the many "art" programs to design a birth certificate from scratch. Once you have your design, a color copier or printer will do the rest. We could go into exhaustive detail on all the many techniques that creative people can use, but you will find a workable discussion of this subject, in great detail, in Acquiring New I.D., also available from Eden Press.

To tell the truth, most people do not have the skills or background to do "art work" and "graphics", but those who do can work wonders with current computer design programs. We see this as a potentially profitable underground business opportunity which motivated "artists" could use to make extra bucks. The service could be promoted on the Internet as one that "replaces" lost or damaged documents.

Some people might feel more comfortable making their new birth certificate look "aged". They will stain it with tea or coffee, leave in the sun for a day or so, wear it in their shoe, fold it fifty times, and roughen the outer edges with fine sandpaper. Others, however, realize that sometimes we just don't have an old copy of our birth certificate lying about, and have to send away to get a new certified copy. This copy will have "old" information, but the paper stock will definitely be whatever the local or state office is now using. It will look fresh and clean, guaranteed. The point is, don't be concerned about how your custom-made birth certificate looks. With the right data and "official" markings, it will convince anyone. If it looks old, it's because you've had it a long time. If it looks brand new, well, you just had to get a new certified copy since you couldn't find the one you thought you had.

### LEVEL TWO BIRTH CERTIFICATE

Do you ever walk around with your birth certificate? Very likely you don't. Why should you? We never have to use a birth certificate except to apply for certain other ID or Social Security benefits. No one wants to see it because it really *isn't* ID! If you have a copy of your birth certificate you probably have it stored away in a scrapbook, a safe deposit box, or an envelope, uh, somewhere.

The point here is simple. Whatever your "walking around" ID is, you don't need to have a birth certificate on you or with you. If you were ever asked to produce it, you could honestly say, "You know, I'm going to have to find it at home, and right now, I don't think I know exactly where it is." Most people would identify with this statement and find it perfectly reasonable.

If you wanted to have a "back up" birth certificate for your Level Two ID, you could create your own just as you did for Level One. If your Level Two ID is simply your already existing ID, you would be justified in storing your (real) birth certificate safely, and never bringing it out except when it was actually required. It could also provide the "model" for a new certificate designed on a computer.

### LEVEL THREE BIRTH CERTIFICATE

By our definition your Level Three birth certificate will have a name and date of birth completely different from your original. There are two sources for this kind of birth certificate—public and private.

**Public sources**, namely state or local Vital Records offices, can provide you with certified copies of birth certificates suitable for creating all the other government-issued ID you might need, including a new drivers license, a new SSN, even a U.S. passport. Later in this chapter we will cover a number of different ways people obtain Level Three birth certificate from government sources, and evaluate the relative merits of each.

**Private sources** of Level Three birth certificates are much easier to use, and can also be utilized effectively in creating a totally new identity. Their most obvious limitations, however, are that they may not provide you with a birth certificate suitable for obtaining a new SSN or U.S. passport. This is not to say that privately created birth certificates *can't* or *have never been used* to secure these two I.D. items. The truth is, they can and they have been used, but at

## Birth Certificates

---

considerable risk to the applicant. We do not recommend privately created birth certificates for use in these situations, simply because the SSA and the Passport Office are adept at reviewing documents submitted to them. If they suspect fraud, they will verify birth certificates by requesting copies of their own from the indicated vital records office.

NOTE: In practice, the Passport Office is much more inclined to pursue such investigations because the "integrity" of an official U.S. document is at stake. Clerks at SSA are more likely to accept or reject on the spot. If they reject your "papers" you can always try again with different ones, or go to another office with less suspicious window-help.

The Level Three birth certificate you create yourself can be produced by the same methods described earlier. You can obtain a blank certificate from one of the I.D. companies illustrated in I.D. by Mail, and fill in all the details to your exact specifications. You would most likely want to make copies of your work at a copy shop like Kinko's, selecting paper stock with the right texture and appearance. Virtually any "safety" type paper would be suitable. If they do not have quite the paper you want, ask them to refer you to a local printer or printing supply house where you could select from many kinds of paper. You could also "rainbow" your copies by using a number of different kinds of paper for copying. Choose the one that appeals to you most in the privacy of your own home. Apply an embossing seal or rubber stamp "certification", and you will have a very impressive document.

If you are establishing a birthdate before 1970, it would be wise to find an old manual typewriter to fill in the information. After this time electric typewriters became more common, particularly the IBM "Selectric" kind with the changeable typing element (the "ball").

Even if you are able to use a scanner/computer to create your document, it would be best to print it out blank, and fill in with the typewriters just mentioned. Computer-style printing is much too perfect and almost a "giveaway" to an experienced examiner. Only recently-generated birth certificates will have this kind of appearance, and those would be either of still young children, or the simpler "abstract" form of birth certificate issued by some of the states. You can always call your local vital records office to see if the abstract form is used in your state. If it is, you could conceivably make both formats and play one off against the other. If a clerk seemed inclined to reject your recently-issued "abstract" birth certificate, you could always pull out your old, obviously worn "certified" birth certificate your folks got for you when you signed up for Little League. The clerk will look for either a now-smushed embossing or a very faded rubber-stamping, and will reassure you that this birth certificate is indeed just fine!

If you want to create your own format you should at least study a number of actual birth certificates for comparison. If your state has open access to birth certificate files, do your research right in their public facility. Copies may be in bound volumes, or in microfiche files, but the clerks will direct you. A good story like trying to track down a "known" lost heir, or looking for evidence of an exotic viral disease suspected of causing birth defects 20 to 30 years later should gain you the cooperation you need for a good look-see. Take notes, and even—if possible—request copies of a few. As long as you are not requesting a "certified" copy, they will probably direct you to their office copier. And to think, the heir you were told about was born in their county! Who? Sorry, you only work for Probate, and the hearing isn't until next month. Oh lucky day.

You could also study your own birth certificate, or that of another cooperating person. You will soon determine the elements and features that define the typical birth certificate, and these will be the items to include in your design. Don't go overboard; just enough to create the overall appearance and form is all you want. Again, you will find other "production techniques" in the book Acquiring New I.D., which will round out your education in practical graphic arts.

The main reason we consider making privately issued birth certificates is that they CAN be used for obtaining other ID. As you will learn in the chapter on driver's licenses and state ID cards, the issuing agencies do not seek to verify the documents if they "appear" genuine and there are no obvious signs of fraud or other misrepresentation. The birth certificate is accepted on its face, or rejected, period. The same treatment occurs in the taking of a thumbprint at the licensing agency. They **DO NOT VERIFY** the thumbprint, because they have no way of doing so!! It is merely retained with the application, and probably serves best as a psychological deterrent to applicants. (NOTE: The FBI does not accept thumbprints for "classification", so no database exists for comparisons.)

## Birth Certificates

---

The SSA provides a list of documents acceptable when someone applies for an SSN, but a birth certificate is particularly favored since it shows both age and citizenship. They will initiate a verification inquiry only if the application shows signs of possible fraud. Unfortunately, a person applying for an SSN "late in life" piques their curiosity, and documents will be reviewed very carefully. But, again, if the papers you give them meet their approval, the SSN will be issued. The chapter on Social Security Numbers provides much more information on this subject.

Using a privately issued birth certificate to apply for a U.S. passport is **NOT** a good idea. Unless you enjoy doing federal time and/or paying a sizable fine, don't even consider this a possibility. These feds are skilled at detecting document fraud, and do not hesitate to verify birth certificates. They receive full cooperation from all state registrars. If you must have a passport, however, there are other options, and the chapter on passports explains some great possibilities. To obtain a U.S. passport you will need government-issued (verifiable) proof of citizenship, typically a birth certificate, and a government issued photo ID showing identity.

**Public sources** of Level Three birth certificates have the great advantage of being verifiable. They will be issued in a name and age different from your own, but you can rely on them to withstand investigation, should anyone care to inquire officially. So how do you go about obtaining a government issued birth certificate in another name and age? There are two different ways to go about this.

### The Classic Paper Trip

The first is what we have always termed the classic "paper trip" method, namely finding a person who died early in life without having obtained any documented identification. Some call this the "infant identity" method, and it is a method that has always worked very well. We have published full details in the previous Paper Trip books, but we will now expand on some of the necessary considerations.

As you read above, some states have "open" files of birth certificates. This means they also maintain open files of death certificates. If you visit one of these public repositories you can do very quick research, indeed. Simply locate the death records for the year(s) near your own date of birth, and flip through the pages (there is usually one death certificate per page), checking the box which shows date of birth. If it is near your own, check for sex and race, again to match your own. When you find a suitable candidate, either make a copy of the entire page for future reference, or copy down pertinent data such as parents' names, siblings if any, and place of birth.

This last point is of great importance. If the person was born and died in the same state, it doesn't take an investigator long to find this fact, if it is ever suspected. In addition, as you might have surmised from the above, many states have begun marking birth certificates "deceased" if they have this knowledge, and if it occurred in their own state. This practice has been applied only to relatively recent deaths, however, not those occurring 15 to 20 years ago. Further, and most important, there is virtually **NO** cross-referencing of birth and death certificates across state lines. If a person was born in one state and died in another, that fact is almost never communicated to the state of birth, which could then—if it wanted to—mark the original birth certificate "deceased."

Many children never make it to adulthood, unfortunately. Medical problems, diseases, genetic defects, abuse and accidents all take a toll on young lives. Death certificates almost always indicate the cause of death, and you might find it useful to note this in your collection of suitable names. If you wanted to concentrate your research in a county where there might not only have been a greater number of accidental deaths, but also deaths of children born outside the state, you might consider areas that offer "summer camps." You can be sure that every summer, in most such resort areas, there will be accidental deaths such as drownings or falls. The victims will be taken back home for burial, but the death certificate will be filed in the county where the event occurred. There are probably more possibilities for this kind of documentation in the Eastern states, simply because distances from city to summer resort more easily cross state lines.

## Birth Certificates

---

Once you locate several possible candidates for Level Three birth certificates, you need to find out whether or not they have been marked "deceased." If you are in an open access state, it's as easy as going to the birth certificate files and looking for yourself. If you are not, you will have to use an indirect approach. Some people will write the Vital Records office for a certified copy of their "brother's" birth certificate as part of a family genealogy project. (You certainly wouldn't want to ask for "your" birth certificate if there was a chance the record showed you'd already gone to heaven...) Other inquiries might be from a "private investigator" looking into claims by disgruntled heirs.

In your research don't discount the usefulness of an obviously ethnic surname, even though your tendency might be to prefer one culturally related to your own. The "open" state of California has records that are full of Latino names who lived very short lives. This would be true for the other border-states as well. Although the notion of some kind of "prejudice" might enter your mind, in most areas with sizeable Latino populations there is nothing of the kind, and people with all kinds of last names live together just fine, thank you very much. So what do you say to someone who points out that you don't "look like a Garcia?" "Yeah, I know, but my mom remarried when I was just a kid, and had all our birth certificates changed. I never thought much about it. Why would it bother you, anyway?"

### A Classic Variation

In The Paper Trip II we cover the subject of **legal name change** in state-by-state detail. As a variation of this method of paper tripping, why not use your ethnic Level Three birth certificate and apply for a legal name change, using perhaps the "ethnicity" as a reason? In practice, of course, you don't really have to give a "reason" per se, just the assurance to the judge that the name change is not meant for fraudulent purposes. You would then leave with a totally new name, of your own choosing, based on the application of a person you never really were. This would be a much safer way to use the court method of legal name change, since these records do indeed become public. Needless to say, if you did pursue this form of paper trip, no other (past) information in your application should be tied to your new identity (address, employment if asked, telephone, SSN, etc.). You would begin using your new identity openly, yet quite divorced from any past ties and references.

Two final notes on legal name change:

- (1) Many states allow the change simply by "use", that is, you just adopt the name, use it openly, and apply for changes to all records you wish to have reflect the new name. This is the same action as a woman's changing to her husband's surname upon marriage, and subsequently changing ID and other records. No court application or appearance is necessary. (You CAN go to court for the name change, but the effect is more one of "proclaiming" the change and now having the "official" documentation to prove it. Whoopee.)
- (2) The second point about all this should be obvious: once you achieve a legal name change in one state--by whichever method--it is perfectly legal in ALL states, even those that presume to "require" a court appearance. Of course, for many people it is much more reassuring to be able to wave "papers" in front of the disbelieving than to debate any questions of "legality."

### A New Paper Trip

We hinted at the possibility of yet another way to obtain government issued birth certificates in The Paper Trip II, but didn't want to be overly prescriptive. This new method has always existed, of course, but few people likely take advantage of it. Imagine giving yourself an entirely new name, date of birth, place of birth, set of parents, and background information, and having a government issued document to prove it. This magic, good-as-gold identification is known as a **Delayed Certificate of Birth**, and can be obtained from any state registrar of vital records. We are devoting the entire next chapter to this document to present extensive details of how it can be obtained and used.

## Chapter IX

# DELAYED CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH

Imagine you're in your early Thirties and the International Sales Manager of BigTime Corp calls you into his office. Seems the chap who's been covering the Pacific Rim markets has decided to cash in his stock options and become an adjunct professor of international marketing at State University. The company needs you to confer with him over the next two weeks (learn everything he knows about his sales area), and be prepared to spend at least ten months of the year traveling from country to country as BigTime's new international rep.

Fantastic! Just the promotion you had been waiting for. Time to spread your wings and fly. Away! You had already gotten to the point of thinking (knowing!) all U.S. hotels, airports and rental cars are cloned from the same master plan for corporate homogeneity, and one more road trip might induce terminal nausea. The boss knows you're exactly the producer the company needs, and off-handedly reminds you make sure your passport is still valid.

You assure him everything will be ready to go, but inside you know you never did apply for a passport, and now you may have only weeks to get one. That afternoon you stop by the post office in your area that accepts applications and pick up the form. A quick read tells you that you will need two special size photographs, a photo ID, \$65, and a certified copy of your birth certificate. Uh-oh. Major problem here. You never did have, or even see, a copy of your birth certificate. Where are you now going to get the certified copy the form requires?

The truth is you never did have a birth certificate! In the late Sixties your parents were touring the country in their VW camper, covered with all the appropriate psychedelic symbols of the time, and were dreamily seeking the ultimate haven of peace and love. They obviously found the love part, because you were born somewhere between Kansas and San Francisco, but no one ever thought to make a note of it, much less record it. Your mother always liked to talk of the cave dwellings in New Mexico, so you think you might have been born there. Your father, according to your mother, took off after that and probably ended up somewhere in Sonora, Mexico, pretending to be a Yaqui Indian. She said peyote was his personal path to enlightenment, but unlike Moses, he never returned.

Your early childhood was a blur of moving, ever-changing adults in the home, and the memory of a mother who one day just...left. You were only about nine or ten, but fortunately a somewhat stable cousin of your mother's took you into her home and got you through high school and college. Thanks, Aunt Cindy! You were just a kid, so you don't know how your "folks" got you into school and took care of all the usual legal stuff, but then that wasn't your problem. Somebody mailed in an application for you to get a Social Security Number, and just handed you the card when you were around twelve. You got your drivers license easy enough, too: Aunt Cindy went with you to sign that you were indeed sixteen at the time, and that the family had never had any official birth record. The DMV clerk muttered something about "getting a delayed birth certificate," but that fell on deaf ears as you were handed the new plastic license hot out of the laminating machine. From then until now no one ever mentioned anything more about your "birth certificate."

Your life has changed from carefree hippie to hustling yuppie, and now the "official" world wants your proof of citizenship (birth) before it will issue you the ultimate ID, a U.S. Passport. At this point a little shuck and jive just won't do anymore. You're dealing with professionals who expect P-R-O-O-F. If you had a certified copy of your birth certificate, that would be simple enough, but you don't. The Passport Office will accept other forms of proof, of course, but these may not be easily obtained, certainly not when you're in a hurry. Here are some of them: Early baptismal or circumcision (!) certificate, hospital birth record, early census, school, or family Bible records, newspaper or insurance files, or notarized affidavits of persons having knowledge of your birth. The Passport Office would also want a state registrar's notice (letter) to the effect that no birth record exists in his state.

## Delayed Certificate of Birth

---

Well, well, well, whatcha gonna do? In your particular case you will probably be able to look up Aunt Cindy and have her provide a notarized statement that she has personal knowledge of your birth, helped you through school, and probably still has some of your school records in her scrapbooks. She may even remember who sent away for your Social Security Number, and a copy of your original SS-5 (the application) could be obtained. Suffice to say, with your American accent English, your driver's license, and the goodies from Aunt Cindy, you will probably have no real trouble getting the passport. It will just be a lot more hassle than if you had a regular birth certificate, OR a Delayed Certificate of Birth.

Which is our way of introducing you to this unique document. It would have been no problem at all if sometime earlier in your life you *had* obtained what is generally called a Delayed Certificate of Birth. Every state has provisions in their vital records rules and regulations for issuing a Delayed Certificate if certain conditions are met. We will detail these shortly. But first, a little "explanation."

The reason why this procedure is available is simply because not all births are recorded, or at least recorded officially. In the past a birth to an unwed mother was considered a shame beyond bearing, and the child might have been born in a back room and subsequently "adopted" through a hush-hush referral by the Sisters of Everlasting Charity. This group most likely would not have been very motivated to secure an "official" birth record, because their primary concern was for a "smooth" (loving, caring family) adoption. The adopting parents might later have secured a Delayed Certificate of Birth based on a totally different origin of the child, which is to say, a story they could present reasonably and live with.

Children born to parents too poor to afford doctor/hospital care have sometimes discovered later that no official record of their birth was ever made, or recorded. They might have had to live with a succession of relatives, none of whom would have been too concerned about "Little Johnny's" birth certificate. After all, everybody knew where he came from...Family Bible? Naw, never was none, boy.

Ever since the late Sixties there have been groups of all kinds who prefer to avoid contact with government agencies, and have purposely chosen not to have births of their children recorded. We will not mention any examples, but some of them will make you very unwelcome should you "trespass" in their domain. So what do they do when it comes time to send their children to school? They don't! They (legally) teach them at home.

Before we leave the "Sixties" theme, there were plenty of fertile females delivering kids throughout the wilds of the whole United States. *Many* were unable or unwilling (too stoned, too poor, in a commune, on the road, "free" in San Francisco) to bother getting birth records made for their children. They didn't want to or didn't care, or both. A lot of them didn't go for the marriage thing, either, which created yet another void in the records system. Ah, freedom!

### IRELAND'S BANISHED BABIES

To add to this discussion of possibilities for securing a Delayed Certificate of Birth, here is a real-life case which is still generating legitimate (!) applications. From 1949 to 1973 at least 2,200 American citizens were born out of wedlock in Ireland and shipped off to the U.S. for adoption so they would not have to live as outcasts in their homeland. Their mothers were sent in shame to Catholic charity homes before their pregnancies became noticeable. There, they gave birth but faced immediate pressure to give the child up for adoption so they could return home with a saved reputation.

Unfortunately, Ireland was a relatively poor country during those years and the Catholic Church looked to the U.S., where many families were willing to make substantial donations in exchange for a child. There was little concern about sending the children to the U.S., even though it was suspected that some of the adopting parents were "rejectees" of the U.S. adoption system. The church finally did institute at least cursory background checks, but there was also widespread misrepresentation to the mothers themselves. Many didn't realize there were signing away their children for life, but believed they were merely going into foster care. The sense of shame was so great that nuns often told adopting parents the children were orphans.

As a result there is little or no documentation of many of these adoptions. Adoption-rights advocates have pressured the Irish government to set up a national registry, but have met



## Delayed Certificate of Birth

---

a wall of silence and general disinterest. Neither the Irish government nor the Catholic Church has ever formally apologized, although some officials have expressed "regrets." As they see it, "It's not all black and white. Rightly or wrongly, the people who were involved in this at the time felt they were doing right by the children."

So you see, lad, maybe there's more than you know about the "Luck of the Irish."

### ADOPTIONS

Just as you might see some possibilities in the "Irish" example, there are other adoption possibilities even closer to home. To understand how you could use an "adoption" background as a starting point for a Delayed Certificate of Birth, you should first have an overall view of the extent to which adoption records are actually "available." Here's the story.

The blunt truth is that in 47 out of 50 states adoptees *do not have a legal right* to information surrounding their birth and adoption. In the 1930s most states passed laws sealing adoption records as part of an experiment in social reform. Sealed records were designed to remove the stigma of both out-of-wedlock birth and infertility. Patrick Purtill of the National Council for Adoption labeled this policy "the single most successful experiment in family history."

Today, however, many assumptions of these reformers no longer apply. Advances in medical science regarding genetics and inheritable diseases have motivated adoptees to seek out their biological parents' family history. They are almost always denied this information, however, due to records that are often incomplete, and to the fact that their biological parents, usually teenagers or young adults in their early twenties, have not yet experienced any life-threatening disease.

Interest in national/cultural/ethnic heritage has also grown in recent years, and adoptees are like many others who consider such heritage a very important part of self-identity. This is in direct contrast to the attitudes typical of 1930s first- and second-generation families who readily turned their backs on their immigrant heritage in order to "assimilate" better into American society. Individuals who have discovered that they are part Native American actually benefited from the many special programs and privileges accorded our Indian brothers. Not bad!

On the other hand, the National Council for Adoption opposes the actions of adopted children who are searching for their birth parents. This organization believes that birth parents have been given a promise of confidentiality under the law, and that this promise should be honored forever. Director of NCFA, William Pierce, says, "There are people who made decisions to carry pregnancies to term and place their children for adoption with a clear understanding that their confidentiality would be protected. There are literally millions of people whose lives would be affected by retroactively changing the rules of the game, which is just not fair." Some parents with adopted children remain fearful that a biological parent who has changed her mind may use information, now widely available on the Internet, to locate the adopted child and stalk the adopting family many years later.

Instead of adoptees seeking fruitlessly for their biological parents, the NCFA and other adoption advocates prefer the creation of mutual-consent registries. These registries, operated by each state, allow the parents and adult adoptees to register their interest in meeting their biological partners. If both parties register they are put in touch with each other. Criticism has focused, however, on the fact that "dead people don't sign onto registries," and that these services are typically under-funded and under-publicized.

A new activist group, Bastard Nation, incorporated in October 1996, is as in-your-face as any environmental or gay-rights group. "Every area of the Internet has adoption resources," says Damsel Plum, publications chair of Bastard Nation. Their web site, [www.bastards.org](http://www.bastards.org), summarizes many of the resources available, such as national white pages, on-line government records such as the Social Security Death Index, chat services, mailing lists, other web sites, and discussion groups.

The premise of Bastard Nation is that adoptees have an absolute right to information surrounding their birth and adoption. Adoptees argue that their privacy rights are being violated, in particular their right to know their identities and their heritage. Shea Grimm, Bastard Nation's legislative chair, believes that a birth is a shared experience between a mother and her child, and that the state does not have a right to say that the mother's privacy interest dominates the child's interests.

## Delayed Certificate of Birth

---

The nation's courts are actually going along with this argument. Tennessee passed a law giving adoptees access to their original birth records, and was immediately sued by a group of birth parents who claimed the law violated their right to privacy. But in February 1997 the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the law saying that births are public events and that the right to privacy does not extend as far as the birth parents wished. In the fall of 1997 the U.S. Supreme Court let stand the decision of the Sixth Circuit, finding the Tennessee law constitutional.

These decisions amount to a rewriting of adoption policy in the U.S. At least in Tennessee, adoption records are now available to all adoptees age 21 or older, their legal representatives, or their parents, siblings, descendants, or ancestors *with the written permission of the adult adoptee*. The law also allows the parents, siblings, spouse, ancestors, or descendants of an adoptee to register to *prevent contact by the adopted person*.

Obviously the subject of adoption (records, privacy, "right to know," public policy, etc.) generates considerable disagreement, which we do not need to evaluate further. The reason we are presenting this brief overview of the adoption "debate" is to present you with what could be a fertile field of possibilities for creating a believable "background" for a new identity. Isn't it perfectly imaginable that your "adoption" could have been accompanied by mystery, confusion, secrecy, and a host of venal human traits like shame and greed? Amid conflicting emotions and motivations, isn't it possible that the "records" of the event might not be totally truthful, or missing in important details? Or, best for you, maybe you just can't find any records at all of your "adoption?" Why, everyone *knows* it's virtually impossible to get adoption records, and you sure can't seem to find yours....

With all these suggested possibilities in mind, it shouldn't be too difficult to come up with a plausible story and believable details that explain why you never had a regular birth certificate recorded, and, equally important, why you never learned about it until only now. These situations do occur, as we have suggested, and the states' vital records offices are prepared to handle them with the issuing of delayed certificates of birth. Obviously, they are not going to hand them out simply for the asking, but they do have established procedures that aren't too terribly difficult to follow.

We now want to share with you the findings of our research into each state's requirements for issuing delayed certificates of birth. The procedure is *roughly* the same in all states, with the exception that some states could be considered "easier," and others definitely more demanding. But rather than tip off the vital records establishment and encourage a horde of new applicants to just certain states, it would be more useful to spell out in some detail just what kind of background documentation is generally expected, and how the process works. This overview will also include actual instruction sheets from several states so you can judge for yourself if this option is one you might wish to pursue.

**KEEP THIS IN MIND:** A *regular* applicant for a delayed certificate of birth will be using the ID he has been using all along, such as school records, drivers license, and any other documentation with his accustomed name, age, etc. A *paper trip* applicant will be presenting ID in the name and age he wishes to have shown on the delayed certificate of birth. In other words, he will have to acquire and/or create some documentation to somehow "justify" the issuance of the delayed certificate—in his new name. This will become apparent as we review the typical requirements.

### GETTING STARTED

To *obtain* a delayed certificate of birth, you have to *apply* for it. To apply for it you need an application. You can secure an application by writing the state registrar of vital records, or simply a local vital records office. (*We have published a complete listing of these offices in The Paper Trip II, or you can order this information alone in our publication, Where to Write for Birth and Death Records, Item #631 in our catalog, \$7.95. We have also included a summary form of this information at the end of this chapter.*)

There are two ways you can go about getting an application. The first, and most direct, is to write the Registrar somewhat as follows:

---

### Letter #1

State Vital Records Office  
State Capitol, State, ZIP

Dear Sir or Madam:

Please send me an application for a delayed certificate of birth. I have reason to believe I was born in your state, but I have never seen or had a copy of my birth certificate, and it is possible in my case that one may never have been issued.

Send to: Your (new) name, (secure) address.

Thank you very much.

Yours truly,

*Signature*

Here's what will happen: In one to two weeks you will receive a form letter from the Registrar, with your original letter above likely stapled to it. It will inform you that they require a thorough search of their state's birth records to verify that you don't actually have one. To do this you will have to send their regular fee for a certified copy, and they will conduct a statewide search of their records. Once they have determined that they do not have any birth record for you, they will *then* consider your application for a delayed certificate. They will send you the application form with instructions, but only *after* they determine no record exists.

As we noted above, however, every state seems to have some bit of difference in how they handle this process. Some states will simply send you the application, as you requested above. On it, of course, they will inform you that an actual search will be made first for a possibly existing certificate. Other states are more conservative and will insist that you apply for the certified copy first, and that should the search not reveal a certificate the payment will be applied towards the delayed certificate. And this leads us to the second way to ask for an application. Write the Registrar:

### Letter #2

Dear Sir or Madam:

Please send me a certified copy of my birth certificate. I was born on July 25, 1973, in Cleveland, Ohio. Enclosed is my money order for your fee. Please send to:

Your (new) name

Your (secure) address

Yours truly,

*Signature*

Let's note several things about this letter. You are applying for a birth certificate that the Registrar will (obviously) not find in the files. They will discover this and reply that a search did not reveal the certificate you described. *At the same time* they will automatically include an application for a delayed certificate of birth, should you believe you are justified in applying for one. They may keep the fees, or allow them as credit towards the production of the delayed certificate. In any event, you have now obtained the application, which will also include full instructions for completion.

This letter is what detectives call "pure smoke." The information is all logical, but only assumed. Its purpose is different from what is stated. The object is to obtain the application for a delayed certificate of birth, which you will ultimately receive. It also lays the groundwork for the application, because the state has *officially* undertaken the search for the "recorded" certificate, and *officially* found none. The state will now *officially* assist you in securing the delayed certificate. You see, the search itself is actually part of the "record."

## Delayed Certificate of Birth

You should plan to send your letter to *at least* six different states so you can compare their relative differences in requirements, etc. Some will strike you as "easy" and others you may decide to avoid. Use your chosen new name (a Level Three name) and a secure address for this correspondence. Do not have any mail in this name come to your residence, of course. If you're using an MFS the name could simply be added to list of "company representatives" who are entitled to receive mail at that address.

We wrote each state asking for an application for a Delayed Certificate of Birth, but the following states did **NOT** do as we requested. Instead they sent us applications for a regular birth certificate, advising us of the fees, and that only in the event they were unable to provide a birth certificate would they then provide us with an application and information on how to secure a delayed birth certificate.

For these states, then, you would be better off using **letter #2**, above:

Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Virgin Islands, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Here a typical response from these states:



STATE OF FLORIDA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

Dear Applicant:

This is in reference to your recent request to file a Delayed Certificate of Birth.

The first step involved in this process is an official search of our records, to determine that a birth certificate is not currently on file in this office.

If we are unable to locate a record, a certified "Not Found" statement will be issued to you along with instructions on how to file for a delayed birth certificate. The fee for this initial search is \$9. An application is enclosed for your convenience.

If you previously had the state records searched and have proof of such a search in the form of a receipt, cancelled check or a "Not Found" statement, please submit for our review.

If we can be of further assistance to you in this matter, please let us know.

Sincerely,

Lorraine Kratz  
Senior Clerical Supervisor  
Office of Vital Statistics  
(904) 359-6677

P.O. BOX 210 • JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32231

LAWTON CHILES, GOVERNOR

**Delayed Certificate of Birth****(New Mexico)**

The following states DID send us actual applications for delayed certificates of birth, along with detailed instructions. For these states you could use letter #1:

California, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York State, City of New York, Vermont, Washington DC, and West Virginia.

The forms and procedures from these states are somewhat similar. We are reproducing five sets of applications and instructions to give you a detailed view of the exact process. Here are the materials we received from California, Iowa, Michigan, New Hampshire, and New Mexico. (Some the following items have been reduced in size for space considerations.)

REQUEST NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICATION FOR FILING A NEW MEXICO DELAYED CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH**

The following information is required to establish a Delayed Certificate of Birth. This application must be completed and signed by the person whose birth is to be registered or by a minor applicant's legal guardian.

**Complete each item below as it should appear on the Delayed Certificate of Birth**

<b>1. APPLICANT'S INFORMATION:</b>			
<small>(FULL NAME AT BIRTH)</small>			
FIRST NAME	MIDDLE NAME	LAST NAME	
<b>DATE OF BIRTH:</b>			
MONTH	DAY	YEAR	
<b>PLACE OF BIRTH:</b>			
CITY	COUNTY	STATE	NEW MEXICO
<b>2. MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME:</b>			
FIRST	MIDDLE	LAST	
<b>MOTHER'S PLACE OF BIRTH:</b>			
CITY	COUNTY	STATE	COUNTRY
<b>3. FATHER'S NAME:</b>			
FIRST	MIDDLE	LAST	
<b>FATHER'S PLACE OF BIRTH:</b>			
CITY	COUNTY	STATE	COUNTRY
<b>4. APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:</b>			
No. and Street / P.O. Box			
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE	
<b>Telephone Number:</b> ( ) HOME ( ) WORK			
<b>5. CERTIFICATION:</b>			
I certify that the information provided in this application is true and correct and that I have used these facts of birth for schooling, employment and other legal purposes. I understand that I may be subject to criminal prosecution for making false statements or by altering or amending any part of this application with the intent to deceive (including records presented).			
Signature		Date	
Subscribed and sworn before me this _____ day of _____, 19 _____			
Signature of Notary Public		My Commission Expires: _____	

Please enclose your check or money order for \$10 payable to **BUREAU OF VITAL RECORDS** to cover the statutory fee for processing a Delayed Birth Registration. Attach the necessary acceptable documentation as described on the **Information Sheet**. **ALLOW TWO (2) TO FOUR (4) WEEKS FOR PROCESSING.**

Send completed form to:

Bureau of Vital Records & Health Statistics  
1190 Saint Francis Drive  
P.O. Box 26110  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-6110

**INFORMATION SHEET**  
**DELAYED BIRTH CERTIFICATE REGISTRATION****OFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION**

Each application for filing a New Mexico Delayed Birth Certificate must be substantiated through the submission of at least two original documents (or certified copies thereof) taken from the official files of a government agency or other organization which normally or routinely records a person's facts of birth. Subject to the approval of the State Registrar, multiple related documents each showing partial facts of birth may be substituted if the relationship can be clearly established, and will be combined to one document. **Documents bearing unauthorized alterations or erasures will not be accepted.**

**DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR A DELAYED BIRTH REGISTRATION**

The certified documentary evidence must consist of at least:

- A. Two different pieces of documentary evidence that establish the registrant's full name, the date of birth, and the place of birth within the State of New Mexico.
- B. One document must establish the facts of parentage of the registrant (i.e. mother's maiden and father's name).

**First document:** Must have been established as close to birth as possible, preferably within two weeks after date of birth.

**Second document:** For persons 50 or under, documentary evidence must have been established prior to the registrant's tenth (10th) birthday.  
For persons 51 or older, documentary evidence must have been established at least five (5) years prior to the first date of application.

**All of the above documents will be used to verify name, date and place of birth and parentage of registrant and will be returned once reviewed and a birth certificate is established or denied.**

**EXAMPLES OF DOCUMENTS WHICH MAY BE ACCEPTABLE:**

- Church Records: Records of Baptism, Blessing or Enrollment (Original record).
- Medical Records: Hospital, Clinic or Physician's Records (Original copies or certified copies).
- Military Service Records: Selective Service System Registration, Veteran Administration Record (Original Documents).
- School Records: Transcripts, Registration Forms, Letter from School Administration (Original documents or certified by school officials).
- Voter Registration Certificate (Original or certified by the County Clerk).
- Application for Marriage License; marriage certificate **not** acceptable (certified copy).
- Birth Certificate of the registrant's child (certified copy).
- U.S. Census Record: (Available from the Bureau of Census).
- Social Security Application Record: (Available from the Department of Health Education and Welfare).
- Life or Medical Insurance Policy (Original or Certified Documents).

**NOTE:**

A DELAYED BIRTH CERTIFICATE ALONE MAY NOT BE SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE FOR PASSPORT OR SOCIAL SECURITY APPLICATION, PLEASE CONTACT THAT AGENCY PRIOR TO FILING TO VERIFY CURRENT REQUIREMENTS.

# Delayed Certificate of Birth

(California)

## APPLICATION FOR DELAYED REGISTRATION OF BIRTH

A fee is required for births registered one year after the date of event. The fee includes one certified copy of the certificate. There is a fee for each additional certified copy requested. Please ask your local registrar or the State Registrar for the current fee.

Enclosed is the fee of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for the Delayed Registration of Birth and one certified copy.

Enclosed is the fee of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for an additional certified copy(ies) of the Delayed Registration of Birth.

Printed Name of Applicant

Mailing Address of Applicant

( )

Area  
Code

Telephone Number

City

State

ZIP Code

104-

## DELAYED REGISTRATION OF BIRTH STATE OF CALIFORNIA

STATE FILE NUMBER

FACTS OF BIRTH	1A NAME OF CHILD—FIRST (GIVEN)		1B MIDDLE		1C LAST (FAMILY)	
	2 SEX	3 DATE OF BIRTH—MONTH, DAY, YEAR		4 NAME OF PHYSICIAN (OR ATTENDANT OR CERTIFIER OR OTHER PERSON ATTENDING THIS BIRTH)		
	5A PLACE OF BIRTH—HOSPITAL, STREET, NUMBER, LOCATION			5B CITY OR TOWN	5C COUNTY	5D STATE
FATHER	6A NAME OF FATHER—FIRST (GIVEN)		6B MIDDLE		6C LAST (FAMILY)	
	7 STATE OR COUNTRY OF BIRTH		8A RACE	8B HISPANIC—IF YES, SPECIFY <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		9 DATE OF BIRTH—MONTH, DAY, YEAR
MOTHER	10A NAME OF MOTHER—FIRST (GIVEN)		10B MIDDLE		10C LAST—(MAIDEN)	
	11 STATE OR COUNTRY OF BIRTH		12A RACE	12B HISPANIC—IF YES, SPECIFY <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		13 DATE OF BIRTH—MONTH, DAY, YEAR
CERTIFICATION OF APPLICANT	1 HEREBY CERTIFY UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT THE ABOVE STATEMENTS ARE TRUE AND CORRECT		14 SIGNATURE		15 CHECK ONE PARENT PERSON WHOSE BIRTH IS BEING REGISTERED <input type="checkbox"/> GUARDIAN ATTENDANT AT BIRTH <input type="checkbox"/>	
	16 DATE	17 ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE) (ZIP CODE)			18A DATE OF DEATH	18B STATE FILE NUMBER
AFFIDAVIT AND SIGNATURES  USE BLACK INK ONLY	IT IS A FELONY TO FILE A FALSE AFFIDAVIT. THERE IS ALSO A CIVIL PENALTY OF \$5,000. "WE HEREBY CERTIFY UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT THE ABOVE STATEMENTS ARE TRUE AND CORRECT AND THAT WE HAD PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF THIS BIRTH AT THE TIME OF OCCURRENCE."					
	19A SIGNATURE OF FIRST PERSON		19B RELATIONSHIP/REASON FOR KNOWLEDGE OF BIRTH		19C DATE SIGNED	
	19D AGE	19E ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE)				
	20A SIGNATURE OF SECOND PERSON		20B RELATIONSHIP/REASON FOR KNOWLEDGE OF BIRTH		20C DATE SIGNED	
	20D AGE	20E ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE)				
STATE REGISTRAR USE ONLY—EVIDENCE SUBMITTED						
FACTS OF BIRTH	21	DOB	POB	F	M	
	DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	DATE RECORDED		DATE ISSUED		
FACTS OF BIRTH	22	DOB	POB	F	M	
	DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	DATE RECORDED		DATE ISSUED		
FACTS OF BIRTH	23	DOB	POB	F	M	
	DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	DATE RECORDED		DATE ISSUED		
STATE REGISTRAR	1 HEREBY CERTIFY THAT NO PRIOR CERTIFICATE HAS BEEN FOUND ON FILE IN THIS OFFICE FOR THE ABOVE REGISTRANT. THE EVIDENCE HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND SAID EVIDENCE SUBSTANTIATES THE FACTS AS SET FORTH IN THE FOREGOING ABSTRACT. BIRTH RECORDS REGISTERED ONE YEAR AFTER THE YEAR OF EVENT ARE NOT "PRIMA FACIE" EVIDENCE TO THE FACTS STATED (HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE, SECTION 10577).				24 OFFICE OF STATE REGISTRAR	
					25 DATE REGISTERED	

STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES, OFFICE OF STATE REGISTRAR

(Rev. 5/93) FORM VS-1

---

## INSTRUCTIONS

Before you apply for a Delayed Registration of Birth, be sure that you do not have a registered birth certificate in California.

### I. SIGNATURES REQUIRED

The application may be signed by the person whose birth is being registered only if he/she is 18 years of age or older at the time of filing the application. If not, the application may only be signed by his/her mother, father, legal guardian, or attending physician or principal attendant at birth.

### II. "AFFIDAVITS" AND "DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE" DEFINED

An "affidavit" is defined as a written statement executed under oath by a person who, at the time of the applicant's birth was at least five years old and had knowledge of the facts of birth.

"Documentary evidence" is defined as original documents or certified copies of documents which show birth information.

### III. AFFIDAVITS AND DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

#### A. If the person whose birth is being registered is under 12 years of age:

1. Two persons having knowledge of the facts of the birth and who were at least five years old at the time of this event must sign the affidavit (Items 19A and 20A). If the persons signing are not relatives of the applicant, they must specify the reason for having knowledge of the birth at the time of occurrence, e.g., "witnessed birth", etc. One document which confirms the date and place of birth and which is dated more than two years prior to the date of this application is required.

or

2. Two documents over two years old which confirm the date and place of birth are required, one document must confirm parentage.

#### B. If the person whose birth is being registered is 12 years of age or older:

1. Two persons having knowledge of the facts of the birth and who were at least five years old at the time of the event must sign the affidavit (Items 19A and 20A). One document which confirms the date and place of birth and which is dated more than five years prior to the date of this application is required.

or

2. Two documents which confirm the date and place of birth and which are dated more than five years prior to the date of this application are required. One document must confirm parentage.

### IV. Suggested documents that may verify date and place of birth or parentage of the person whose birth is being registered are listed below. (Health and Safety Code Section 10521)

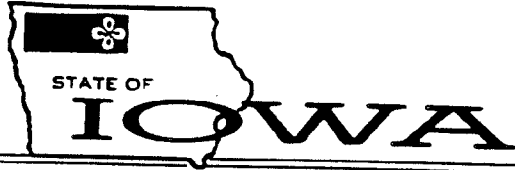
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Birth Certificate of Applicant's Child   | 6. Social Security Record: This may be obtained from the Social Security Administration in Baltimore, Maryland or your local Social Security office. |
| 2. Applicant's Certificate of Registry of Marriage  | 7. Voting Registration Records   |
| 3. U.S. Census Record: A form for requesting a search of the census records will be sent from this office upon request. | 8. Baptismal Certificate or other Church Records   |
| 4. Military Service Records   | 9. Newspaper Notice of the Birth   |
| 5. Hospital Records of Birth or other Medical Records   | 10. School Records   |

### V. When properly completed and signed, mail this form, documents and required fees to the Office of State Registrar, 304 "S" Street, P.O. Box 730241, Sacramento, CA 94244-0241.



## Delayed Certificate of Birth

(Iowa)



TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
CHRISTOPHER G. ATCHISON, DIRECTOR

Dear Applicant:

When your birth in Iowa has not been previously recorded, you may file a "Delayed Certificate of Birth." Please submit the following items to file a Delayed Certificate of Birth.

- (1) A completed Delayed Certificate of Birth form which has been signed before a notary public by the person whose birth is to be registered. If the individual is under the age of 16 years or is legally incompetent, it must be signed by one of the parents or legal guardian.
- (2) Three documents (or copies of) which, when combined, verify these facts of birth.

- a. Full name at time of birth
- b. Date of birth
- c. City/town and county of birth
- d. Mother's full maiden name
- e. Father's full name

The documents must have been established a minimum of five years prior to the request for Delayed Certificate of Birth for an individual age 7 years or older.

Supporting documents for Delayed Certificate of Birth for a child under the age of 7 years must have been established at least 1 year prior to the request.

If the Delayed Certificate of Birth is requested for Social Security or Passport application, documents which were established early in life are more acceptable verification. You should also check with the above two agencies first to see if they will accept a delayed record of birth.

Examples of documents which may verify the facts of birth are attached to this instruction sheet.

The Clerk of District Court in your county can assist you with completing the certificate and can review your documents.

The fee for processing and filing a Delayed Certificate of Birth is \$10.00. An additional \$10.00 fee is required if you wish to receive a certified copy. All fees are payable by check or money order to the Department of Public Health.

The completed, notarized Delayed Certificate of Birth, supporting documents and fees should be mailed to:

Bureau of Support Services  
Vital Records  
Iowa Department of Public Health  
Lucas State Office Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075

Your Delayed Certificate of Birth will be processed approximately 15 working days after it is received at the Iowa Department of Public Health. **After viewing your documents we may require additional documents.** If you have any questions, please call the Delayed Certificate Clerk at (515) 281-5872.

LUCAS STATE OFFICE BUILDING / DES MOINES, IOWA 50319-0075 / 515-281-5787  
FAX # (515) 281-4958 / TDD-DEAF SERVICES #(515) 242-6156

***Examples of Supporting Documents***

Birth certificate of a child.

Religious record: Baptismal or confirmation records generally list full birth name and dates of birth.

Family Bible records

Military entry or discharge papers.

Marriage Certificate: State or County certificate copy generally show age, birthplace and name of parents.

Employment record.

School record: Available from the Area Education Association. You may contact your local school system to obtain the location of the Area Education Association Office for the school district you attended.

Social Security Application: A copy of your original Social Security Application may be obtained by writing to:

**Department of Health, Education and Welfare  
Social Security Administration  
Baltimore, Maryland 21235  
1-800-772-1213**

Life Insurance Policy or Pension Plan: You may submit a statement prepared by the company which reflects birthdate and effective date of insurance policy or enrollment in retirement plan.

Hospital or Physician Record: Copy of hospital/physician record which provides facts of birth or a statement reflecting the facts of birth which includes the date of original record.

You can tell from these sets of instructions that the registrars are looking for a "believable" applicant. Anyone who has been around awhile naturally accumulates records and documents of all kinds. You will have to satisfy the registrar that your life's records are those of a believable person with a believable story, who simply, through no fault of his own, never had a recorded birth certificate.

**COMPLETING THE APPLICATION**

There are two kinds of "evidence" or "proof" that will justify the issuance of a delayed certificate of birth. The first is documentary evidence from your *early years* (earlier the better), such as a family Bible, correspondence, early school records, or some other documented evidence linking you to a family, place of birth, and date of birth. The second is documentary evidence *within the last several years* that shows identity and age. The applications quite generously list many kinds of evidence that can be considered. What the Registrar is looking for is an image of completeness and continuity.

**Helpful hints:** Family Bibles are readily available at many antique shops, even swap meets. They are suitably old, and will usually have plenty of blank pages for recording family history. Some antique dealers also have old fountain pens and (actual) inks from earlier years. The dealer will be able to tell you when such-and-such a pen and ink were in circulation. Just remember, however, that before the Sixties people used *legible* handwriting, not the cursive "printing" so often used today.

## Delayed Certificate of Birth

(Iowa)

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
VITAL RECORDS SECTION

Cert. No. \_\_\_\_\_

## Delayed Certificate of Birth

Full name at birth \_\_\_\_\_  
First Middle LastDate of birth \_\_\_\_\_ Race \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_  
(Month) (Day) (Year)Birthplace \_\_\_\_\_ Iowa \_\_\_\_\_  
(City or Town) (County)Father: Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth-place \_\_\_\_\_  
Maiden (State or Country)Mother: Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth-place \_\_\_\_\_  
(State or Country)

Affidavit: I hereby declare upon oath that the above statements are true.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(To be signed by registrant if possible)

Subscribed and sworn to before me on \_\_\_\_\_ 19 \_\_\_\_\_

My commission expires on \_\_\_\_\_ 19 \_\_\_\_\_

(SEAL)

## FOR STATE OFFICE USE ONLY

Notary Public \_\_\_\_\_

## ABSTRACT OF SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

	Name and kind of document, and by whom issued and signed	Date original document was made
1		
2		
3		

## INFORMATION CONCERNING REGISTRANT AS STATED IN DOCUMENTS

	Birth date or age	Birthplace	Name of Father	Maiden Name of Mother
1				
2				
3				

Additional information: \_\_\_\_\_

## Statement of Reviewing Official

I hereby certify that no prior certificate has been found in the County or State Registrar's Office for this registrant and that documentary evidence has been seen and read which substantiates the facts as set forth in the foregoing abstract.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief, Bureau of Vital Records/Statistics

CFN-588-0040 (2/88)

CPA-27493

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Filed \_\_\_\_\_

USE BLACK INK OR TYPEWRITER RIBBON

**DELAYED CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH  
STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**(New Hampshire)**

LOCAL FILE NO.....

STATE FILE NO.....

<b>REGISTRANT</b> (Person whose name is being registered)	1. REGISTRANT'S FULL NAME AT BIRTH			2. BIRTH DATE (Month) (Day) (Year)		
	3. SEX	4. BIRTH PLACE (Name of Hospital, At Home, etc. - If "At Home", Street Name and No.)	5a. CITY OR TOWN OF BIRTH		5b. COUNTY OF BIRTH	
<b>FATHER</b>	6. FULL NAME OF FATHER			7. STATE OR COUNTRY OF FATHER'S BIRTH		
<b>MOTHER</b>	8. FULL MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER			9. STATE OR COUNTRY OF MOTHER'S BIRTH		
<b>AFFIDAVIT</b>	10. SIGNATURE OF REGISTRANT: I hereby declare upon oath that the above statements are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.				11. PRESENT ADDRESS OF REGISTRANT	
<b>NOTARY/ J P</b> (Seal)	12. SIGNATURE OF NOTARY OR JUSTICE OF THE PEACE		Subscribed and sworn to me on 19		13. DATE COMMISSION (Month) (Day) (Year) EXPIRES	

**APPLICANT - DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE**

<b>SUPPORTING RECORD 1</b>	TITLE OR DESCRIPTION OF DOCUMENT				BY WHOM ISSUED & SIGNED (Affiant or Custodian)	
	DATE OF ORIGINAL FILING (Month) (Day) (Year)	DATE THIS COPY WAS ISSUED (Month) (Day) (Year)	BIRTH FACTS IN THIS DOCUMENT	Birthplace	Date of Birth or Age	
	BIRTH FACTS IN THIS DOCUMENT Full Maiden Name of Mother		BIRTH FACTS IN THIS DOCUMENT	Name of Father		
<b>SUPPORTING RECORD 2</b>	TITLE OR DESCRIPTION OF DOCUMENT				BY WHOM ISSUED & SIGNED (Affiant or Custodian)	
	DATE OF ORIGINAL FILING (Month) (Day) (Year)	DATE THIS COPY WAS ISSUED (Month) (Day) (Year)	BIRTH FACTS IN THIS DOCUMENT	Birthplace	Date of Birth or Age	
	BIRTH FACTS IN THIS DOCUMENT Full Maiden Name of Mother		BIRTH FACTS IN THIS DOCUMENT	Name of Father		
<b>SUPPORTING RECORD 3</b>	TITLE OR DESCRIPTION OF DOCUMENT				BY WHOM ISSUED & SIGNED (Affiant or Custodian)	
	DATE OF ORIGINAL FILING (Month) (Day) (Year)	DATE THIS COPY WAS ISSUED (Month) (Day) (Year)	BIRTH FACTS IN THIS DOCUMENT	Birthplace	Date of Birth or Age	
	BIRTH FACTS IN THIS DOCUMENT Full Maiden Name of Mother		BIRTH FACTS IN THIS DOCUMENT	Name of Father		
<b>SUPPORTING RECORD 4</b>	TITLE OR DESCRIPTION OF DOCUMENT				BY WHOM ISSUED & SIGNED (Affiant or Custodian)	
	DATE OF ORIGINAL FILING (Month) (Day) (Year)	DATE THIS COPY WAS ISSUED (Month) (Day) (Year)	BIRTH FACTS IN THIS DOCUMENT	Birthplace	Date of Birth or Age	
	BIRTH FACTS IN THIS DOCUMENT Full Maiden Name of Mother		BIRTH FACTS IN THIS DOCUMENT	Name of Father		
<b>QUALIFYING INFORMATION</b>						

**CERTIFICATION OF CITY OR TOWN CLERK**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that no prior birth certificate is on file in the local records for the person whose birth is to be recorded. I have reviewed the evidence submitted to establish the facts of birth. I have prepared the abstract of evidence to accurately reflect the nature and content of the documents presented. I am the clerk of

CITY/TOWN

SIGNATURE

DATE SIGNED

**CERTIFICATION OF STATE REGISTRAR**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that no prior birth certificate is on file at the N.H. Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics for the person whose birth is to be recorded. I have reviewed the evidence submitted to establish the facts of birth. The abstract of evidence appearing on the Delayed Certificate of Birth accurately reflects the nature and content of the documents presented to the local clerk. This application is approved and the Delayed Certificate of Birth shall be registered with the local clerk and the N.H. Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics.

SIGNATURE OF STATE REGISTRAR

DATE SIGNED

## Delayed Certificate of Birth (New Hampshire)

### Instructions for Applying for a Delayed Birth Certificate.

A person claiming to be born in the State of New Hampshire who does not have a record of birth on file at either the N.H. Bureau of Vital Records or the local town/city of birth may apply for a delayed certificate of birth. This pamphlet has been prepared to assist such applicants as they go through the prescribed procedure stipulated by the Rules of the Bureau of Vital Records (VT 306). The rules contain the official instructions and are the official source of reference if specific interpretations or questions arise.

Application for a delayed birth certificate is made on form VS 33, that must be typed or printed without errors or erasures.

The local clerk will assist the applicant in completing the top portion of the form through item 11 if a personal visit is practical. In any case, be sure that the signature in item 10 is affixed in the presence of a notary public or a justice of the peace. All applications will be prepared by the local registrar when ever this is possible.

A delayed certificate request is used to place on file a birth certificate when a birth certificate has not been filed for the applicant within six months after birth.

Certain documentary evidence must be obtained by the applicant and submitted with the application form to the town/city clerk where birth allegedly took place. Details on the type of documents needed will follow. A fee of \$25.00 payable to the town clerk of birth, should accompany the documents and the completed application form.

If the applicant is 18 years of age or older he/she may sign the application form. If the applicant is younger than 18 years of age the Form VS 33 can be signed by a parent, a legal guardian or a legal representative of the applicant. The documentary evidence presented must prove the following facts:

The full name of the applicant at time of birth.

The date and place of birth.

The full maiden name of the mother.

The full name of the father. (If the parents are not married the name of the father can be placed on the birth certificate only when an affidavit of paternity has been executed and filed with the form VS 33. Details on this and related questions concerning marital status of parents should be referred to the local registrar or the Bureau depending upon the specifics involved.) The rules concerned with the documentary evidence stipulate the following:

The name of the registrant and the date and place of birth to be placed on the delayed birth certificate shall be supported by at least—

(1) Three records, one of which shall be a record made *before the first birthday* of the registrant. Only one of these records may be an affidavit of

personal knowledge—or

(2) Four records - which were made *after the first birthday* of the registrant. Only one of these four may be an affidavit of personal knowledge. It is important to note that the value of the affidavit of personal knowledge can vary considerably. It must be notarized. The person making the statements must be at least 10 years older than the registrant if the age of the registrant is being confirmed. The affidavit must be of legal age, *must know the facts stated from personal knowledge*, not hearsay, and should state this in detail including, if possible, why they are sure of their facts as stated. The affidavit should include all of the items that can be sworn to as correct.

The documents submitted should be *certified copies* of the originals when applicable. Otherwise, the information should be presented on a letterhead, or on an official form used for the purpose and signed by the person issuing the information and sealed, if an official seal is available.

Please refer to the following examples of evidence recommended for use when substantiating the five basic facts that must be proved before a delayed certificate of birth can be issued. The documents at the top of the list will be considered as the most valuable pieces of evidence.

Notarized medical records.

Notarized statements from the physician, midwife, mother or father present at the birth.

Baptismal certificate, with seal if available.

Elementary school records, preferably from a very early grade, stating date of birth, and name of at least one parent.

U.S. Census report. Application form available from the local registrar of vital records or the Bureau.

Family bible records.

Copies of Income Tax returns listing the applicant as a dependent, certified by the Internal Revenue Service.

Notarized affidavit of personal knowledge from a family member who was at least 10 years old at the time of the birth and who is now of legal age.

Early insurance policies or applications for the policy.

Birth records of siblings (when surrounding the birth date of applicant) (but not limited to above examples)

Any proof submitted must have been established early in the life of the applicant. Consequently, military service records, marriage records, high school or college records, and similar documents are not as acceptable as the documents noted above. However, they can be used in conjunction with the recommended documents.

In addition to the documents required to prove the facts of birth as described above whenever the place of alleged birth is a city/town that borders on a neighboring state the applicant must apply to the Bureau of Vital Records in the neighboring state

## **Delayed Certificate of Birth (New Hampshire)**



for a search of their records and provide a "no record of birth" statement that will document that the applicant does not have a birth record on file in the bordering state.

A similar document must be obtained from the Bureau of Vital Records in Concord, N.H. and from the local registrar in the city/town of alleged birth. A \$10.00 fee is charged by N.H. statute for each search for a record.

These documents must be part of the "package" presented to the local registrar in the city/town of alleged birth and are in addition to the evidence submitted to prove the facts of birth.

After the form VS 33 has been completed by the local registrar and the evidence examined to be sure it meets the criteria established by the Rules of the Bureau all of the material will be forwarded to the State Registrar of Vital Records for a final review. In many instances the original presentation is not acceptable which necessitates further documentation. To keep such delays to a minimum, applicants are advised to follow these instructions closely and submit evidence that will be of sufficient value to comply with the guidelines, as outlined in this pamphlet. Allow approximately one month for the processing of the paper work from the time all necessary documents are submitted.

It is important for the applicant to understand that the state registrar will not approve the issuing of a delayed certificate of birth until he is satisfied that the Rules of the Bureau governing the process have been followed and the evidence submitted provides satisfactory proof of the alleged facts.

The applicant must be aware of the problems that could arise if a delayed certificate of birth is issued when the evidence presented to substantiate the facts is of a questionable level of quality. Delayed birth certificates in such instances may not be acceptable to the requesting agencies, i. e. passport officials, Social Security, etc., as they are presented. Therefore, it is best to provide solid evidence to prove your case and you can then be reasonably confident that the delayed birth certificate will be accepted under the most rigid scrutiny.

If any questions arise as you proceed with your application please contact the local registrar of the city/town of birth who will be available to assist you. Questions that can not be answered at the level will be referred to the Bureau of Vital Records, Concord, N.H.

Prepared by:  
**BUREAU OF VITAL RECORDS & HEALTH STATISTICS**  
**DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES**  
**HAZEN DRIVE**  
**CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03301**  
**(603) 271-4650**  
**WITHIN N.H.**  
**TOLL FREE 1-800-852-3310 EXT. 4650**

# Delayed Certificate of Birth

(Michigan)

Michigan Department of Public Health  
Office of the State Registrar  
and Center for Health Statistics

## APPLICATION TO ESTABLISH A DELAYED REGISTRATION OF BIRTH

NO.

1. FULL NAME AT TIME OF BIRTH	2. DATE OF BIRTH
3. EXACT PLACE OF BIRTH (county and city, village or twp.) MICHIGAN	4. SEX
5. MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER	6. MOTHER'S BIRTHPLACE (state or country)
7. NAME OF FATHER	8. FATHER'S BIRTHPLACE (state or country)

I declare upon oath that the above statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

9a. \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature) 9b. DATE SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

9c. CURRENT ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ street or post office box \_\_\_\_\_ city \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

9d. My relationship to person named in Item 1 (when such person is under 18 years old) \_\_\_\_\_

STATE OF \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_

Subscribed and sworn to before me

Notary Public

on \_\_\_\_\_ 19 \_\_\_\_\_

My commission expires \_\_\_\_\_

*If you are 18 years of age or older, Items 1 through 9d should be completed and signed by you in the presence of a notary public. If under 18, these items should be completed and signed by either parent, legal guardian or representative, in the presence of a notary public.*

COMPLETE THE SECTION BELOW ONLY IF NECESSARY PER PARAGRAPH #4 OF THE INSTRUCTION LETTER

### AFFIDAVIT OF PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE

State of \_\_\_\_\_

County of \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, whose address is

(number and street)

(city and state)

being duly sworn, depose and say:

That I am \_\_\_\_\_ of

(relationship to registrant)

who was born on

(date)

in

(city, village, or township)

in the County of \_\_\_\_\_, Michigan; and is the child of

(name of father)

and

(name of mother)

Signature

Subscribed and sworn to before me on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19 \_\_\_\_\_

Notary Public

For the County of \_\_\_\_\_

My Commission Expires \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE LEGIBLY

## Delayed Certificate of Birth

(Michigan)

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
OFFICE OF THE STATE REGISTRAR & DIVISION FOR HEALTH STATISTICS  
P.O. BOX 30195, 3423 North M. L. KING BLVD., LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909  
Telephone Number: (517) 335-8660

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR: Establishing a Delayed Registration of Birth

A birth which occurred in Michigan and not officially registered within one year after the date of birth must be registered as a delayed birth. The enclosed application for B-101a titled "Application to Establish a Delayed Registration of Birth" is designed to obtain the information necessary to establish a delayed birth certificate.

#### ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Only the following people are eligible to request the establishment of a delayed birth certificate:

1. The registrant (the person whose birth was not recorded).
2. A parent, the guardian or the legal representative of the registrant.
3. An older person having knowledge of the facts of birth.

#### COMPLETING THE FORM

1. Use a typewriter or print legibly in black ink, except for signatures when completing the form.
2. Complete Items 1-8 to show the facts as they existed at the time of birth. If the mother was not married to the father at the time of birth or within ten (10) months before the birth, information about the father should not be entered on the application unless a properly executed affidavit of parentage, or a true or certified copy of an acknowledgment of paternity filed in a court, or a true or certified copy of a court determination of paternity is filed with the Department of Public Health.
3. Item 9 must be completed and signed in the presence of a notary public. The registrant, if 18 years of age or older and competent to sign and swear to the accuracy of the facts stated, one of the parents, the legal guardian, the legal representative of the registrant, or an older person having knowledge of the facts of birth must complete Item 9 in the presence of a notary public. When completing Item 9, the person attesting to the facts should sign his/her present legal name.
4. An affidavit of personal knowledge may be used as documentary evidence. See the section on Required Documentary Evidence. If an affidavit of personal knowledge is used as documentary evidence, it must be completed by an older person who has knowledge of the facts of birth and must not be the same individual who signed the application.

#### REQUIRED DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Each of the following items must be supported by sufficient documentary evidence.

1. The full name of the registrant at the time of birth.
2. The date of birth and the city and county of birth.
3. The full maiden name of the registrant's mother and her state (or country, if not U.S.) of birth.
4. The name of the registrant's father if it is entered on the application and his state (or country, if not U.S.) of birth.



## Delayed Certificate of Birth

**(Michigan)**

EACH of these facts as listed above must be individually supported by one of the following combinations of acceptable documentation:

1. TWO documents prepared on or before the registrant's fifth birthday.
2. ONE document prepared on or before the registrant's fifth birthday AND ONE document prepared at least five years prior to the date of the application to establish a delayed birth certificate.
3. ONE document prepared on or before the registrant's fifth birthday AND an affidavit of personal knowledge from an older person who has knowledge of the facts.
4. TWO documents prepared at least five years prior to the date of the application AND an affidavit of personal knowledge from an older person.
5. THREE documents prepared at least five years prior to the date of the application.

Documentary evidence must not contain signs of erasure, alterations or changes to the pertinent information. The authenticity of documents submitted may be checked in the course of application review. Applications supported by falsified or altered documents will be denied.

### SUBMITTING THE MATERIALS TO THE OFFICE OF THE STATE REGISTRAR

Forward the following material to the Office of the State Registrar & Division for Health Statistics, Michigan Department of Public Health, P.O. Box 30195, Lansing, Michigan 48909:

1. The properly completed application.
2. The required evidence as explained in these instructions.
3. The official statement from the Michigan Department of Public Health that a record of birth is not on file if that official statement was received more than one year from the date of the application.
4. The fee of \$26.00. (The fee required is an application fee and is not refundable.) Checks or money orders should be made payable to: THE STATE OF MICHIGAN.

### ESTABLISHMENT OF A DELAYED REGISTRATION OF BIRTH OR DENIAL OF AN APPLICATION

If the application requirements are met, a delayed registration of birth will be established. Upon establishment of the delayed registration of birth, the state registrar will forward a copy of the record to the local registrar in the area where the birth occurred and a certified copy of the record to you. If you wish to receive additional copies at the time the record is established, you must submit an additional \$4.00 for each additional certified copy required.

Certified copies of the delayed registration of birth may be obtained from the local registrar in the area where the birth occurred.

Should you be unable to supply the documentation required to establish the birth facts, the application will be denied. Upon denial, you may pursue establishing the facts of birth in the probate court.

## Delayed Certificate of Birth

(Michigan)

Following are suggestions for acceptable documentary evidence and how they may be obtained:

A. PHYSICIAN'S OFFICE RECORD OF BIRTH

A copy or abstract of the attending physician's records which shows the facts of birth.

B. BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE

If the original baptismal certificate has been lost, a certified copy of the record can be obtained from the church in which baptized. A Cradle Roll enrollment or similar church record is also acceptable. If the certificate is in a foreign language, a certified translation must accompany the document.

C. CENSUS RECORD

If the registrant lived in the United States, a federal census record would be acceptable, preferably one immediately after the date of birth. Copies of the census records can be obtained from the Bureau of the Census in Pittsburgh, Kansas. Instructions and forms for requesting a search for a census record will be sent from this office upon request.

D. BIBLE RECORD

Do not remove the page on which the entry of birth is made, but make sure the certified and notarized copy shows the date the Bible was printed and whether entry is in ink or shows any changes or alterations.

E. HOSPITAL RECORDS

A copy or abstract of hospital records is acceptable. This can be the hospital of birth or any hospital in which the registrant has been a patient and the admission record gives the facts of birth.

F. LIFE INSURANCE POLICIES

If the registrant ever carried life insurance, the office issuing the insurance can provide a transcript of the application. The date and place of birth or age should appear on the application and many times the names of the parents.

G. DISCHARGE - CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

If the registrant is a veteran of the armed forces, the discharge documents should give the age at the time of enlistment and also the place of birth.

H. MARRIAGE LICENSE AND APPLICATION

The marriage record in the registrant's possession may not give the age or birth place, but this information should appear on the application for a license to marry. A copy of the license application may be secured from the county in which the license was obtained.

I. BIRTH CERTIFICATES OF REGISTRANT'S CHILDREN

If the registrant has children and their births are recorded, the registrant's age and birth place should appear on their certificates. If the births occurred in another state, certified copies can be obtained from the state of birth.

J. SOCIAL SECURITY APPLICATION

To obtain a copy of your original application for your social security number, contact your nearest Social Security Administration Office. They will assist you. State your name, social security number and ask for a copy of your SS-5 form. Usually this application will state your date and place of birth and also your parent's names.

K. SCHOOL RECORDS

Enrollment records should give the date and place of birth, or they may give only the age. In submitting school records, be sure that the date on which the school record was originally made is given - the date of enrollment or the date of census. School records can be obtained from the school attended or from the Superintendent of Schools for the district in which the school is located.

- L. AN AUTHENTIC COPY OF SOME OF THE FOLLOWING RECORDS IS ACCEPTABLE:
- a. Application for employment
  - b. Voting registration record
  - c. Records kept by lodge, union or organization of which the registrant is a member
  - d. Court record

M. AFFIDAVIT OF PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE

An affidavit from someone who has direct knowledge of the facts that must be established is acceptable as evidence if attested to before a notary public. Only ONE affidavit of personal knowledge can be accepted. Please remember this does not count as a document required with the parents' names stated including the MAIDEN NAME OF THE MOTHER. An affidavit of personal knowledge is not mandatory.

Another item you may want to acquire at an antique shop is an old manual typewriter, the kind with individual striking keys. If you are into producing "old" documents with typed-in data, the modern "Selectric" and computer-generated type will quickly give away your best efforts.

Finally, don't despair finding suitably old printed material such as the kinds of documents listed on the instructions. You can ASK different antique dealers to locate old "archive" documents (like those listed), and they will "find" them for you. How do they do this? Simpler than you think. These entrepreneurs are approached daily by all kinds of people wanting to unload the late "Aunt Minnie's" just-discovered attic treasures. Dealers reject far more items than they buy, but if you *tell* them what you're looking for, they put the word in the ears of these "finders", and the items you want will very soon appear--by one route or another. In all likelihood the dealer already knows where he can get what you want, but he won't tell you. He will let the passage of a few days or weeks add to the value of what he has so diligently procured "especially for you." Don't be afraid to bargain. After all, you're merely a "collector," and can afford to be choosy. "These old report cards just have a charm modern ones will never have, don't you agree?"

What you do with these old materials will have to be left up to your creative imagination. Suffice to say there are tools and techniques that will provide you with the most convincing documents with exactly the data you require. Don't be put off if the dealer seems a bit noseey. He's only trying to get to know his customer. The more specific you can be about your "interests" the better. Maybe you're into modern history and are planning a book with unique illustrations to capture the "ambience" of a particular decade (the one you were born in, of course).

If you decide to use some of these old records and documents as originals to be scanned and then reproduced in blank form, you will need paper stock on which to print or copy the new data you wish to insert. You could go to a local printer and select from his samples some stock that might be similar to that used on your originals. You might also get lucky at the antique shop and "find" some old blank paper, naturally aged. If not, typical techniques for aging include staining with tea or coffee, exposing to full sun light for a day or so, roughing up edges with a fingernail file, dog-earing the corners, and folding and refolding until well-worn fold lines develop. You will have to be judge of how "old" you need the document to look.

When you fill in new data on a blank form, make sure you use the same typewriter for ALL entries. Don't get lazy and change only name and date of birth, for example. Any document examiner will look over the *entire* specimen to see if it is consistent and matches the time frame when it was produced. If you do use an old manual typewriter, remember, too, that typists often made mistakes and had to erase the error, often leaving bits of the error still visible on the document. You could include a few such "mistakes" and make the document look all the more believable. The last thing you want is a document that is absolutely "perfect." Just in case you're not a typist, *typical* typing errors are hitting "k" for "d", "w" for "s", and "b" for "v". Of course, any other "errors" will be just as convincing if the correction appears intentional.

## Delayed Certificate of Birth

Many of the applications for delayed certificate of birth allow for the use of "witnesses" who can attest to the facts about the birth. These statements must be notarized, and most notaries are sticklers about asking for ID to accompany the signatures in their logbook. Depending on your personal situation you may or may not want to have "witnesses" to your application for the delayed certificate. We know how "easy" this could be, but you must also consider that someone else, even if he is today your most trusted friend, not only knows what you are doing, but also that he might be persuaded later to "tell what he really knows." The bottom line is your own comfort level. How secure will you feel knowing that someone else knows? We consider Level Three ID a form of "back door" for personal safety. But if another person could in some way jeopardize all your efforts, you might find it a "trap door" instead. The use of witnesses will have to be your own judgment call.

In completing the application don't be afraid to state "Unknown," "N/A" (not applicable), or leave an item blank. Resist the temptation to "tell everything you know." The clerks don't really want to read your life's story. Basically, give them the kind of information they are requesting, and nothing more. If they find your application is somehow "inadequate" or "incomplete," they will advise you so. This gives you the perfect opportunity to provide them with exactly what they want. Once they get it, they will feel all the more justified issuing you the delayed certificate. If you find that you need a little more time to acquire the item(s) they want to see, write them that you will have to travel to do so, and that your work schedule won't allow that for another three to four months. They will add your letter to the application, and leave the entire matter "pending." The chances are good that another clerk will actually process your application, and, now seeing you have provided the requested item, will feel no hesitation in completing and recording your delayed certificate of birth. And by the way, you'll get a certified copy, yes sir.

### A Letter from a Paper Tripper

Dear friends,

Recently I had to go through your "Paper Trip" methods in order to escape from what was turning into a bloody as well as costly divorce. After reading "The Paper Trip I & II," I felt I was ready for almost anything, and after careful planning, I was.

Probably the least noticeable and most reliable way for me to go was by way of the delayed birth certificate. In New Jersey, in order to get a delayed birth certificate, the Bureau of Vital Statistics has to scour the records to make sure you aren't filed already. Then, they will send you a letter saying that no record was found of your birth, along with the form which will become your delayed birth certificate. Fill it out (the form is pretty much self-explanatory) as best you can, and if you want to claim ignorance as to information about your parents, put "Unknown" or something to that effect in the proper blanks. I filled out the form and mailed it back to the Bureau of Vitals with a baptismal certificate, which a Catholic friend of mine was able to procure for me. Approximately a month later (you know how slow government bureaucrats are) I received my new birth certificate in the mail, sent to a mail drop, of course.

Next stop was the New Jersey DMV. I applied for my driver's license learner's permit, but found out it would take over a month for me to take the driving test and get my license. I was starting a new job under my new name and needed some sort of photo ID. Since I was getting a regular drivers license, however, I was not able to get a non-driver ID, and county ID took a license, an SSN, and a stack of other papers I did not have. Well, in New Jersey one can get a boat license easier than any other form of photo ID. Basically all you need is a birth certificate and a face. No tests, no hassles. I used the boat ID for about 1-½ months before I took the road test and became a New Jersey licensed driver.

Next on my list was an SSN. Following the advice listed in the two "Paper Trips," I walked into the local SSA office and applied. While I waited almost two hours (I had gone at the beginning of the month at lunchtime, when all the SS officers just wanted to process everybody and get them OUT), I formulated my story as to why I, at age 26, didn't have an SSN. When I was called I told the girl behind the desk that my parents, waaaaay back in the time of peace, free love, and Vietnam, didn't want their son to be numbered and registered with the government, thus the delayed birth certificate and no SSN. She said "fine" and processed my application with no further delay.

The Vietnam anti-government parent story may be an interesting avenue to stroll down for future paper trippers, especially those who are "thirty something." Your information was very helpful, and I hope other readers get as much satisfaction from your work as I did. I look forward to "The Paper Trip III," whenever it appears on the horizon. Thanks for saving my life!

— NJF, Upper Montclair, NJ

## Delayed Certificate of Birth

You will almost certainly be applying by mail for the delayed certificate. Vital records offices process the great majority of all requests by mail, and are quite comfortable doing so. Applying in person might seem more convenient, but it could also present opportunities for questions you may not be prepared to answer. So why take the chance? Besides, there's always the subtle charm and extra credence afforded things from a distance. Make it work to your advantage. Give them the paper they want, and you'll get the paper you want.

THE FEES LISTED BELOW ARE FOR SINGLE COPIES ONLY AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CURRENT INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED, AS APPROPRIATE, FROM THE VITAL STATISTICS OFFICE OF THE STATE OR AREA IN WHICH THE BIRTH OCCURRED. CURRENT TELEPHONE NUMBERS ARE PROVIDED. WRITTEN REQUESTS FOR COPIES OF BIRTH CERTIFICATES SHOULD BE SENT TO "VITAL STATISTICS OFFICE" AT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ADDRESSES.

### ADDRESSES OF VITAL STATISTICS OFFICES

Alabama	Center for Health Statistics, P.O. Box 5625, Montgomery, AL 36103-5625 (205) 242-5033	\$12.00
Alaska	Bureau of Vital Statistics, P.O. Box 110675, Juneau, AK 99811-0675 (907) 465-3391	\$10.00
Arizona	Vital Records, P.O. Box 3887, Phoenix, AZ 85030 (602) 255-3260	\$9.00
Arkansas	Division of Vital Records, 4815 West Markham-Slot 44, Little Rock, AR 72205 (501) 661-2336	\$5.00
California	Vital Statistics Section, 304 S. Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 (916) 322-1356	\$16.00
Colorado	Colorado Dept. of Health, HSRD-VR-A1, 4300 Cherry Creek Dr. South, Denver, CO 80222-1530 (303) 692-2200	\$15.00
Connecticut	Vital Records Section, 150 Washington St., Hartford, CT 06106 (203) 566-1124	\$5.00
Delaware	Office of Vital Statistics, P.O. Box 637, Dover, DE 19901 (302) 736-4721	\$5.00
District of Columbia	Vital Records Branch, 613 G Street, NW, 9th Floor, Washington, DC 20001 (202) 727-9281	\$12.00
Florida	Office of Vital Statistics, P.O. Box 210, Jacksonville, FL 32231 (904) 359-6920	\$9.00
Georgia	Vital Records unit, 47 Trinity Ave., Atlanta, GA 30334 (404) 656-7456	\$10.00
Hawaii	Vital Records Section, P.O. Box 3378, Honolulu, HI 96801 (808) 548-5819	\$2.00
Idaho	Bureau of Vital Statistics, 450 W. State St., 1st Floor, Boise, ID 83720-0036 (208) 334-5980	\$8.00
Illinois	Division of Vital Records, 605 W. Jefferson St., Springfield, IL 62702-5097 (217) 782-6555	\$15.00
Indiana	Division of Vital Records, P.O. Box 1964, Indianapolis, IN 46206 (317) 633-0276	\$6.00
Iowa	Vital Records Section, 321 East 12th St., Des Moines, IA 50319 (515) 281-4944	\$10.00
Kansas	Vital Statistics, Rm. 151, Landon St. Off. Bldg. 900 S.W. Jackson, Topeka, KS 66612-2221 (913) 296-1415	\$10.00
Kentucky	Vital Statistics, 275 E. Main St., Frankfort, KY 40621-0001 (502) 564-4212	\$7.00
Louisiana	Office of Vital Records, P.O. Box 60630, New Orleans, LA 70160 (504) 568-5152	\$13.00
Maine	Vital Records, State House Station II, Augusta, ME 04333 (207) 289-3184	\$10.00
Maryland	Division of Vital Records, P.O. Box 68760, Baltimore, MD 21215 (800) 832-3277 (410) 225-5988	\$4.00
Massachusetts	Registrar of Vital Statistics, 150 Tremont St., Rm. B-3, Boston, MA 02111 (617) 727-0110	\$17.00
Michigan	Office of State Registrar, P.O. Box 30195, Lansing, MI 48909 (517) 335-8656	\$13.00
Minnesota	Minnesota Dept. of Health, 717 S.E. Delaware, Minneapolis, MN 55440 (612) 653-5121	\$11.00
Mississippi	Office of Vital Records, P.O. Box 1700, Jackson, MS 39205 (601) 960-7981	\$12.00
Missouri	Bureau of Vital Statistics, P.O. Box 570, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0570 (314) 751-6387	\$10.00
Montana	Bureau of Records and Statistics, 1400 Broadway, Helena, MT 59620 (406) 444-4228	\$10.00
Nebraska	Bureau of Vital Statistics, P.O. Box 95007, Lincoln, NE 68509-5007 (402) 471-2871	\$8.00
Nevada	Dept. of Vital Statistics, 505 E. King St., Rm. 102, Carson City, NV 89710 (702) 885-4480	\$11.00
New Hampshire	Vital Records, 6 Hazen Dr., Concord, NH 03301-6527 (603) 271-4654	\$10.00
New Jersey	Bureau of Vital Records, C N 370, Trenton, NJ 08625 (609) 292-4087	\$4.00
New Mexico	Vital Statistics Bureau, 1190 St. Francis Dr., Santa Fe, NM 87503 (505) 827-0121	\$10.00
New York	Vital Records Section, Empire State Plaza, Tower Bldg., Albany, NY 12237 (518) 474-3077	\$15.00
New York City	New York City Dept. of Health, 125 Worth St., New York, NY 10013 (212) 285-9503	\$15.00
North Carolina	Office of Vital Statistics, P.O. Box 27687, Raleigh, NC 27611 (919) 733-3526	\$10.00
North Dakota	Division of Vital Records, State Capital, 600 E. Blvd., Bismarck, ND 58505-0200 (701) 224-2360	\$7.00
Ohio	Division of Vital Statistics, 65 S. Front St., Rm. G-20, Columbus, OH 43266-0333 (614) 466-2531	\$7.00
Oklahoma	Vital Records Section, P.O. Box 53551, Oklahoma City, OK 73152 (405) 271-4040	\$5.00
Oregon	Vital Records, P.O. Box 14050, Portland, OR 97214-0050 (503) 731-4095	\$15.00
Pennsylvania	Vital Records, P.O. Box 1528, New Castle, PA 16103 (412) 656-3126	\$4.00
Rhode Island	Division of Vital Statistics, 3 Capitol Hill, Rm. 101, Providence, RI 02908-5097 (401) 277-2811	\$12.00
South Carolina	Office of Vital Records, 2600 Bull St., Columbia, SC 29201 (803) 734-4830	\$8.00
South Dakota	Vital Records, 445 E. Capital, Pierre, SD 57501-3185 (605) 773-4961	\$5.00
Tennessee	Tennessee Vital Records, 312 8th Ave. N, 3rd Floor, Nashville, TN 37247-0350 (615) 741-1763	\$10.00
Texas	Bureau of Vital Statistics, 1100 W. 49th St., Austin, TX 78756-3191 (512) 458-7380	\$11.00
Utah	Vital Records, P.O. Box 16700, Salt Lake City, UT 84116-0700 (801) 538-6105 (6368)	\$12.00
Vermont	Vital Records, P.O. Box 70, Burlington, VT 05402-9962 (802) 863-7275	\$5.00
Virginia	Division of Vital Records, P.O. Box 1000, Richmond, VA 23208-1000 (804) 786-6228	\$5.00
Washington	Vital Records, P.O. Box 9709, Olympia, WA 98504-9709 (206) 753-5936	\$11.00
West Virginia	Vital Records Office, State Capital Complex, Bldg. 3, Rm. 516, Charleston, WV 25305 (304) 348-2931	\$5.00
Wisconsin	Vital Records, P.O. Box 309, Madison, WI 53701 (608) 266-1371	\$10.00
Wyoming	Vital Records Service, Hathaway Bldg., Cheyenne, WY 82002 (307) 777-7591	\$11.00

## Chapter X

# DRIVER'S LICENSES & STATE ID

In the United States the driver's license is the most commonly accepted form of personal identification. A valid drivers license (non-expired) that displays the person presenting it is accepted virtually without question or challenge—everywhere. Its first cousin, the "State ID," called "Non Driver Identification," or "(state name) Identification" is now equally accepted as members of the non-driving public have demanded ID that commands the same respect as the drivers license. Beyond its required use for operating a motor vehicle, it smoothes the way for cashing checks, opening bank accounts, obtaining notary services, establishing credit accounts, purchasing alcohol and tobacco (if you don't look old enough), and for just about any other purpose for which age and/or identity might be an issue.

All states issue drivers licenses and state ID. (Please note that in this chapter we will use the terms "drivers license" and "state ID" to refer to the identification documents just described. We are aware that there are other designations, but for purposes of simplicity we will use only these two terms.) What makes this form of ID so interesting, however, is that there are many differences among the states in how they issue and administer their documents. We have been fortunate in being able to gather data that clearly illustrate these differences in table and chart format. In this chapter you will find a series of these comparisons with descriptive analysis. You will want to study these charts in detail if you are looking for specific advantages, or even situations to avoid. A lot of the material speaks for itself.

Driver's licenses and state ID are the perfect Level Two ID. They are the ID you need for "walking around," the ID you present *in person* when it's required. When you're driving and suddenly get pulled over by the highway patrol your driver's license will speak for you. If you don't have it on you, or worse, don't have one at all, you're asking for more problems than you need. The point is that in present US society it's a lot easier to get along if you possess one of these two identification documents.

Since there is no national or federal form of drivers license the states are obligated to recognize all legally-issued licenses, no matter from what state. The same applies for legally issued state ID cards. While the states will respect each other's licenses, they also expect drivers who have become "residents" to apply for that state's license after a reasonable period, anywhere from three months to a year. This presents both challenges and opportunities.

If you've absorbed the Paper Trip concept of Level Two ID, and still want to maintain a secure level of privacy, you might want to arrange your drivers license and/or state ID situation in such a way that you are never really a resident of *any* state. How? Use Mail Forwarding Services in different states as your "resident" address. You can easily apply for state ID and have it tied to these out of state addresses. You can use any state ID that suits you when the need arises. In situations when you are advised "No Out of State ID Accepted" you may want to have a local ID to fall back on.

Occasionally an idiot clerk will ask why you have an out of state ID (really!). Take the opportunity to "educate" the dolt that your work requires frequent visits to the state, but that you actually live clear across the country (a land he will never see). And the reason you don't have an out-of-state driver's license is because you have a rare visual impairment that precludes driving. If his stare persists, add that you're looking into the new form of laser surgery that promises to restore your sense of depth perception. Didn't he see that piece on "20/20?" Uh, oh yeah.

You can apply the same technique for driver's licenses. You can drive anywhere with an out of state license, and it will, of course, show your address (MFS) for that state. When you use it out of state it will be accepted as a license, but sometimes you might be asked where you live **HERE**. Again, be prepared for an ordinary answer that will not arouse interest. "I can give you my present address, but I'm moving this month and I don't know the new address." "Actually, I have to travel over three states, and the agency just puts me up in different motels. I don't think

## Driver's Licenses & State ID

---

I've been home in over six months!" Your job? How about private investigator? Accountant on temporary assignments? Engineering consultant? Executive security specialist? Government agent (FBI, INS, DEA, BATF, FAA)? It's not illegal to *say* you're "with the government," so long as you don't try to *act* under "color of law." Let people think what they want.

Another note about using MFS: Don't be put off by officials or others who say that you can't use the address of an MFS as your "residence." First, ask them to show you, in writing, that this is a regulation or law. The truth is, they won't be able to. Then tell them you *don't* live at any particular physical address due to your work assignments, travel, etc. You simply use the address of the MFS to receive all your mail, including theirs, and that the MFS forwards it to you as your request. Don't they know how impossible it would be to get the post office to do this? Finally how could you possibly afford to maintain a house or apartment if you were there no more than maybe a few weeks out of the year? They should desist at this point.

Dealing with cops after being pulled over, however, can be quite another matter. Their nature is to be suspicious, especially of anything from out of their city. If you live in a not-large town with its own police force, take a good look sometime at the cars and people they choose to stop. The chances are *more than even* that the people are not from your town (you might even notice that the car does not look familiar). The cops are not only giving them a ticket for whatever violation they can concoct, but *more importantly* giving them the "message" that it would be advisable for them not to make a practice of driving through this town again. The cops make great sport of spotting (undesirable) outsiders, and working them over. Lord help you if your car is not registered properly, the tags are expired, the tires are bald, a tail light is broken, a wiper blade is missing, you can't find the insurance papers, and your license clearly shows you aren't a local resident. You got troubles a-comin'. If you see yourself in this kind of situation, a very helpful book you should *get and read* is *You & The Police!*, available from Eden Press.

The point we need to make here is simple and direct. When you're out driving around in your merry Oldsmobile, be sure you've got a driver's license that you will feel confident handing to a traffic officer. It should be valid and with no "holds" from any law enforcement agencies. It is a known truth in law enforcement that most arrests are made in situations not related to the criminal activity, and that the most common situation is the traffic stop. When the red and blue lights go on, your license could make all the difference in what happens next.

But, you say, you *do* have a "questionable" license status, and can't risk another stop, for whatever reason. What you need, then, is another license. You need a license with no ties to your current license. This means you will need to use another name, date of birth, and SSN (if required). These are the three great identifiers that, if not changed, could lead to problems down the road due to several databases we will describe in the next section. First, though, the necessities.

Your name should be completely different from your current one, as described earlier in The Paper Trip III. The programs used by these databases can find variations of your name, as well as the same initials, to use as possible "suspect" names. Be creative and change names and initials. You should also create a completely different date of birth, since it is a prime identifier in these programs as well. Day, month, and year—change them all.

Most states still do not use the SSN for licensing purposes, although this could change within a couple years. A new federal law will mandate the collection and use of SSNs on driver's licenses by October 1, 2000, unless this law is repealed. (We have more on this in the chapter on Social Security Numbers.) You can tell from the charts which states use the SSN now, and what exceptions they might have. In many of these states, please note, *if a person objects the licensing agency will create another (non-SSN) number for them*. If you find yourself in such a situation, by all means *object!* You don't want store clerks stealing your identity, remember?

You will find in the charts what documents the licensing agencies will accept for issuing a new license. The Paper Trip III shows how to obtain or create exactly these kinds of documents, and a little preparation will make your appearance at the DMV (or whatever your state calls its licensing agency) an absolute breeze. The most "difficult" part of the process might be answering the anticipated question, "Why are you getting a license at this time in your life? Haven't you had one previously? (If you answer "yes," they will want to know when and what state. If it was over ten years ago, they will let it pass, since those records have long since gone to archives, and they will not initiate a search, which of course they will not tell you.)

## Driver's Licenses & State ID

---

Desk clerks at the DMV are like all workers who come in contact with many people from the public. They "know" their customers—what typical applicants are like, how they act, and how they respond to all the usual questions. A person now in his late twenties or older who has never had a drivers license is somewhat of a rarity, and could easily pique the curiosity of an otherwise jaded and bored bureaucrat. Not that you will "make her day," but your story is probably one she wouldn't mind hearing. So, why haven't you ever had a license...?

Here's a starter list of possible explanations, one of which is sure to suit your fancy.

1. You've just moved from New York City, where many residents never have cars.
2. You've just been released from prison after doing time for (aggravated assault, hijacking, armed robbery, manslaughter-reduced-from-first-degree-murder, etc.) Your effort to show her your release papers will probably be met with a polite decline.
3. You're now recovered from eye surgery that corrected a birth defect that was preventing you from driving. It's like a miracle that you no longer see two and three of everything.
4. You were a passenger in a horrible accident that killed six people, and after years of therapy you finally have found the courage to take driving lessons.
5. You have a severe case of dyslexia (seeing things backwards) which you have only recently overcome. By the way, is there a time limit on taking the written test?
6. You have now left a religious cult that prohibited any outside contact, including driving.
7. You've never been able to afford a car until now, and had to depend on friends to drive you around.
8. You simply didn't want to drive because you lacked the confidence and was afraid you might cause a serious accident. You feel much better now after psychotherapy.
9. For most of these reasons it would seem appropriate that you present a state ID, since you were out there functioning, just not driving. If the clerk remarks that the ID is "new," that is, recently issued, tell her it was just renewed since you weren't sure when you might be getting your license.

If you have the chance to tell your story, tell it naturally and not in a "rehearsed" manner. Agree with the clerk that it might seem strange to her, but that to you this is a Big Day! Why you even took driving lessons to make sure you were fully prepared. Just remember not to talk *too much*. That's a giveaway sign, too.

Since you have either never had a license, or had it too far in the past, you most certainly will have to take a driving test. If you engaged a driving school (a very good idea) they will provide a vehicle currently licensed, registered, and insured for you to take the test. If you have a friend loan you a vehicle, you are subjecting him and his vehicle to official notice, examination and record keeping—not a good idea. The examiner will take you out for a fifteen-minute spin, you pass the test, and a new license will soon be in your hands. In over half the states you will be issued the license on the spot, as soon as they take your photo, which these days is digitally integrated into the data field. In the rest of the states you will be mailed your license within a couple weeks. The charts will tell how each state operates in this aspect of licensing.

### DATABASES YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

The National Driver Register (NDR) is a computer master file which consists of "pointee" records on individuals which point to the state(s) that have revoked, suspended, or denied a license to an individual. The primary purpose of the NDR is to assist state drivers license officials in locating information about problem drivers *at the time of application*. Because it is a nationwide index, a state agency can submit a single inquiry to the NDR to determine if a person's driving privileges have been withdrawn in another state.

The NDR index currently contains records on approximately 24 million problem drivers. About 127,000 inquiries are processed daily, and an average of 3,700 "identifications" are made.



## **Driver's Licenses & State ID**

Over three-fourths of the inquiries are now done on line (direct access), and the number will grow as more state offices are wired into the network. All states participate even though the program is voluntary. The level to which they participate varies, however, as shown on the map.

The National Driver License Compact (NDLC) is an agreement among the states to control problem drivers. It provides for exchange of information to keep unsafe drivers from accumulating violations in many states and escaping control action. It implements the "one license" concept. Forty-one states and the District of Columbia are members of the NDLC. Non-member states are CT, GA, KY, MA, MI, NC, PA, TX, and WI.

What this means is that if you pick up some tickets in states that belong to the NDLC, your license state will learn of it and add these "points" to your driving record, possibly affecting your license, and most certainly your insurance. Tickets you pick up in the states listed will *not* be reported outside those states.

The Nonresident Violator Compact assures nonresident motorists receiving citations for minor traffic violations in a party state the same treatment accorded resident motorists. A procedure is established whereby a nonresident receiving a traffic citation in a party state must fulfill the terms of that citation or face the possibility of license suspension in the motorist's home state until the terms of the citation are met. Safeguards are built into the compact so that a nonresident driver receiving a citation has due process protection.

At present forty-five states and the District of Columbia belong to the Compact. The states that do not belong are AK, CA, MI, MT, OR, and WI.

### **COMPARISON CHARTS**

We are presenting the following series of charts to illustrate differences among the states regarding drivers licenses and state ID cards. We will point out items of special interest, and interpret them if necessary. Our data present the most recent information available at time of printing, but you must realize that the states are always making changes in the issuing and administration of these documents. If a particular point is of importance and you cannot resolve it from our text, by all means call the office responsible and have them detail it for you. We are including the telephone numbers for all states' information offices, which in turn can direct you to the particular office and number you need. If you are contemplating going out of state for various needs, by all means call first to verify that state's requirements before you apply. There's nothing worse than a wasted (paper) trip. These numbers can prove very helpful:

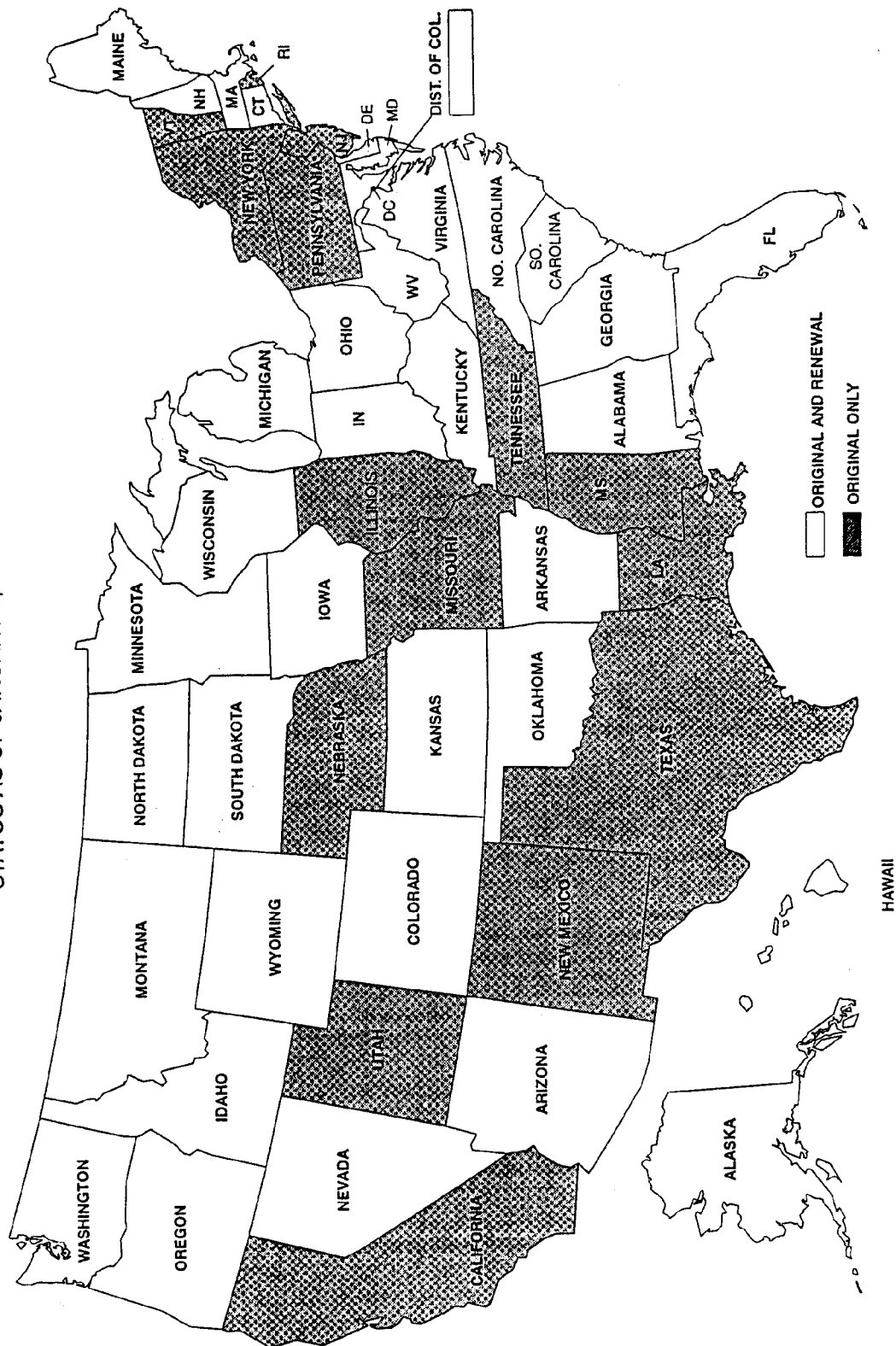
### **STATE INFORMATION OFFICES**

ALABAMA: 1-205-261-2500	KENTUCKY: 1-502-564-3130	NORTH DAKOTA: 1-701-224-2000
ALASKA: 1-907-465-2111	LOUISIANA: 1-504-342-6600	OHIO: 1-614-466-2000
ARIZONA: 1-602-255-4900	MAINE: 1-207-289-1110	OKLAHOMA: 1-405-521-1601
ARKANSAS: 1-501-371-3000	MARYLAND: 1-301-974-2000	OREGON: 1-503-378-3131
CALIFORNIA: 1-916-322-9900	MASSACHUSETTS: 1-617-727-2121	PENNSYLVANIA: 1-717-787-2121
COLORADO: 1-303-866-5000	MICHIGAN: 1-517-373-1837	RHODE ISLAND: 1-401-277-2000
CONNECTICUT: 1-203-240-0222	MINNESOTA: 1-612-296-6013	SOUTH CAR: 1-803-734-1000
DELAWARE: 1-302-736-4000	MISSISSIPPI: 1-601-359-1000	SOUTH DAKOTA: 1-605-773-3011
DIST./COLUMBIA: 1-202-727-1000	MISSOURI: 1-314-751-2000	TENNESSEE: 1-615-741-3011
FLORIDA: 1-904-488-1234	MONTANA: 1-406-444-2511	TEXAS: 1-512-463-4630
GEORGIA: 1-404-656-2000	NEBRASKA: 1-402-471-2311	UTAH: 1-801-533-4000
HAWAII: 1-808-548-6222	NEVADA: 1-702-885-5000	VERMONT: 1-802-828-1100
IDAHO: 1-208-334-2411	NEW HAMPSHIRE: 1-603-271-1100	VIRGINIA: 1-804-786-0000
ILLINOIS: 1-217-782-2000	NEW JERSEY: 1-609-292-2121	WASHINGTON: 1-206-753-5000
INDIANA: 1-317-232-1000	NEW MEXICO: 1-505-827-4011	WEST VIRGINIA: 1-304-348-3456
IOWA: 1-515-281-5011	NEW YORK: 1-518-474-2121	WISCONSIN: 1-608-266-2211
KANSAS: 1-913-296-0111	NORTH CAROLINA: 1-919-733-1110	WYOMING: 1-307-771-7011

# Driver's Licenses & State ID

STATES USING NATIONAL DRIVER REGISTER TO CHECK DRIVER LICENSE APPLICATIONS

STATUS AS OF JANUARY 1, 1996



# DRIVER TRAINING, LICENSE EXAMINATION AND RENEWAL

STATE	DRIVER TRAINING REQUIRED	C.A.N. AUTHORITY OF BIRTH CERTIFICATES BE VERIFIED WITH REGISTRAR OF VITAL STATISTICS	POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION REQUIRED BEFORE ISSUING FIRST DRIVER LICENSE	DRIVER LICENSES ISSUED ON TAMPER-PROOF MEDIA	CONDUCTED BY	EXAMINATION FOR ORIGINAL AND RENEWAL DRIVERS LICENSE					MEDICAL ADVISORY BOARD PROVIDED BY LAWL. ADM. ORD.-A	INSTANT (ON-SPOT) DRIVER LICENSE RENEWALS ISSUED	RENEWAL NOTICES MAILED	EXPIRATION DATE EXTENDED FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL	DRIVER & VEHICLE REGISTRATION RECORDS ELECTRONICALLY CROSS-REFERENCED	
						KNOWLEDGE	SIGNS AND SIGNALS	KIND OF EXAMINATION REQUIRED (F-ORIGINAL LICENSE, R-RENEWAL)		OTHER					COMMON DRIVER DATA BANKS	SEPARATE RECORDS REQUIRED
								VEHICLE OPERATION	VISION							
Alabama	No	2/ Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Public Safety	4/ F	4/ F	4/ F	4/ F	L & A	5/ No	5/ Yes	No	-	-	-
Alaska	No	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Public Safety	F	F	F	-	-	-	Yes	Yes	No	-	-
Arizona	No	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Transportation, Motor Vehicle Division	F	F	F	-	-	L	Yes	No	6 months after discharge	-	-
Arkansas	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Arkansas State Police, Driver Examination Div.	F	F	F	-	-	-	Yes	Yes	30 days after discharge only when on first tour of active duty, not to exceed 6 years	-	-
California	Under 18	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Motor Vehicles	4/ F & R	4/ F & R	F	F & R - Limited term licenses 4/	F & R - General Physical 4/	A	No	Yes	30 days after discharge or return to State	-	-
Colorado	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Revenue, Motor Vehicle Division	F	F	F	-	-	-	98%	No	3 years, or 90 days after return to State, whichever occurs first	-	-
Connecticut	Under 18	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Motor Vehicles	F	F	F	-	-	L	Yes 5/	Yes	No, may obtain nonoperator's license by mail	-	-
Delaware	Under 18	Yes	Yes	Yes	Division of Motor Vehicles	F	F	F	-	-	L	Yes	Yes	No, but may renew by mail	-	-
Dist. of Col.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Bureau of Motor Vehicle Services	F	F	F	-	-	A	Yes	Yes	No, but may renew by mail	-	-
Florida	1/ Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles	4/ F & R	4/ F & R	F	-	-	L	Yes	Yes	No, but may renew by mail	X	X
Georgia	No	No	Yes	Yes	Div. of Driver Licenses	F	F	F	-	-	L	Yes	No	No	-	-
Hawaii	No	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Public Safety, Driver Services Section	F	F	F	-	-	L	No	No	No	-	-
Idaho	Under 17	2/ Yes	Yes	Yes	County Sheriff's Offices	F	F	F	-	-	L	No	5/ Yes	6 months after discharge	-	-
Illinois	Under 18	No	Yes	Yes	Driver Services Dept.	F	F	F	-	-	L	Yes	Yes	4 years from expiration date and 60 days after return to State	-	-
Indiana	No	No	Yes	Yes	Driver Examiners or Branch employees	F	F	F	-	-	L	Yes	Yes	Division of active duty while out of State, and 45 days after return to State	7/ X	X
Iowa	Under 18	Yes	Yes	Yes	Driver License Examiners	F	F	F	-	-	A	Yes	No	Yes-90 days past discharge date when stationed out of State	-	-
Kansas	All 15	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Revenue, Division of Vehicles	F & R	F & R	F	-	-	L	Yes	Yes	6 months after discharge	-	-
Kentucky	No	No	Yes	Yes	State Police	F	F	F	-	-	L	Yes	Yes	No, but may renew by mail without reexamination while on active duty out of State	-	-
Louisiana	1/ Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Public Safety, Office of Motor Vehicles	F	F	F	-	-	A	Yes	Yes	60 days after discharge or return to Commonwealth 7/	-	-
Maine	Under 17	Yes	Yes	Yes	Bureau of Motor Vehicles	F	F	F	-	-	L	Yes	No	60 days after discharge for those entering Armed Forces before 8-1-78, otherwise, 30 days after discharge	-	-
Mass. (1)	1/ Under 18	Yes	Yes	Yes	Motor Vehicle Administration	F	F	F	-	-	L	Yes	Yes	30 days after discharge or return to State (includes dependents of active military personnel)	X	X
Massachusetts	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Registry of Motor Vehicles	F	F	F	-	-	L	Yes	6/ Yes	60 days after honorable discharge	X	X
Michigan	1/ Under 18	Yes	Yes	Yes	Bureau of Branch Office Services	F	F	F	-	-	A	No	Yes	30 days after honorable discharge following license expiration, may renew by mail, 30 days after discharge	X	X
Minnesota	Under 18	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Public Safety, Driver & Vehicle Serv. Div.	F	F	F	-	-	A	No	Yes	90 days after discharge	X	X
Mississippi	Youth, 1st license	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Public Safety	F	F	F	-	-	A	Yes 5/	Yes	Yes, 90 days after discharge	-	-
Missouri	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	State Highway Patrol	F	F	F	-	-	A	Yes 5/	Yes, except revocations	60 days after discharge	-	-
Montana	Under 16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Field Operations Bureau	4/ F	F	F	-	-	A	No	No	30 days after release from active duty	-	-
Nebraska	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Motor Vehicles	F & R	F & R	F	-	-	-	Yes	No	60 days after discharge	-	-

# DRIVER TRAINING, LICENSE EXAMINATION AND RENEWAL

STATE	DRIVER TRAINING REQUIRED	CAN AUTHENTICITY OF BIRTH CERTIFICATE BE VERIFIED WITH REGISTRAR'S VITAL STATISTICS	POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION REQUIRED BEFORE FIRST DRIVER LICENSE	DRIVER LICENSES ISSUED ON TAPE/PROOF MEDIA	CONDUCTED BY	KIND OF EXAMINATION REQUIRED (F=ORIGINAL LICENSE, R=RENEWAL)				MEDICAL ADVISORY BOARD PROVIDED BY LAW/ADM. ORD.-A	INSTANT (ON-RE-SPOT) DRIVER LICENSE RENEWALS ISSUED	RENEWAL NOTICES MAILED	EXPIRATION DATE EXTENDED FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL	DRIVER & VEHICLE REGISTRATION RECORDS ELECTRONICALLY CROSS-REFERENCED	
						KNOWLEDGE	SIGNS	VISION	VEHICLE OPERATION					COMMON IDENTIFIER IN TWO DATA BANKS NEEDED	TWO SEPARATE INQUIRIES NEEDED
Nevada	1/	2/	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Motor Vehicles, Driver License Division	F	F	F	F	L	5/	Yes	No-May renew by mail	8/	X
New Hampshire	Under 18	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Motor Vehicles	F	F	F	F	L	Yes	Yes	No-but renewables with letter from commanding officer if certain conditions are met	-	X
New Jersey	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Transportation Motor Vehicle Services	F	-	F	F	A	Yes	Yes	No	X	-
New Mexico	Under 16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Motor Vehicles	F	F	F	F	L	Yes	Yes	No 7/	-	-
New York	Under 18 license	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Motor Vehicles	4/F	F	F	F	L	Yes	Yes	6 months after separation	-	X
North Carolina	Under 18	No	Yes	Yes	Div. of Motor Vehicles	F	F	F	F	L	Yes	Yes	Temporary renewals by mail. Expiration date shown, or 30 days after return to state, when license is returned	X	-
North Dakota	Under 16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Drive License Division State Highway Patrol	F	F	F	F	A	Yes	Yes	30 days after discharge	-	-
Ohio	Under 18	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Public Safety, Drive License Bureau	F	F	F	F	A	Yes	Yes	8 months after honorable discharge	-	-
Oklahoma	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Public Safety, Motor Vehicle Div. &	F	F	F	F	L	Yes	Yes	Valid while outside U.S. Must renew within 60 days after return to U.S.	X	-
Oregon	1/ Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Transportation 3/	F	F	F	F	-	Yes	Yes	No, by mail/renew by mail	8/-	X
Pennsylvania	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Registy of Motor Vehicles	F	F	F	F	L	Yes	Yes	45 days after discharge or return to State	-	-
Rhode Island	Under 18	Yes	Yes	No	Dept. of Motor Vehicles	F	F	F	F	L	Yes	Yes	Special license must valid until 30 days after discharge	-	-
South Carolina	No	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Public Safety	F	F	F	F	L	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	X
South Dakota	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Motor Vehicles	F	F	F	F	-	Yes	No	30 days after return to State	-	-
Tennessee	No	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Commerce & Regulations	F	F	F	F	A	Yes	Yes	60 days after discharge	-	-
Texas	Youth 1st license	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Public Safety	F	F	F	F	L	No	Yes	90 days after discharge	-	-
Utah	1st license	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Public Safety, Drive License Division	4/F	4/F	4/F	4/F	L	Yes	Yes	90 days after discharge	-	X
Vermont	Under 18	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Motor Vehicles	F	F	F	F	L	Yes	Yes	4 years, or 30 days after discharge	X	-
Virginia	1/ Under 18	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Motor Vehicles	F	F	F	4/F	A	5/ Yes	Yes	System on expiration date of license	8/-	X
Washington	Under 16	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Licensing	F	F	F	F	L	Yes	Yes	90 days after discharge	-	-
West Virginia	No	No	Yes	No	WV State Police	F	F	F	F	L & A	Yes	Yes	6 months after discharge	-	X
Wisconsin	Under 18	No	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Motor Vehicles	4/F	F	F	F	L	Yes	Yes	Renewal by mail	X	X
Wyoming	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Transportation	F	F	F	F	L	No	No	No, but may renew by mail	X	X
Puerto Rico	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Dept. of Public Works	F	F	F	F	L	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-

1/ FLORIDA-Drug, alcohol, and traffic education course required of original applicants who have no proof of previous license. LOUISIANA-At applicant's for a first-time driver's license. MICHIGAN-If applicant has completed public school education within 1 year of the application, a road test is not given. MARYLAND-3-hour alcohol awareness course required of individuals over 18 who have never been licensed in the U.S. OREGON-At applicant's 16-16 years of age must successfully complete a motorcycle rider education course before a motorcycle endorsement may be issued. VIRGINIA-Driver training is required for persons who have not reached the age of 19. An 18-year-old applicant must complete classroom portion, containing an alcohol component, of a driver education course. Applicants 16-17 years must complete both the classroom and the behind-the-wheel components of a driver education course.

2/ ALABAMA, IDAHO-If requested, can check with vital statistics, but also have samples on file at office.

3/ PENNSYLVANIA-Test also administered by the Department of Education to those under 18 successfully completing 30 hours of instruction.

4/ CALIFORNIA, COLORADO-Reexamination usually waived on regular licenses for "clear record drivers" under 70. Persons holding limited term licenses, because of their skill. CALIFORNIA-A reexamination of knowledge and signs and signals is required of renewal applicants who have had a traffic violation during the term of license, physical or mental condition are examined at 1- or 2-year intervals. FLORIDA-Signs and signals test waived for "safe driver" renewals-drivers who have a conviction-free driving record for the 3-year period immediately preceding renewal. Following States require older drivers to renew at shorter intervals making these drivers subject to any reexamination requirements more frequently. HAWAII-2-year term for 65 and over. IOWA and RHODE ISLAND-2-year term for ages 70 and over. MAINE-Renewal-upon exam at time of first renewal after age 40. At every 2nd renewal after age 40, at every renewal after age 62. NEW MEXICO, 1-year term after age 40. At every 2nd renewal after age 40, at every 4 years for ages 75-90. every 2 years for ages 61-66, and every year for ages 67 and older. MONTANA-Applicants with valid CDL in possession may be waived from written and skill test requirement, examiner discretion. NEW YORK-Written examinations required upon first license and to amend CDL classes. Examination on renewal required for CDL with hazardous materials endorsement. PENNSYLVANIA-Medical exams are required on a random basis for those 45 and

over. UTAH-If those eligible persons choose to visit an examination station, the knowledge and vehicle operation test are required. Reexamination is usually waived for "clean record drivers" under age 70. VIRGINIA-written traffic law test will be required if applicant has more than 1 conviction of a moving traffic violation in the 5 years prior to the expiration date of the license being renewed. WASHINGTON-Waived if out-of-State license is presented at time of application and no physical visual impairments. CDL requires knowledge test on hazardous materials endorsements and renewals. WISCONSIN-Persons with medical/physical disabilities and all school bus operators are still tested. Gives haz mat and school bus knowledge test upon renewal.

5/ CONNECTICUT-Beats the 11 full service branches and 3 satellite offices, they have 7 photo license centers, and you may use several AAA Offices and AAA bus stops or renewals. MISSOURI-Beginning April 1996 (with completion date of all offices by Oct. 1996), implementation of instant issue licenses. MISSISSIPPI-Effective July 1, 1995. PENNSYLVANIA-the occurs only at counter operation in Harrisburg central office. RHODE ISLAND-Road of residential addresses also required. WASHINGTON-On-the-spot issuance of applicant presents photo ID.

6/ ALABAMA-Only after failure to renew within 30 days of expiration. MASSACHUSETTS-Except suspensions, revocations and parking tickets. OKLAHOMA-Only after failure to renew within 15 days of expiration. UTAH-Drivers who have received no suspensions, revocations, or convictions of reckless driving and no more than 4 reportable violations and have less than a certain number of points during previous 5 years are eligible for renewal-by-mail program. Those persons are notified by mail and must complete a medical questionnaire and permit a renewal fee. They are then sent an extension sticker to be attached to the present license, valid for 5 more years. HAWAII, NEW YORK and WYOMING-Except suspensions and revocations.

7/ HAWAII, NEW MEXICO-Thirty days after discharge only for those holding paper licenses issued prior to 1967 to persons on active military duty then and still on active duty and who have been absent from the State continuously since 1967. KENTUCKY-Legislation passed by 1994 General Assembly will give military personnel 90 days after discharge to renew before expiration, would also have option to renew by mail. Legislation signed by Governor 3/18/94.

8/ ILLINOIS-Five possible identifiers can be used to access both databases or either data base can be accessed directly.

9/ OREGON-Beginning to combine and cross-reference driver and vehicle registration records. VIRGINIA-Driver and vehicle records housed with one database. Common identifier is customer number.

# DRIVER LICENSE RECIPROCITY

STATE	TIME UNIT TO OBTAIN LICENSE AFTER ESTABLISHING RESIDENCE	NEW RESIDENTS										SIGNATORY TO DRIVER LICENSE SERVICES AGREEMENT	MEMBERSHIP OF -				
		LICENSE FROM FORMER STATE MUST BE SURRENDERED TO NEW STATE				EXAMINATION REQUIRED FOR PERSONS POSSESSING CURRENT LICENSE FROM FORMER STATE				PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL DRIVER REGISTRATION PROGRAM			NON-RESIDENTS MAY OBTAIN LICENSE	DRIVER LICENSE VIOLATOR COMPACT	NON-RESIDENT VIOLATOR COMPACT		
		2/	2/ Yes Yes No Yes	2/ No No No Yes	2/ Yes Yes Yes Yes	3/	KNOWLEDGE	SIGNALS	VISION	VEHICLE OPERATION	WITH APPLICATIONS CHECKED FOR ANY REASON						
											3/					3/	3/
Alabama	30 Days	Yes	2/ Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	No	No, but State provides service	5/	6/	7/
Alaska	90 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	May be waived	May be waived	X	-	X	X	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Arizona	30 Days	Yes	No	No	May be waived	May be waived	-	-	X	-	X	X	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Arkansas	30 Days	Yes	2/ No	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
California	10 Days	Yes	2/ No	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	May be waived	X	X	Yes	Yes, student, military	No	Yes	No
Colorado	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	X	X	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Connecticut	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	X	X	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Delaware	60 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	X	X	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Dist. of Col.	30 Days	Yes	2/ No	Yes	X	X	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	X	X	Yes	Yes, noncommercial only	No	Yes	Yes
Florida	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Georgia	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Hawaii	(1)	Yes	2/ No	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	3/ Waived	X	X	Yes	No, but State provides service	No	Yes	Yes
Idaho	90 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	Waived	X	X	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Illinois	90 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	Waived	X	X	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Indiana	30 Days	Yes	2/ Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	Waived	X	X	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Iowa	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	Waived	X	X	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kansas	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	Waived	X	X	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Kentucky	30 Days	Yes	2/ No	Yes	3/ X	3/ X	X	X	X	Waived	X	X	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Louisiana	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	May be waived	X	X	Yes	Yes, and surrender (foreign license)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Maine	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	X	X	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Maryland	30 Days	Yes	2/ Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	X	X	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Massachusetts	30 Days	Yes	2/ Yes	Yes	3/ -	3/ -	X	X	X	May be waived	X	X	4/ -	No	No	Yes	Yes
Michigan	30 Days	Yes	2/ No	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	May be waived	X	X	X	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Minnesota	60 Days/30 Days CDL	Yes	2/ No	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	May be waived	X	X	X	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Mississippi	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	May be waived	X	X	X	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Missouri	30 Days	Yes	2/ No	Yes	X	X	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	X	X	Yes	Yes, surrender all other licenses	Yes	Yes	Yes
Montana	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	X	X	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Nebraska	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	X	X	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nevada	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	X	X	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Hampshire	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	X	X	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Jersey	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	X	X	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Mexico	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	X	X	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New York	30 Days	Yes	2/ Yes	Yes	3/ X	3/ X	X	X	X	3/ Waived	X	X	No	No, but State provides service	Yes	Yes	Yes
North Carolina	30 Days	Yes	2/ No	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	Discretionary	-	X	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
North Dakota	30 Days	Yes	2/ No	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	May be waived	-	X	No	No, but State provides service	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ohio	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	Discretion of examiner	-	X	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Oklahoma	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	May be waived	-	X	No	No, but State provides service	Yes	Yes	Yes
Oregon	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	May be waived	-	X	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Pennsylvania	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	May be waived	-	X	No	No, but State provides service	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rhode Island	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	May be waived	-	X	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
South Carolina	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	-	X	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
South Dakota	30 Days	Yes	2/ Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	-	X	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Tennessee	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	-	X	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Texas	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	-	X	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Utah	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	-	X	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vermont	6 Months or reciprocal agreement	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	-	X	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Virginia	30 Days	Yes, if compact State	2/ No	Yes	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	May be waived	X	May be waived	-	X	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Washington	30 Days	Yes	2/ Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	May be waived	-	X	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
West Virginia	30 Days	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	Discretion of examiner	-	X	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Wisconsin	30 Days	Yes	2/ No	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	May be waived	-	X	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Wyoming	30 Days	Yes	2/ No	Yes	X	X	X	X	X	May be waived	-	X	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Puerto Rico	120 Days	No	No	No	X	X	X	X	X	May be waived if needed	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

1/ HAWAII-A valid driver license, Class 1, 2 or 3 from any State, U.S. Territory or Possession, or Canadian Province is valid in Hawaii until the expiration date shown on the license if the driver is 18 years of age or over.

2/ The State of issuance is notified that the license was surrendered. MICHIGAN-License destroyed and Issuance State notified by mail. CDLs are returned to driver after expiration date is punched out. MINNESOTA-License is invalidated and returned to licensee; a surrendered list is prepared and sent to other States weekly. MONTANA, NEBRASKA-A list is prepared for monthly distribution to all showing surrender of license from our of State and notification that those drivers are now licensed in Montana or Nebraska. NEW YORK-State notified electronically or by letter. TENNESSEE-State of license notified monthly of the change and document destroyed. WASHINGTON-License invalidated and returned to applicant. Residents only may obtain license; non-residents may obtain ID card only. WYOMING-License is invalidated and returned to licensee; a surrendered list is prepared and sent to other States every 2 weeks.

3/ IDAHO-Stats test of examiner's discretion; usually waived. KENTUCKY-No tests required if new resident surrenders on ARKANSAS license that has expired less than 30 days. A CONNECTICUT license expired less than 60 days, or a TENNESSEE license that has not expired. (TENNESSEE applicants are exempt from the written test only; vision test still required.) MICHIGAN-Required for all foreign country applicants including Canada and Mexico. NEW YORK--Reciprocity is granted for any State, the District of Columbia, any U.S. territory or possession, or any Canadian Province. Reciprocity is not granted for driver licenses of foreign

countries and all examinations (knowledge, vehicle operation, vision) are required and the application is treated as an "original" request.

4/ MICHIGAN-Only for serious offenses, i.e., alcohol/drugs, reckless driving, etc.: Do not withdraw for "failure to appear".

5/ The agreement for driver license services permits a State licensing agency to conduct tests for non-residents whose home-State license expires and cannot be renewed without personal appearance and reexamination. KENTUCKY-Can administer test, but does not issue temporary licenses. NEW JERSEY-Reports license withdrawals for all major traffic offenses including DUI, reckless driving, failure to perform duties of a driver involved in an accident, criminal driving while suspended or revoked, fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer and driving after being declared a habitual offender.

6/ The Driver License Compact is an agreement among the States to control problem drivers. It provides for exchange of information to keep unsafe drivers from accumulating violations in many States and escaping control action, it implements the "one license" concept.

7/ The nonresident violator compact allows a driver-violator in a foreign State to proceed to his home State without long delays and posting of bond, his case to be settled without his appearance in court at a later date.

**ITEMS INCLUDED ON DRIVER LICENSE**

STATE	NAME	ADDRESS	LICENSE NUMBER	SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN)	ISSUANCE DATE	EXPIRATION DATE	DATE OF BIRTH	CLASS OF LICENSE/ENDORSEMENT	RESTRICTIONS (EYES, GLASSES, ETC.)	PHOTOGRAPH	RACE	SEX	WEIGHT	HEIGHT	COLOR OF EYES	COLOR OF HAIR	VITAL ORGAN DONOR	SGS- NATURE OF DRIVER	OTHER ITEMS
			1/	2/	3/					4/							5/		6/
Alabama	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number
Alaska	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number
Arizona	X	X	X	2/X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Medicaid (voluntary)
Arkansas	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	(5/)	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
California	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Colorado	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	5/X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Connecticut	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Delaware	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	(5/)	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Dist. of Col.	X	X	1/X	1/X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Florida	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Georgia	X	X	X	(2/)	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Hawaii	X	X	1/X	1/X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Idaho	X	X	X	(2/)	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Illinois	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Indiana	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Iowa	X	X	X	(2/)	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Kansas	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Kentucky	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Louisiana	X	X	X	(2/)	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Maine	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Maryland	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Massachusetts	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Michigan	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Minnesota	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Mississippi	X	X	1/X	1/X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Missouri	X	X	2/X	2/X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	5/X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Montana	X	X	X	(2/)	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Nebraska	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Nevada	X	X	1/X	1/X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
New Hampshire	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
New Jersey	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
New Mexico	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
New York	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
North Carolina	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
North Dakota	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Ohio	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Oklahoma	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	Optional	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Oregon	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Pennsylvania	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	(5/)	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Rhode Island	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
South Carolina	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
South Dakota	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Tennessee	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Texas	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Utah	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Vermont	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Virginia	X	X	X	2/X	3/X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Washington	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
West Virginia	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Wisconsin	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Wyoming	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)
Puerto Rico	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal, camera number; Under 21, until 21st birthday (doby)

upon request, any other initial license (additional fee). TENNESSEE-Photo background (red on under 21) and on restricted licenses.

VERMONT-Photo is optional. Gray background-all photos red bar at top of photo-leader permit. Yellow bar at top of photo-leader permit. Dark Green bar at top of photo-leader permit. U. Blue bar at top right-CDL bar and eye color-not on photo. Yellow background for return dependent.

2/ The SSN is the license number.

3/ The SSN is mandatory for CDL application. ARIZONA-Optional on Classes D and M. GEORGIA, MONTANA-Not mandatory; when applied SSN becomes license number. IDAHO-Effective 1/1/93, not collected for non-CDL still required to be put on record for CDL (a part of record if collected prior to 1/1/93 or supplied for Class D). IOWA, MISSOURI, VIRGINIA-SSN will remain in driver's file, but driver may choose not to have the SSN show on his/her driver license. If SSN does appear on driver's license, it will be the license number. IOWA, State law requires that the CDL applicant submit his/her SSN and that it appear on the CDL license. KENTUCKY-Mandatory but at 1/1/77/95 does not appear on license. NEVADA-The license number is a 12-digit number based on the SSN. Some licenses may continue to show the SSN as the license number until 1/95. WASHINGTON-Not mandatory; when applied license number may not appear on record (not on license), required on CDL application.

3/ VIRGINIA-When issue date may not appear on record (not on license), required on CDL application.

# FORMS OF APPLICANTS NAMES USED ON DRIVER LICENSE AND NONDRIVER IDENTIFICATION CARD

STATE 2/	SUR-NAME	FIRST	MIDDLE	MIDDLE INITIAL	MAIDEN	LEGAL	MARRIED	PROFES-SIONAL	STAGE	ARE PROFESSIONAL AND STAGE NAMES CROSS-REFERENCED WITH LEGAL NAME
Alabama	R	R	P	R	R	R	R	-	-	No
Alaska	R	R	R	R	-	R	-	-	-	Yes
Arizona	R	R	R	-	-	R	R	P	P	Yes
Arkansas	R	R	P	P	P	R	P	-	-	No
California	R	R	R	P	P	R	P	P	P	Yes
Colorado	R	R	R	R	P	R	P	(3/)	(3/)	Yes
Connecticut	R	R	P	P	P	R	P	P	-	Yes
Delaware	R	R	P	R	-	-	R	-	-	No
Dist. of Col.	R	R	R	R	P	P	P	-	-	No
Florida	R	R	4/ R	-	R	4/ R	R	(3/)	(3/)	No
Georgia	R	R	P	P	P	R	P	-	-	No
Hawaii 2/	R	R	R	-	-	R	R	-	-	No
"	R	R	P	P	P	R	R	-	-	No
Idaho 2/	R	R	R	R	R	R	P	-	-	No
"	R	R	R	R	R	-	-	-	-	No
Illinois	P	P	P	R	P	(3/)	(3/)	-	-	-
Indiana	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	No
Iowa	R	R	R	R	P	R	P	-	-	No
Kansas	R	R	5/ R	R	R	R	R	-	-	No
Kentucky	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	-	-	No
Louisiana	R	R	R	P	P	R	Optional	-	-	No
Maine	R	R	P	R	P	R	R	-	-	No
Maryland	R	R	R	-	P	R	P	-	-	No
Massachusetts	R	R	P	R	P	R	P	P	P	No
Michigan	R	R	R	P	P	R	P	(3/)	(3/)	Yes
Minnesota	R	R	R	-	P	R	R	-	-	No
Mississippi	R	R	R	P	R	(3/)	P	-	-	No
Missouri	R	R	R	P	P	R	R	(6/)	(6/)	No
Montana	R	R	R	-	P	R	R	P	-	Yes
Nebraska	R	R	P	R	P	R	R	-	-	No
Nevada	R	R	R	P	P	R	P	-	-	No
New Hampshire	R	R	P	P	-	R	P	-	-	No
New Jersey	R	R	-	R	-	R	R	-	-	No
New Mexico	R	R	P	R	P	R	P	P	P	No
New York	R	R	P	R	-	R	R	-	-	No
North Carolina	R	R	R	-	R	R	R	-	-	No
North Dakota	R	R	R	R	P	R	P	-	-	No
Ohio	R	R	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	No
Oklahoma	R	R	P	R	P	R	P	-	-	No
Oregon	R	R	R	P	P	P	P	P	P	No
Pennsylvania	R	R	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	No
Rhode Island	R	R	R	R	-	P	R	-	-	No
South Carolina	R	R	R	P	P	P	P	-	-	No
South Dakota	R	R	P	P	P	R	P	(3/)	(3/)	Yes
Tennessee	R	R	R	-	P	R	7/ R	-	-	No
Texas	R	R	R	P	P	R	P	-	-	No
Utah	R	R	P	P	P	R	R	-	-	No
Vermont	R	R	P	R	P	R	R	-	-	No
Virginia	R	R	R	P	P	R	P	(8/)	P	No
"	R	R	R	R	-	-	-	-	-	Yes
Washington	R	R	R	R	P	R	7/ P	-	-	No
West Virginia	R	R	P	P	P	R	R	-	-	Yes
Wisconsin	R	R	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	No
Wyoming	R	R	P	R	P	R	R	P	P	Yes
Puerto Rico 2/	R	R	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	No

1/ R = The name form is required to be shown. P = The name is permitted if the applicant desires. A dash indicates the name form is neither required nor permitted.

2/ PUERTO RICO--Nondriver Identification cards are not issued. In the States that issue nondriver Identification cards, the name form requirements are the same as for the driver license except in HAWAII and IDAHO. Where they differ, the nondriver Identification card requirements are the second entry for the State.

3/ Permitted only by court order changing the name. MICHIGAN, persons may change their names by presenting evidence of use of the desired name. ILLINOIS-- Persons may change their names by presenting confirmation of the name and establishing an acceptable link between the old and new names.

4/ FLORIDA--Both names are permitted, but one or the other is required.

5/ KANSAS--Full middle name required if it can be verified; if not, middle initial is required.

6/ MISSOURI--Signature may include nickname or professional name but last name must be same as last legal action.

7/ TENNESSEE--Married name required if it is the legal name. WASHINGTON--May be hyphenated with legal name.

8/ VIRGINIA--Professional prefixes (Dr., Sister, etc.) are permitted.

## Driver's Licenses & State ID

Requirements for Learner's Permit	Driver records checked prior to issuance:				Classify instruction permits same as driver's license:	Length (in months) instruction permit valid:	Instruction permit		
	Your State	Prior State of residence	National Driver Register	None			Renewable	Number of times	Length (in months) valid
Pre-Issuance Criteria									
Alabama	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	48	YES	1	2
Alaska	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	24	YES	NA	24
Arizona	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	12	YES	*	12
Arkansas	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NR	NR	NR	NR
California	NO	NO*	NO*	YES	YES	12	NO	NA	NA
Colorado	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	6	YES	NA	6
Connecticut	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NA	NA	NA	NA
Delaware	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	2	YES	1	2
District of Columbia	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Florida	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	12	NO	0	0
Georgia	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	12	YES	*	12
Hawaii	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	3	YES	*	3
Idaho	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	6	YES	NR	6
Illinois	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NA	NO	NA	NA
Indiana	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	12	YES	*	12
Iowa	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	24	YES	*	24
Kansas	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	12	YES	*	12
Kentucky	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	6	YES	*	6
Louisiana	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	NR	NR	NR	NR
Maine	YES	NO	NO	NR	YES	18	NO	NA	NA
Maryland	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	6	NO	NA	NA
Massachusetts	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Michigan	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	5	YES	NA	5
Minnesota	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Mississippi	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	2	YES	*	2
Missouri	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	6	YES	1	6
Montana	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	6	YES	1	6
Nebraska	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	*	YES	*	*
Nevada	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	8	NO	NA	NA
New Hampshire	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
New Jersey	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	3	YES	NA	3
New Mexico	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NR	NO	NA	NA
New York	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	66	YES	*	66
North Carolina	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	18	YES	1	18
North Dakota	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	12	YES	NA	12
Ohio	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	6	YES	NA	*
Oklahoma	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	48	YES	NR	48
Oregon	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	18	NO	NA	NA
Pennsylvania	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	4	YES	*	4
Puerto Rico	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	24	NA	NA	NA
Rhode Island	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	6	NO	NA	NA
South Carolina	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	6	YES	*	6
South Dakota	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	6	YES	1	6
Tennessee	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	12	YES	NA	12
Texas	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	24	YES	*	*
Utah	NO*	NO	NO	YES*	NO	6*	*	*	6*
Vermont	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	24	YES	NA	24
Virginia	YES	NA	NO	NO	YES	12	NO	NA	NA
Washington	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES*	12*	YES	1	12
West Virginia	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	2	YES	1	2
Wisconsin	YES	NO	*	NO	YES	6	YES	*	6
Wyoming	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	12	YES	1	12

Thirty-eight states check a driver's record before issuing an instruction permit. Twelve of these check only their own records. Twenty-five check the NDR in addition to their own records. Twelve do not check any records prior to issuance. One checks the prior state of residence only. Ten check their own records, the NDR, and prior state of residence.



## Driver's Licenses & State ID

Requirements for License	Driver education test waiver:			Medical certificate requirements for:				Driver record check:			
	Vision	Knowledge and Signs	Road Test	Motorcycle/motorscooter	Bus/truck	Tractor-trailer		Your State	Prior State of residence		
							School bus			National Driver Register	
											None
Proofs and Waivers											
Alabama	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO*	NO
Alaska	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
Arizona	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Arkansas	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
California	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO*	YES*	NO
Colorado	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Connecticut	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	.	NO
Delaware	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
District of Columbia	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Florida	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO
Georgia	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Hawaii	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES*	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
Idaho	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Illinois	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO*	YES	NO	NO*	NO
Indiana	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES*	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Iowa	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	NO	YES	NO
Kansas	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Kentucky	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Louisiana	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NA
Maine	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES*	NO	NO
Maryland	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
Massachusetts	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Michigan	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Minnesota	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Mississippi	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO
Missouri	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Montana	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Nebraska	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
Nevada	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
New Hampshire	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
New Jersey	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO	YES*	YES	NO	YES*	YES*
New Mexico	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
New York	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
North Carolina	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO
North Dakota	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Ohio	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Oklahoma	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Oregon	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES*	NO
Pennsylvania	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
Puerto Rico	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
Rhode Island	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
South Carolina	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO*	NO*	NA
South Dakota	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Tennessee	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO
Texas	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO*	YES	NO	YES	NA
Utah	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Vermont	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	NO	NO	YES
Virginia	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO*	YES	NO	YES	NO
Washington	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES*	YES*	YES*	NO	YES	NO
West Virginia	NO	NO	NO	NO*	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Wisconsin	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES*	YES	YES	YES*	YES*	NO
Wyoming	NO	NO	YES	NO*	NO*	NO*	NO*	YES	YES	YES*	NO

Forty-seven states check the driver record before issuing a driver's license. Eight check their own records only. Thirty-seven check the NDR and their own records. Nineteen check the prior state of residence. Illinois checks if the driver is 19 or over. Indiana and South Carolina check their own records and prior state of residence. New Mexico checks the NDR and prior state of residence. New Jersey records are not routinely checked, the NDR occasionally. South Dakota, the NDR is checked intermittently. Washington checks NDR and own records prior to issuance of a temporary license. Wyoming checks NDR before mailing the hard-copy license. Alabama and Oregon check NDR after issuance of license.

## Driver's Licenses & State ID

Requirements for License	Type of license issued prior to record check		Test for new residents holding valid out-of-State license:						License transmittal:		Differences between minor and adult's license:
	Temporary	Conditional	Mandatory			Discretionary			By mail	In person	
			Vision	Knowledge and Signs	Road Test	Vision	Knowledge and Signs	Road Test			
Preissue Actions											
Alabama	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Alaska	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Arizona	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO
Arkansas	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
California	YES*	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES
Colorado	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES	YES
Connecticut	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES*
Delaware	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
District of Columbia	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Florida	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
Georgia	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES
Hawaii	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES
Idaho	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
Illinois	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Indiana	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES*	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
Iowa	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES*	NO
Kansas	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
Kentucky	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
Louisiana	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
Maine	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Maryland	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Massachusetts	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Michigan	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES
Minnesota	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Mississippi	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES
Missouri	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES
Montana	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES
Nebraska	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
Nevada	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
New Hampshire	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
New Jersey	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
New Mexico	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
New York	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES
North Carolina	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
North Dakota	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Ohio	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
Oklahoma	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES*	YES*	NO
Oregon	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES*	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
Pennsylvania	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES
Puerto Rico	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Rhode Island	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
South Carolina	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES
South Dakota	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Tennessee	YES*	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Texas	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES
Utah	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES
Vermont	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES
Virginia	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Washington	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES*	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
West Virginia	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
Wisconsin	YES*	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
Wyoming	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES

Nineteen states issue temporary drivers licenses, before performing a record check. Twenty-four states send licenses by mail. In 25 the applicant must appear in person. Eight states allow either by mail or in person. Field stations in Iowa issue license in person.

## Driver's Licenses & State ID

Driver Testing I.D. Requirements	Required identification documents:
Alabama	Proper identification to satisfy examiner
Alaska	Proper identification
Arizona	Birth certificate, 2 forms of identificat
Arkansas	Two from approved list
California	Signature comparison prior to road test
Colorado	*
Connecticut	Birth certificate, two forms of identification, and address verification
Delaware	Proof of name and DOB (birth certificate), social security card, two proofs of state residency
District of Columbia	NR
Florida	Identification required
Georgia	Satisfactory evidence of name and date of birth
Hawaii	*
Idaho	Birth certificate and proof of identity, acceptable documents available*
Illinois	*
Indiana	Request identification when needed, pt. value 6 pts. req. off of 42 item ID list
Iowa	Identification and signature. If no DL - require proof of name, DOB and SS # from list of 7 items
Kansas	Birth certificate, valid license, clearance from state of last issuance (original or true test copy)
Kentucky	Birth certificate, social security card, clearance or license from state of last issuance
Louisiana	Authentic documents such as birth certificate, personal identification, Social Security card
Maine	Birth certificate under 23 years of age and one additional form of identification
Maryland	Original or certified birth certificate and actual Social Security card. Valid out-of-state driver's license if applicable
Massachusetts	NR
Michigan	Legal identification; list of acceptable documents is available
Minnesota	NR
Mississippi	Birth certificate and social security card
Missouri	Identification required from approved list *
Montana	Birth certificate or license or other legal document
Nebraska	One proper ID from approved list
Nevada	Require identification - legal proof of name, date or birth, social security #
New Hampshire	NR
New Jersey	Birth certificate or other approved identification
New Mexico	Birth certificate or other identification
New York	Proof of date of birth and identity
North Carolina	Birth certificate or two other recognized documents of identification
North Dakota	Satisfactory proof of birth and social security card
Ohio	Satisfactory proof of birth and social security card
Oklahoma	Positive proof of age and identity - original documents
Oregon	Documentary proof of age, 2 additional documents establishing identity & 1 document that includes residence address & name
Pennsylvania	Birth or baptismal certificate, passport, INS N-560, INS N-550 or 570, marriage record, military ID
Puerto Rico	Photo check against learner permit record or out-of-state license
Rhode Island	Positive proof required
South Carolina	Birth certificate - documentary evidence, etc.
South Dakota	Current license, certified birth certificate, Social Security card
Tennessee	Birth certificate, out-of-state license, verification of SSN, military ID (two documents, unless one is photo)
Texas	Birth certificate or other acceptable evidence of name, date, and place of birth
Utah	Birth certificate or previously issued driver's license, SSN
Vermont	Require documentary proof of identity and date and place of birth
Virginia	Birth certificate or other acceptable document as proof of name and DOB for original and duplicate
Washington	Documents, photo, and signature comparison
West Virginia	Birth certificate, DD Form 214, passport/visa
Wisconsin	Social Security #, Birth certificate, other supporting document
Wyoming	Out-of-state license, birth certificate or immigration card

All states require some type of ID for application. Colorado applicants not having a valid or expired license must furnish proof of age and identity with acceptable traceable documents. Illinois requires at least three documents with applicant's name, date of birth, SSN, residence and signature. Maryland requires birth certificate, SSN, and other document bearing signature.

## Driver's Licenses & State ID

Driver's License Administration	Items on driver's record:																			
	Medical record	All license applications	All examination results	Restrictions in effect	Convictions	Accident involvement	Change of license type	Change of name	DWI clinic	Driver improvement clinic	Defense driving course	Prior address	Advisory letters	Interviews/hearings	Suspensions	Revocations	Cancellations	Probational status	Point accumulation	Insurance info.
Alabama	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Alaska	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
Arizona	YES*	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NA	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Arkansas	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
California	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES*
Colorado	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Connecticut	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NA	YES	NO
Delaware	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA	YES	NO
District of Columbia	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Florida	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Georgia	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
Hawaii	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
Idaho	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Illinois	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Indiana	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO
Iowa	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NA	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Kansas	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA	NO
Kentucky	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Louisiana	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES*
Maine	NO	YES*	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Maryland	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Massachusetts	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Michigan	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Minnesota	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Mississippi	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Missouri	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES*	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Montana	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Nebraska	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Nevada	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES*
New Hampshire	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
New Jersey	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
New Mexico	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NA
New York	YES*	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES*	YES	YES	YES	NO*	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
North Carolina	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES*
North Dakota	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Ohio	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Oklahoma	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
Oregon	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Pennsylvania	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NA	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Puerto Rico	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Rhode Island	NO*	NO	NO	NO*	YES	YES*	NO*	NO*	YES	YES	YES*	NO	NO	NO*	YES	YES	YES	NO*	NA	NO
South Carolina	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
South Dakota	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO*	NO
Tennessee	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Texas	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Utah	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES*	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Vermont	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES
Virginia	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	*YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES*
Washington	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
West Virginia	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO
Wisconsin	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Wyoming	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES

States include different items on your driving record. Forty-eight include suspensions. Forty-seven include revocations and convictions. Forty have accident involvement, 34 have point accumulation, 38 change of license type, 32 probation status. Nine states do not include change of name. Utah includes only moving traffic violation convictions.

## Driver's Licenses & State ID

Driver's License Administration	Driver status available to all law enforcement agencies on a 24-hour 7-day basis:	Method of filing:				Automatic identification:					Retention period (in years) for complete driver record:
		Alphabetic	Alphanumeric			Habitual offenders	Problem drivers				
			Numeric	Other	Drivers eligible for and referred to driver improvement program		Suspensions and revocations	Any subset			
Driver Status											
Alabama	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES*	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	7
Alaska	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	6
Arizona	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	5
Arkansas	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	INDEFINITE
California	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	8
Colorado	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES*	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	3
Connecticut	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	5
Delaware	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	*
District of Columbia	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Florida	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	10
Georgia	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	10
Hawaii	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	7
Idaho	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	10
Illinois	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	4
Indiana	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES*	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	10
Iowa	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	5
Kansas	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES*	3*
Kentucky	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	5
Louisiana	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	5
Maine	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	5
Maryland	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	3
NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Michigan	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	7
Minnesota	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Mississippi	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	3*
Missouri	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NA	NO	NO	YES	NO	5
Montana	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA*	5
Nebraska	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	4
Nevada	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	7
New Hampshire	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
New Jersey	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	3
New Mexico	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	3
New York	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	4
North Carolina	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES*	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	5
North Dakota	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	7
Ohio	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	*
Oklahoma	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	5
Oregon	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	5
Pennsylvania	YES	NO	YES*	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	No Limit
Puerto Rico	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	*
Rhode Island	YES*	YES*	YES*	YES*	YES*	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	3 5
South Carolina	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	10
South Dakota	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	10
Tennessee	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	5
Texas	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	*
Utah	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NR
Vermont	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	8
Virginia	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	11
Washington	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	5
West Virginia	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES*	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	7
Wisconsin	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	5
Wyoming	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	3

Forty-eight states make driver's status available to law enforcement around the clock. The states file your records with various letter-number systems (alphanumeric). Thirty-six states can automatically identify habitual offenders; 32, problem drivers; 44, suspensions and revocations. Nebraska and Rhode Island cannot identify any of the above. The retention period for driver records is generally specified by statute, ranging from only a few years to lifetime.

### Driver's Licenses & State ID

Driver License Administration	Frequency of update:			Frequency of purge:			Purge criteria:				Maintain purged records for statistical purposes:
	Daily	Weekly		Daily	Weekly		Vital statistics	Driver license returned by another			
			Other			Other		State	Voluntary surrender of driver license	Other	
Record Maintenance											
Alabama	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES*	NO
Alaska	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Arizona	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Arkansas	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES
California	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO
Colorado	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO
Connecticut	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	MONTHLY	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO
Delaware	YES	NA	NA	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
District of Columbia	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Florida	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES*	YES
Georgia	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	YES	YES	YES*	YES
Hawaii	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES
Idaho	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	NO	YES	YES*	YES
Illinois	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	NO	NO	YES*	YES
Indiana	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO
Iowa	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES	YES	YES*	NO
Kansas	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES	YES	YES*	YES
Kentucky	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO
Louisiana	YES	NO	NO	NR	NR	NR	YES	YES	YES	YES*	NO
Maine	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES
Maryland	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES
NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Michigan	YES*	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO
Minnesota	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Mississippi	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Missouri	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	NO	NO	YES*	YES
Montana	YES	NO	NO	NA*	NA*	NA*	YES	YES	YES	NA*	NA*
Nebraska	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	YES	NO	YES*	NO
Nevada	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NA
New Hampshire	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
New Jersey	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES
New Mexico	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO
New York	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO
North Carolina	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES
North Dakota	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO
Ohio	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES
Oklahoma	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO
Oregon	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES
Pennsylvania	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO
Puerto Rico	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES*	YES
Rhode Island	YES	NA	NA	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES*	YES
South Carolina	YES	NO	NO	NR	NR	NR	NO	YES	YES	YES*	YES
South Dakota	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
Tennessee	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	YES	NO	YES*	YES
Texas	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO
Utah	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES
Vermont	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	NO	YES	YES*	YES
Virginia	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES
Washington	YES*	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO
West Virginia	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NA	NA	NA	NA
Wisconsin	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO	NO	YES*	NO
Wyoming	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES*	YES*	YES*	YES*	YES

Forty-six states update driver records daily; five, weekly. Eight states purge records daily; four purge weekly. Other states have varying schedules and criteria for purging records. This is a *very individualized* area of administration. If you need to know more about your state's treatment of old records, call an information officer.

### Driver's Licenses & State ID

Driver License Administration	Purged driver record data retained:				Microfilm/microfiche original documents:					Laws enacted:	
	Personal data only				Driver license applications					Privacy	Freedom of information
	Historical data only			Complete record	Traffic citations			Driver improvement actions			
	Driver identifier only				Insurance information	Other					
Record Storage											
Alabama	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES*	NO	NO
Alaska	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
Arizona	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Arkansas	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
California	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Colorado	NA	NA	NA	NA	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES
Connecticut	NA	NA	NA	NA	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
Delaware	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
District of Columbia	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Florida	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES
Georgia	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
Hawaii	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
Idaho	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
Illinois	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES*	NO	YES
Indiana	NA	NA	NA	NA	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES*	YES
Iowa	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES*	YES	YES
Kansas	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES*	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES*
Kentucky	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES
Louisiana	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES*	YES	NO
Maine	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES
Maryland	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Massachusetts	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Michigan	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Minnesota	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Mississippi	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
Missouri	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES*	YES
Montana	NA*	NA*	NA*	NA*	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Nebraska	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Nevada	NA	NA	NA	NA	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
New Hampshire	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
New Jersey	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
New Mexico	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES
New York	NA	NA	NA	NA	NO	YES*	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES
North Carolina	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO
North Dakota	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES*	DNA	DNA
Ohio	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
Oklahoma	NA	NA	NA	NA	YES	YES	YES	NR	NO	DNA	DNA
Oregon	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
Pennsylvania	NA	NA	NA	NA	YES	YES*	YES*	NO	NO	YES	YES
Puerto Rico	NO	NO	NO	YES	.	.	.	.	.	YES*	NO
Rhode Island	NA	NA	NA	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	.	NO	YES
South Carolina	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES
South Dakota	NA	NA	NA	NA	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES
Tennessee	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES*	NO	YES
Texas	NA	NA	NA	NA	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES
Utah	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES*	YES	NO
Vermont	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
Virginia	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES*	YES	YES
Washington	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
West Virginia	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES
Wisconsin	NA	NA	NA	NA	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES
Wyoming	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO

Nine states have a privacy law only. Fifteen have a freedom of information law only. Nineteen have both laws. Six states have neither law. Indiana privacy law does not pertain to driving records. Missouri does not reveal SSNs.

### Driver's Licenses & State ID

Driver's License Administration	Driver required to appear in person for a duplicate license:	Time lapse (in days) between application for receipt of a duplicate license:	Driver record checked prior to issuance of duplicate license	Issuance of a duplicate license made part of the driver record:	Duplicate licenses clearly identifiable by:				Notified by AAA when an International driver's license issued:	
						Color code	Overprint	Other		Made part of driver record
Duplicate Licensing										
Alabama	YES	0	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NA
Alaska	YES	0	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
Arizona	NO	0	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NA
Arkansas	YES	0	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
California	YES*	30	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NA
Colorado	YES	30	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES*	NO	NA
Connecticut	YES	0	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NA
Delaware	YES	0	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NA
District of Columbia	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Florida	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NA
Georgia	YES	30	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NA
Hawaii	YES	45	YES	YES	NO	NA	NA	NA	NO	NA
Idaho	YES	0	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
Illinois	YES*	0	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NA
Indiana	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NA
Iowa	YES	0	YES*	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NA
Kansas	YES*	0	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NA
Kentucky	YES	0	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
Louisiana	YES	NO	YES	NO*	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NA
Maine	YES*	DNA	YES	YES	NO	NA	NA	NA	NO	NA
Maryland	YES	0	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NA
Massachusetts	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Michigan	YES	30	YES	YES	NO	NA	NA	NA	NO	NA
Minnesota	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Mississippi	YES	30	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES
Missouri	YES	20	YES	YES	NO	NA	NA	NA	NO	NA
Montana	YES	5	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NA
Nebraska	NO	0	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NA
Nevada	YES	0	YES	YES	NO	NA	NA	NA	NO	NA
New Hampshire	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
New Jersey	NO	21	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NA
New Mexico	YES	0*	YES	YES	NO	NA	NA	NA	NO	NA
New York	YES	0	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NA
North Carolina	YES	60*	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NA
North Dakota	YES	0	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NA
Ohio	YES	5 * 10	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NA
Oklahoma	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NA	NA	NA	NO	NA
Oregon	YES*	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES*	NO	NA
Pennsylvania	NO	5	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NO
Puerto Rico	NO*	5*	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NA
Rhode Island	YES	0	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NA
South Carolina	YES	1	YES	YES	NO	NA	NA	NA	NO	NA
South Dakota	NO	NONE	YES	YES	NO	NA	NA	NA	NO	NA
Tennessee	YES	On Line	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NA
Texas	YES	30	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NA
Utah	YES	21	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NA
Vermont	NO	4	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NA
Virginia	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES*	NO	NA
Washington	YES	10*	YES	YES	NO	NA	NA	NA	NO	NA
West Virginia	NO	5	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
Wisconsin	YES	NONE*	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NA
Wyoming	YES	45*	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

Thirty-nine states require a driver to appear in person for a duplicate license. The time lapse between application and receipt ranges from immediate to 90 days. California issues an interim temporary license immediately. In Illinois, if the applicant is out of state, he can obtain the duplicate by mail; "valid without photo" is issued, but must be updated upon return to state.

Forty-seven states check driver records before issuing a duplicate license. In 32 states a duplicate license is clearly identifiable by such markings as an overprint, the letters "D", "DUP", or special coding.



## Driver's Licenses & State ID

Driver's License Administration	AAA checks driver records prior to issuance of an international driver's license:	Notified by host country of violations/convictions of your State driver:	Made part of driver record and appropriate action taken	Forward record of conviction requiring mandatory suspension/revocation country of visiting driver:	I.D. cards issued to nondrivers:	Department/agency having primary responsibility for issuing identification cards		
						Motor vehicle department/agency	State/local police	Other
Alabama	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Alaska	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Arizona	DNA	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Arkansas	DNA	NO	NA	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
California	NO		YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Colorado	YES	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES	NO	NO
Connecticut	NA	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Delaware	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
District of Columbia	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Florida	NR	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Georgia	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES*	NO	YES	NO
Hawaii	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES*
Idaho	YES	NO	NA	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES*
Illinois	DNA	YES*	YES*	YES*	YES	YES	NO	NO
Indiana	YES	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Iowa	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Kansas	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Kentucky	YES	NO	NA	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Louisiana	NO	NO	NO*	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Maine	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NA	NA
Maryland	NO	YES*	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Massachusetts	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Michigan		NO	NA	YES	YES*	YES	NO	NO
Minnesota	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Mississippi	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Missouri	DNA	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Montana	NO	NO	NA	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Nebraska	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Nevada	NO	NO	NA	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
New Hampshire	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
New Jersey	NO	NO	NA	NO	NO	NA	NA	NA
New Mexico	DNA	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
New York	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
North Carolina	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
North Dakota	NO	NO	NA	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES*
Ohio	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Oklahoma	NO	NO	NA	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Oregon	DNA	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Pennsylvania	DNA	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Puerto Rico	NO	NO	NA	NR	NO	NA	NA	NA
Rhode Island	DNA	NO	NA		YES	YES	NO	NO
South Carolina	NO	NO	NA	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
South Dakota	DNA	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Tennessee	YES	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES*	NO	NO
Texas	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Utah	NO	NO	NA	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Vermont	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NA	NA
Virginia	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Washington	NO	NO	NA	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
West Virginia	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Wisconsin	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES*
Wyoming	NO	NO	NA	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO

The AAA checks driver records in only six states before issuing an International Drivers License: CO, ID, IN, KY, MS, and TN.

## Driver's Licenses & State ID

Driver's License Administration  Licensing	Is automated knowledge testing offered to all applicants?	Under what type of system are driver's licenses suspended for traffic convictions?			Does your State have an Admin Per Se law (CDL)?  What is the BAC level? (21yrs/older)	What is the BAC level for non-CDL drivers?	Documents required to change name on license? A=affidavit, B=birth certificate, C=court order, D=divorce decree, M=marriage license, P=passport, T=tax forms	Commercial motor vehicle serious traffic violation definition been expanded?
		Point system	Frequency/type of occurrence	Other				
Alabama	CDL Only	YES	NA	NO	NO	0.10	B, C, D, M	NO
Alaska	YES	YES	NA	NO	YES	.10+	C, D, M	NO
Arizona	NO	YES	NA	NO	YES - .10	0.10	C, M	NO
Arkansas	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	0.10	A	NO
California	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	0.08	NONE	NO
Colorado	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES-.04	0.10	C, M	NO
Connecticut	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES-.10	0.10	NA	NO
Delaware	NO	YES	NA	NO	YES	0.10	C, D, M	NA
District of Columbia	YES	YES	NA	NO	YES - .10	0.10	C	NO
Florida	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES-.08	0.04	C, M	YES
Georgia	YES	YES	NA	NO	YES-.08	0.10	B, C, M	NO
Hawaii	NO	NA	NA	NA	YES-.10	0.10	D, M	NO
Idaho	NO	YES	NA	NO	YES-.10	0.10	C, D, M	NO
Illinois	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES - 0	0.10	C, D, M, P	YES
Indiana	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Iowa	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES-.10	0.10	DL Name Change form	NO
Kansas	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES-.08	0.08	B, C, D, M	NO
Kentucky	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	0.10	C, M	NO
Louisiana	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES-.10	0.04	C, M	NO
Maine	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES-.04	0.08	C, D, M	NO
Maryland	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES-.10	0.10	C, M	NO
Massachusetts	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Michigan	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	0.10	B, C, M	YES
Minnesota	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES - .10	0.10	C, M	NO
Mississippi	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES-.10	0.10	C, D, M	NO
Missouri	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES-.10	0.10	A, B, C, D, M	NO
Montana	NO	YEE	NO	NO	NO	0.10	State Form	NO
Nebraska	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES-.10	0.10	A, B, C, D, M, P	NO
Nevada	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES-.10	0.10	C, D, M	NO
New Hampshire	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	0.08	B, C	NO
New Jersey	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	0.10	C, M	NO
New Mexico	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES - .08	0.08	A	NO
New York	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	0.10	A, B, C, D, M, P	NO
North Carolina	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES-.04	0.08	C, T	NO
North Dakota	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES-.10	0.10	B, C, M	NO
Ohio	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES-.01	0.10	C	NO
Oklahoma	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES-.10	0.10	C, M, P	NO
Oregon	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES-.04	0.08	1 old name, 1 new name	NO
Pennsylvania	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	0.10	C, M	NO
Puerto Rico	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	0.10	C	NO
Rhode Island	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
South Carolina	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	0.10	B, C, D, M	NO
South Dakota	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	0.10	A, M, T	YES
Tennessee	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	0.10	C, D, M	NO
Texas	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES-.04	0.10	A, C, D, M	NO
Utah	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES-.04	0.08	C, M	NO
Vermont	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES-.08	0.08	None	NO
Virginia	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES-.08	0.08	C, D, M	NO
Washington	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES-.10	0.10	A	YES
West Virginia	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES-.04	0.10	C, D, M	YES
Wisconsin	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES-.10	0.10	C, others	YES
Wyoming	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES-.04	0.10	A, C, D, M	NO

Notice the variety of documents accepted for **change of name** on driver's licenses. In California, home to at least one driver in five, *no documents are needed*. Drivers can simply *request* a change of name, signing the form "under penalty of perjury, the following statement is true and correct, etc., etc."

## Driver's Licenses & State ID

Driver's License Administration	Method used to assign driver's license number			Method used to assign I.D. number			Method used to issue licenses		
	Social Security Number	Algo-rhythmn	Other	Social Security Number	Algo-rhythmn	Other	Central issue	Over-the-counter - photographic	Over-the-counter - digitized image
Licensing									
Alabama	NO	NO	Sequential	NO	NO	Sequential	YES	NO	NO
Alaska	NO	NO	Sequential	NO	NO	Sequential	NO	YES	NO
Arizona	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO
Arkansas	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
California	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO
Colorado	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES
Connecticut	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES
Delaware	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
District of Columbia	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Florida	NO	NO	name,sex,dob	NO	NO	name,sex,dob	NO	YES	NO
Georgia	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO
Hawaii	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
Idaho	NO	NO	9/mix/alpha/nos	NO	NO	9 mis-alpha/nos	NO	YES	NO
Illinois	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
Indiana	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Iowa	YES	NO	Audit No.	YES	NO	Audit No.	NO	YES	NO
Kansas	YES	YES	Choice	YES	YES	Choice	NO	NO	YES
Kentucky	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Louisiana	NO	NO	Sequential	NO	NO	Sequential	NO	YES	YES
Maine	NO	NO	Computer Gen.	NO	NO	Computer Gen.	NO	YES	NO
Maryland	NO	NO	Soundex	NO	NO	Soundex	NO	NO	YES
Massachusetts	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Michigan	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO
Minnesota	NA	NA	Soundex	NA	NA	Soundex	YES	NO	NO
Mississippi	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
Missouri	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
Montana	YES	NO	Pseudo nos	YES	NO	Pseudo nos.	YES	NO	NO
Nebraska	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
Nevada	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
New Hampshire	NO	NO	.	NO	NO	.	NO	NO	YES
New Jersey	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO
New Mexico	NA	NA	Sequential	NA	NA	Sequential	NA	YES	NA
New York	NO	NO	Random	NO	NO	Random	YES	NO	NO
North Carolina	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
North Dakota	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Ohio	NO	NO	Preprinted nos	NO	NO	Preprinted nos	NO	YES	YES
Oklahoma	YES	NO	Computer Gen	YES	NO	Computer Gen	NO	YES	NO
Oregon	NO	NO	Order of issue	NO	NO	Order of issue	NO	YES	NO
Pennsylvania	NO	NO	Sequential	NO	NO	Sequential	YES	YES	NO
Puerto Rico	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Rhode Island	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
South Carolina	NO	NO	Sequential	NO	NO	Sequential	NO	NO	YES
South Dakota	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Tennessee	NO	NO	Sequential	NO	NO	Sequential	NO	YES	NO
Texas	NO	NO	Random	NO	NO	Random	YES	NO	NO
Utah	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
Vermont	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
Virginia	YES	NO	T with 8 nos.	YES	NO	T with 8 nos.	NO	NO	YES
Washington	NO	NO	name w/ dob	NO	NO	name w/ dob	NO	YES	NO
West Virginia	NO	NO	mix alpha/nos	NO	NO	mix alpha/nos	YES	YES	NO
Wisconsin	NO	NO	Soundex	NO	NO	Soundex	NO	YES	NO
Wyoming	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO

In seventeen states the drivers license number is actually the driver's SSN. Sixteen states use an algorithm (mathematical formula) to generate the number. Maryland, Minnesota and Wisconsin use the Soundex system (a letter-number formula based on name and date of birth). Seven states simply issue licenses with sequential numbers. Maine and Oklahoma use computer generated numbers. Kansas allows a choice between the SSN and a computer generated number. New York and Texas assign numbers randomly.

Thirty-six states now make the license available **over the counter, on the spot**. The rest issue licenses from a central facility and send them to you. If you're in a hurry, the over-the-counter states are the ones to choose.

## Driver's Licenses & State ID

Driver's License Administration	Assign unique number and maintain record:			I.D. card and driver license differentiated by:			Eligibility for I.D. card: Youths not eligible for a driver license			I.D. card fee: Youths		
		Assign unique number only		Color coded	Overprint	Other					Adults	Over 65 years of age
			Maintain record only									
I.D. Cards								Adults not eligible for a driver's license	Voluntary non-driver			
Alabama	YES	NA	NA	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	15.00	15.00	15.00
Alaska	YES	NO	NA	YES	NO	YES*	YES	YES	YES	10.00	10.00	10.00
Arizona	YES	NA	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES*	YES	YES	12.00	12.00	FREE
Arkansas	YES	NA	NA	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	5.00	5.00	5.00
California	YES	NA	NA	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	6.00	6.00	3.00
Colorado	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES*	YES	YES	YES*	3.50	3.50	FREE
Connecticut	YES	NO	NO	NO	NA	YES	YES*	YES	YES	10.00	10.00	10.00
Delaware	YES	NA	NA	NO	YES*	NO	YES	YES	YES	5.00	5.00	5.00
District of Columbia	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Florida	YES	NA	NA	NO	YES	NA	YES	YES	YES	3.00	3.00	3.00
Georgia	YES*	YES*	NA	YES	YES*	YES*	YES*	YES*	YES*	10.00	10.00	10.00
Hawaii	NA	NA	NA	NO	NO	YES*	NA	NA	NA	3.00	3.00	3.00
Idaho	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES*	YES	YES	7.50	7.50	7.50
Illinois	YES	NA	NA	YES	YES	YES*	YES*	YES*	YES*	4.00	4.00	FREE
Indiana	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	3.00	3.00	3.00
Iowa	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	5.00	5.00	5.00
Kansas	YES	NA	NA	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	8.00	8.00	4.00
Kentucky	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES	YES	4.00	4.00	4.00
Louisiana	YES*	NA	NA	YES	NO	YES*	NO	YES	YES*	3.50	3.50	3.50
Maine	YES	NA	NA	YES	YES	YES*	NO	YES	YES	NA	5.00	5.00
Maryland	YES	NA	NA	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	5.00	5.00	FREE
Massachusetts	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Michigan	YES	NA	NA	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES	YES	6.00	6.00	FREE
Minnesota	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Mississippi	YES	NA	NA	NA	NA	YES	YES	YES	YES	13.00	13.00	13.00
Missouri	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES*	YES	YES	YES	7.50	7.50	7.50
Montana	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES*	YES	YES	YES	1.00	1.00	1.00
Nebraska	YES	NA	NA	NO	NO	YES*	NA	NA	NA	15.00	15.00	15.00
Nevada	YES	NA	NA	YES	YES	NO	YES*	YES	YES*	3.00	9.00	4.00
New Hampshire	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
New Jersey	NA	NA	NA	YES	NA	YES*	NO	YES	NO	NO	3.50	3.50
New Mexico	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	5.00	5.00	5.00
New York	YES	NA	NA	NA	YES	NA	NO	YES	YES	6.50	6.50	3.75
North Carolina	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES*	NA	1.00	1.00
North Dakota	YES	NA	NA	NO	NO	YES*	NO	YES	YES	8.00	8.00	8.00
Ohio	YES	NA	NA	YES	NA	NA	YES	YES	YES*	7.25	7.25	7.25
Okahoma	YES	NA	NA	NO	YES	NO	.	.	.	7.00	7.00	7.00
Oregon	YES	NA	NA	NO	YES*	NO	YES	YES	YES	5.00	5.00	13.00
Pennsylvania	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES*	.	YES	YES	10.00	10.00	10.00
Puerto Rico	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Rhode Island	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES*	NO*	NO*	NO*	5.00	5.00	5.00
South Carolina	YES	NO	NA	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	5.00	5.00	5.00
South Dakota	YES	NA	NA	YES	NO	YES*	.	.	.	8.00	8.00	8.00
Tennessee	YES	NA	NA	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	3.00*	1.50*	1.50*
Texas	YES	NA	NA	NO	NO	YES*	YES*	YES*	YES*	10.00	10.00	5.00
Utah	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES*	NO	YES*	YES*	NO	2.00	2.00
Vermont	YES	NA	NA	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	10.00	10.00	10.00
Virginia	YES*	NA	NA	NO	NO	YES*	YES	YES	YES	NA	5.00	NA
Washington	YES	NA	NA	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	4.00	4.00	4.00
West Virginia	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES*	YES	YES	10.00	10.00	FREE*
Wisconsin	YES	NA	NA	NO	YES	NA	YES	YES	YES	NA	4.00	4.00
Wyoming	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES*	6.00	6.00	6.00

Forty-two states assign a unique number to maintain a record of state ID cards. But these states neither assign a unique number nor maintain a record of ID cards: CO, CT, KY, MO, MT, NM, PA, and WY. Georgia uses the SSN. Louisiana is not computerized.

# NONDRIVER IDENTIFICATION CARD

STATE		IDENTIFICATION REQUIRED TO OBTAIN NON-DRIVER ID. CARD COMPARED TO DRIVER LICENSE	TAMPER-PROOF ELEMENTS USED IN DESIGN OF NON-DRIVER ID. CARD COMPARED TO DRIVER LICENSE	ITEMS INCLUDED ON IDENTIFICATION CARD																		
				NAME	ADDRESS	NUM. BER	SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN)	ISSU-ANCE DATE	EXPI-RATION DATE	BIRTH DATE	PHOTO-GRAPH	RACE	SEX	WEIGHT	HEIGHT	COLOR OF EYES	COLOR OF HAIR	VITAL ORGAN DONOR	SIGNA-TURE	OTHER	FEE	TERM
Alabama	S	1/	2/	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	State seal	6/ \$20.00	6/ 4 Years	6/
Alaska	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	10.00	5 Years	AI
Arizona	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	12.00	Permanent	AI
Arkansas	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	5.00	4 Years	AI
California	S	S	S	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	(4/)	X	State seal	6/ \$5.00	6/ 6 Years	6/ AI
Colorado	S	S	S	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	3.50	6/ 6 Years	AI
Connecticut	S	S	S	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	Bar Code	Free	Permanent	AI
Delaware	S	S	S	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	10.00	4 Years	AI
Dist. of Col.	S	S	S	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	5.00	4 Years	6/ AI
Florida	S	S	S	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	15.00	4 Years	16 & over
Georgia	S	S	S	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	Free	4 Years	65 & over
Hawaii	S	S	S	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	3.00	6/ 4 Years	65 & over
Idaho	S	S	S	X	X	X	3/	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	(S)	10.00	3 Years	AI with SS card
Illinois	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	(S)	7.50	4 Years	AI
Indiana	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	(S)	6/ 4.00	5 Years	AI
Iowa	S	S	S	X	X	X	3/ X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	(S)	5.00	4 Years	AI
Kansas	S	S	S	X	X	X	3/ Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	6/ 6.00	4 Years	AI
Kentucky	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	State seal	4.00	4 Years	AI
Louisiana	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	State seal	6/ 10.00	4 Years	AI
Maine	S	S	S	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	State seal	5.00	Permanent	AI
Maryland	M	S	S	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	State seal	6/ 10.00	4 Years	AI
Massachusetts	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	State seal	5.00	4 Years	18 & over
Michigan	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	15.00	Permanent	AI
Minnesota	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	6/ 6.00	4 Years	6/ AI nonalveis
Mississippi	S	S	S	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	State seal, camera num-ber, Commissioner's sig.	12.50	Permanent	65 & over
Missouri	S	S	S	X	X	X	3/ X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	(S)	9.25	Permanent	AI
Montana	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	13.00	4 Years	13 & over
Nebraska	S	S	S	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	7.50	3 Years	Under 65
Nevada	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	1.00	Permanent	65 & over
New Hampshire	S	S	S	X	X	X	3/ X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	Governor's sig., State seal	8.00	4 Years	AI
New Jersey	S	S	S	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	15.00	Permanent	AI
New Mexico	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	10.00	Permanent	10 & over
New York	S	S	S	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	5.00	Permanent	70 & over
North Carolina	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	Blood type optional	10.00	5 Years	65 & over
North Dakota	S	S	S	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	5.50	4 Years	17 & over
Ohio	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	5.00	4 Years	13 & over
Oklahoma	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	(S)	6/ 6.25	6/ 4 Years	16 & over
Oregon	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	State Seal	6/ 10.00	5 Years	AI
Pennsylvania	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	8.00	Permanent	AI
Rhode Island	S	S	S	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	2.50	4 Years	AI
South Carolina	S	S	S	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	7.00	4 Years	AI
South Dakota	S	S	S	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	State, camera number	13.00	4 Years	AI
Tennessee	S	S	S	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	5.00	4 Years	16 & over
Texas	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	Living will, power of attorney	10.00	Permanent	18 & over
Utah	S	S	S	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	(S)	5.00	3 Years	10 & over
Vermont	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	8.00	6/ 5 Years	AI
Virginia	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	10.00	4 Years	AI
Washington	S	S	S	X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	State seal	10.00	4 Years	16 & over
West Virginia	S	S	S	X	X	X	\$	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	(S)	5.00	5 Years	AI
Wisconsin	S	S	S	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	6/ 7.50	Permanent	12 & over
Wyoming	S	S	S	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	10.00	4 Years	AI
Puerto Rico	None Issued			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	5.00	6/ 5 Years	AI
				X	X	X	Optional	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	10.00	4 Years	AI
				X	X	X	\$	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	10.00	4 Years	16 & over
				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	10.00	Permanent	AI
				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	\$	10.00	Permanent	12 & over

OPERATION printed in space for conditions; also State Seal and camera number. WASHINGTON—State seal, coded number shows office of issuance. Department of Licensing logo.

6/ ALABAMA—Mentally/physically disabled and cannot obtain a driver license—issue fee only. 62 & Over or mentally/physically disabled and cannot obtain a driver license—Permanent. CALIFORNIA—Ten years for persons 62 and over at \$3.00. COLORADO—Minor expires on 18th birthday, provisional on 21st birthday, adult, indefinite term. DELAWARE—Not limited to nondrivers. FLORIDA—Once cardholder turns 60, card is valid until cancellation by Department or by death of cardholder. ILLINOIS—No fee for handicapped and/or over 65. KANSAS—For over 65, there is a \$2.00 fee. LOUISIANA—ID cards issued to persons over 60 are free. MICHIGAN—Persons 65 and older legally blind, or denied driver license for medical or physical disability pay no fee. HOLDERS of valid Michigan driver licenses are not eligible, but residents with out-of-State licenses are if they plan to reside in Michigan longer than 90 days. MINNESOTA—Except 65 and older—lifetime with no expiration. NEW YORK—6-year ID card is \$10.25. 10-year card issued to senior citizens and SSN recipients. NORTH CAROLINA—No fee for 70 years and over, legally blind, or homeless. TENNESSEE—Permanent ID cards are issued at no fee to mentally retarded or physically handicapped persons with doctor's statement. UTAH—The term is 5 years or 21st birthday, whichever is shorter.

1/ S = Some requirements for nondriver ID card and driver license. L = Less stringent requirements for the nondriver ID card. H = More stringent requirements for the nondriver ID card. M = More than driver license.

2/ S = Some as driver license. L = Less than driver license. M = More than driver license.

3/ IDAHO—SSN not required part of record if collected prior to 1/1/83; part of record if supplied now. IOWA, KANSAS, MISSOURI—If given, SSN is the card number. NEVADA—SSN will remain in applicant's file, but driver may choose not to have the number show on their driver license. If SSN does appear on the license, it will be located on top next to the new 12-digit driver license number.

4/ CALIFORNIA—Vital organ donor certificate may be attached to ID card. COLORADO—Organ donor pledge card is printed in laminated on back of card and may be completed at any time. PENNSYLVANIA—Organ donor sticker may be attached to ID card plus certificate displayed.

5/ HAWAII—Emergency notification name and validation signature. IDAHO—Place of birth and date applicant received 21 (if applicable) ILLINOIS—"Original," "Duplicate," or "Corrected" and document control number. IOWA—Some information as driver license MISSOURI—Sequential number establishing date and office of issue and MINOR printed on licenses of applicants under the age of 21. NORTH CAROLINA—Certification of residency. TENNESSEE—"IDENTIFICATION ONLY" printed across data on card; "NOT FOR VEHICLE

## Chapter XI

# SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

The Social Security Number (SSN) has become the most often used number for record keeping in the United States. First issued in 1936, the SSN was intended only for Social Security programs, but its use has gradually widened. In 1961 the IRS began employing the SSN as a taxpayer ID number, and now requires it on records of any transactions in which the IRS is interested, such as banking, stock market activity, most financial dealings, and employment. The trend has broadened to include employee ID, medical records, credit reports, and countless other "unofficial" applications like signing up for adult education courses or getting your kid in Little League.

Why? Our society now thrives on accurate retrieval of information, and having a unique number for each person's many files works best. The SSN was there all along, different for each person, just waiting to be used. We have never had any system of "national ID", typical of many European countries, despite periodic calls for such an "enumeration." And thanks to many civil libertarians, religious fundamentalists, and a healthy helping of just plain government-haters, it seems doubtful that the feds will ever be able to implement any form of pure national ID.

In reality, however, they may never *have* to create an official national ID. The reasons are straightforward, and not comforting. First, the SSN itself already serves as an "unofficial" form of national ID, simply because that is how it is used. We know it was never intended to serve as ID (which certainly would have been rejected in the social environment of the Thirties), but simply as a "retirement account number." The legislative history of the Social Security Act expressed the explicit fears of trade unionists for the ultimate unfair labor practice of "blacklisting", which would have become even easier to practice by virtue of any kind of "national ID." Suffice to say the SSN was never *intended* to be a national ID. Instead, it has become a kind of *de facto* ID, that is, used a lot, but only with pretensions of being ID.

As *de facto* ID, however, there are many holes and imperfections in the application of the SSN as any kind of secure, national ID. Some individuals have obtained multiple SSNs and may or may not use them legally. Others use the SSN of another person (popular among illegal aliens), with or without that person's knowledge. Some use SSNs which are incorrect, and may not be corrected until such time as a claim for disability or retirement is made. Some people still do not have an SSN, perhaps for religious reasons. Still others have created fictitious SSNs, which have become part of the official SSN-IRS records, and may never be identified as such. Finally, as a scientific objection to the SSN as ID, it has no "checking digit" which would enable an examiner to determine its validity for a particular person. We're talking basic computer science here, but then computers weren't around in the Thirties.

The third reason why the SSN will never become a true national ID is pure politics. There happen to be 50 states with minds of their own, who will not for a second relinquish their rights to "control" their residents through the issuance of drivers licenses and State ID cards. In the U.S. this form of identification has become our everyday, *real* ID. We know that there are also holes in state licensing systems, but the reality is that these forms of ID are accepted as real ID. The issuing agencies do attempt to establish personal identity, age, and physical characteristics as the basis for each identification document produced. And, despite our having 50 different issuing agencies, each with its own format, etc., a license or State ID issued in one state is perfectly valid in all others, rendering it, in fact, a form of "national ID." For better or worse our nation of drivers will continue to rely on their licenses as their ID. And the bureaucrats who issue them will retain a vested interest in securing their own continued employment.

So what are we actually saying? That the SSN is some kind of ID, but then it isn't? That the SSN isn't really that important, but then it is? Forgive any possible confusion, but there is an explanation here, and it's not too hard to understand. Let's clarify all this:

The SSN will likely *never* become the national ID. Driver's licenses and State ID cards will serve this purpose, in our uniquely American way. What the SSN *will* become is an

## Social Security Numbers

---

increasingly utilized identifier of records, which will in turn, indirectly "identify" individuals. And here are some recent developments which bear this out.

### WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

A state appellate court in Los Angeles has told California residents who do not have Social Security Numbers and want to get a drivers license: tough luck. "Obtaining an SSN is a proper prerequisite to obtaining a drivers license, and by inference, the DMV may therefore require those who do not have SSNs to obtain them." Decisions in other states reflect this opinion. In 1976 Congress exempted state motor vehicle departments from the restrictions on Social Security numbers in the Privacy Act of 1974.

The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1977 requires the SSNs of *both* parents on any application to issue a Social Security number to a minor child. The Social Security Administration will provide this information to the IRS as part of the Data Master File to identify questionable claims for the earned income credit, the *dependent exemption*, and other tax benefits, before tax refunds are paid out.

The restriction on Social Security numbers in the Privacy Act applies only to local, state, and federal *government agencies*. Private employers are required to report employees' earnings by their SSNs, but they can also use SSNs as employee ID if they wish. They are not *legally* prohibited from doing this.

The 1996 Welfare Reform Law requires states to collect SSNs from all applicants for a professional license, a commercial driver's license, any occupational license, or marriage license, as well as from anyone involved in a divorce, child-support order, or paternity determination, presumably to help track down "deadbeat parents."

In at least one state, Wisconsin, the trend has begun to **cease** using SSNs as student ID. At the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Vice Chancellor John Torphy said, "Each time the card is used, the higher the chance there is that it could be lost and picked up by somebody who could use the number improperly." Other schools in the state are now moving to discontinue using SSNs as student ID, too.

An Arizona motorist and independent privacy crusader, Willy Bills, was recently stopped for a traffic violation and asked by the patrolman for his SSN. "At first I hesitated," said Bills, "and then I declined and said, 'I don't believe I have any duty to provide it.'" Bills was right, but Tucson police, like police elsewhere, don't tell people that the demand is voluntary. The department later sent him a memo saying, "**The provision of Social Security numbers is purely voluntary and individuals are free to decline the request to provide the number.**" Indeed, a Connecticut State court decision (1991) held that the federal Privacy Act requires such a police demand is voluntary. For the record, here's exactly what the Act says:

***"It shall be unlawful for any Federal, State, or local government agency to deny any individual any right, benefit, or privilege provided by law because of such individual's refusal to disclose his social security account number, (and any agency) which requests an individual to disclose his social security account number shall inform that individual whether that disclosure is mandatory or voluntary, by what statutory or other authority such number is solicited and what use will be made of it."*** (This provision was later amended to exempt state welfare, tax, and motor vehicle agencies.) 5 U.S. Code 552a (note).

Citizen Bills adds, however, "How can you effectively do that at a traffic stop when you've got a cop shining a flashlight in your face? We wonder, too. In practice, though, if you're asked to give your SSN to a government agency and no disclosure statement is included on the form, complain and cite the Privacy Act. Why not have the statement above put onto a wallet-size business card, just in case? When in doubt, whip it out!

There have been isolated legal challenges to using SSNs as ID based on "sincerely held" *religious convictions*. Anyone pursuing such a course would automatically be throwing away whatever pretense of privacy he might have enjoyed, but the cases do make interesting reading. Equating the SSN as the "Mark of the Beast" in the Book of Revelation, these protesters believe anyone accepting such a mark in order to "buy or sell," and thus worshipping the beast, will incur "the wrath of God." Great courtroom drama, no doubt, but why not wait for the movie...?

You are not legally required to provide your SSN to private businesses, including private healthcare providers and insurers, unless you are involved in a transaction in which the IRS

## Social Security Numbers

---

requires notification. (Medicare and parallel state health plans are part of government, and can thus require your SSN.) Since no law prevents businesses from *asking* for your SSN, and there are few restrictions on what they can do with it once they have it, and since they may refuse goods or services if you don't provide it, why not just slip them a green weenie with a well-composed fake SSN? They won't be able to verify it, and you just might be saving yourself a lot of potential hassle were your real number ever misappropriated by some underling in the firm.

By the way, it's only a matter of time before some firm that collects SSNs "just because", gets its obtuse butt on the sharp end of a massive lawsuit brought by victims of identity theft, who will allege that the "willful collection of private SSNs aided and abetted a criminal act." The criminal case will at least be embarrassing, but the civil trial could be good for considerable damages. (Are there any contingency fee lawyers listening? Juries will be very sympathetic...)

### SO WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

Everybody seems to want your Social Security Number. A new federal law to become effective October 2000, says that to be acceptable for federal purposes, (whatever that means), a state driver's license must display the holder's SSN. A state may avoid this by **requiring SSNs be submitted with license applications** and by regularly verifying SSNs with the Social Security Administration. At present only California and Massachusetts fit this exemption. (The law: *Section 656 of the immigration reform legislation of 1996, Public Law 104-208, codified at 5 U.S.C. 301 note*) This sounds like a fine mess the feds want to impose on everyone, so we shall see what becomes of it. Very likely, the doors to identity theft will open all the wider.

As a reflection on this, Congress enacted a law in 1996 requiring Health and Human Services (HHS) to create a healthcare numerical identifier by the end of 1997. After lots of debate, and sharp differences of opinion even within HHS, nothing was done. They didn't want to take the heat for creating a "new number" pointing out that the SSN was already the identifier for healthcare in the military and in Medicare/Medicaid. The talk continues with the attitude that Congress itself should come up with what it "requires."

No matter what comes down the pike, if you are going to participate in our "free" society it seems that you will just have to have an SSN. You undoubtedly already have an SSN, right? Well and good. Consider it your key to any possible retirement/disability benefits you might claim in the future, and as your IRS number if you choose to pay income taxes.

In the meantime, however, why expose your "private" number to any and all just because they have the temerity to ask for it? If you use Level One ID, why not have a Level One SSN, too? Why not have an SSN that you can hand out but that will never hurt you?

**CONSIDER:** You've no doubt been asked at a bank or some other establishment where you were presenting a check to provide a thumbprint on the document as some kind of "proof"? Well, to tell the truth, the print itself is worthless as ID since it will never be checked ("classified," as the FBI calls it). The purpose is strictly psychological: The banks don't want non-customers (read "no-account" types) in their lobbies because they haven't been checked out, and they don't really know who they are. This, to the banking mentality, equates with trash and trouble, and therefore the demeaning act of "fingerprinting."

Just so, you can have a "disposable" SSN as quickly as it takes to make one up. What could be easier than creating a nine-digit number and using it whenever the occasion demands? There are, however, a few "technicalities" you will want to keep in mind if you decide to create your own SSN....

### HOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN SSN

You already know that the SSN is composed of three blocks of numbers, spaced 123-45-6789. These are not random numbers, of course, and you will need to know what each actually represents.

The **first block of numbers** (called "Area Numbers") represents the **STATE** in which the number was issued. The original system began with the lowest numbers being assigned to the New England states, and the highest numbers to the western states. There are now some "anomalies" as a few states have used up their original area numbers and been assigned newer,



## Social Security Numbers

non-sequential numbers. Check out the chart we are including here, and you will quickly get the idea.

### STATE INDEX OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS BY AREA NUMBERS

#### Original Designations:

001—003 New Hampshire  
 004—007 Maine  
 008—009 Vermont  
 010—034 Massachusetts  
 035—039 Rhode Island  
 040—049 Connecticut  
 050—134 New York  
 135—158 New Jersey  
 159—211 Pennsylvania  
 212—220 Maryland  
 221—222 Delaware  
 223—231 Virginia  
 232—236 West Virginia/  
           North Carolina  
 237—246 North Carolina  
 247—251 South Carolina  
 252—260 Georgia  
 261—267 Florida  
           (+ 589—595)  
 268—302 Ohio  
 303—317 Indiana  
 318—361 Illinois  
 362—386 Michigan  
 387—399 Wisconsin  
 400—407 Kentucky  
 408—415 Tennessee  
 416—424 Alabama  
 425—428 Mississippi  
 429—432 Arkansas  
 433—439 Louisiana  
 440—448 Oklahoma  
 449—467 Texas  
 468—477 Minnesota  
 478—485 Iowa  
 486—500 Missouri  
 501—502 North Dakota  
 503—504 South Dakota  
 505—508 Nebraska  
 509—515 Kansas  
 516—517 Montana  
 518—519 Idaho  
 520 Wyoming  
 521—524 Colorado  
 525 New Mexico

526—527 Arizona  
 528—529 Utah  
 530 Nevada  
 531—539 Washington  
 540—544 Oregon  
 545—573 California  
 574 Alaska  
 575—576 Hawaii  
 577—579 Wash. DC  
 580\*\* Virgin Islands  
 581—584 Puerto Rico  
  
 700—728 RR Retirement

#### Added Designations:

585 New Mexico  
 586\*\* Guam, Philippines,  
           N. Mariana Island,  
           American Samoa  
 587 Mississippi  
 588 Mississippi,  
 589—595 Florida  
 596—599 Puerto Rico  
 600—601 Arizona  
 602—626 California  
 627—645 Texas  
 646—647 Utah  
 648—649 New Mexico  
 650—653 Colorado  
 654—657 South Carolina  
 658 South Carolina  
 659—665 Louisiana  
 666 "Unassigned"  
 667—675 Georgia  
 676—679 Arkansas  
 680 Nevada  
 681—690 North Carolina  
 691—699 Virginia  
  
 729—999 UNASSIGNED

(*Italicized numbers* are designated, but are not yet in use.)

( \*\* SSNs in these areas were also assigned to Southeast Asian refugees from April 1975 through November 1979.)

## Social Security Numbers

---

What you can learn from the chart is that if you want to make up a number to reflect your growing up, say, in New York (050-134), it would be a cause for closer questioning by a knowledgeable person if you were presenting an SSN starting out with 575 (Hawaii). Your background story will be much more believable if your SSN "matches" the area where you say you obtained your SSN.

**But NOTE this refinement:** If you were born (your ID, that is) before 1972, you are safer choosing a number that reflects the state you were in when you might most reasonably have applied for an SSN yourself, at say age 16. If you claim you went to high school in Oklahoma, it would be very reasonable for your SSN to have numbers between 440 and 448.

If you were born after 1972, it's much more likely that your parents obtained your SSN so they could claim you as a dependent on their income tax returns, beginning with tax year 1989. The number you need to create should reflect the state where you were living in the late Eighties. In this case, if you claim you were living in South Dakota your number would start with 503 or 504, despite the fact that your family moved to California in 1992.

Sorry for the complications, but this is how the system is working these days. We can thank the explosive expansion of computerized, government-run databases and their insatiable lust for "data matching" for demanding SSNs of the very young. The SSN is the key to your records.

The **second block of numbers** is called the "Group Number." Despite there being only two digits in the group number, it is actually **the key** to the entire numbering system. It serves to break down SSNs for any given state into more manageable groups of numbers. "Manageable?" Yes. Just imagine a huge room filled with filing cabinets in which all Social Security records were kept. The clerks who had to go to any particular filing cabinet would have had their job made all the easier by knowing what "group number" (area of the room) they needed to locate before finding the actual (serial number) account they wanted to retrieve. It was this pre-computer mentality that produced the SSN and its peculiar numbering system.

The group number, logically, could be any number between 01 and 99 ("00" has never been used). Further, the first SSNs could have started at 01 and simply moved up a digit each time that block became fully issued. Well, folks, that's not what really happened and that's certainly not how the system works. The way in which the group number is applied in creating new SSNs resembles more the work of some under-employed code-cracker working in Naval Intelligence during the pre-Hitler years. The system is bizarre, even arcane, but it was also a product of its times, and the bureaucracy had lots of file clerks to do all the searching and filing. From our perspective it seems unnecessary, but it made perfect sense to them. Shall we learn?

As we said above the group number is essentially a "block" of two-digit numbers, which helps organize the massive files of millions of individual records. The assigning of a block number within the area number, however, follows a distinct pattern, which we can spell out in terms of two **RULES** that govern this SSN "logic."

### **Rule No. 1: Odd-Even-Even-Odd**

Although group numbers may range from 01 to 99, groups for a given state are not assigned in a straight numerical order. Rather, they are introduced into the numbering system in a four-part sequence.

The **first** set of group numbers is the **odd numbers below 10**, namely 01—09. They are used in ascending order, 01, 03, 05, 07 and 09.

The **second** set of group numbers are the **even numbers, 10—98**, again used in ascending order, until 98 is completely filled.

The **third** set of group numbers is **even numbers, 02—08**, assigned in ascending order, until the series is filled up.

The **fourth** set of group numbers is all the **odd numbers, 11—99**.

Several interesting facts become obvious once you know this system. If you find out that the currently issued block number in your state is 74, you automatically know that group numbers *above* 74 (odd or even) are *not valid*. You also know that *even numbers* 02 through 08, *plus all odd numbers 11—99* are *invalid*, too. They haven't been issued yet!!

## Social Security Numbers

---

If the block number now issued in your area is 97, only 99 would still be invalid. All the other group numbers would be *valid*.

There is no correlation by "years" in the assignment of group numbers. They have been assigned, as needed, and in the order shown above. A fast-growing state could have gone through a dozen group numbers in a single year; a non-growing state might not have used even one. New Hampshire is only up to 90, still in the second set of group numbers—ever since 1936, at that!! This means that no SSNs with group numbers in the third and fourth sequence (plus even numbers above 90) *have ever been issued in New Hampshire!*

Only eleven states have now gone completely through the above numbering system, and have necessarily been assigned additional, new area numbers. These states are: South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, California, and Puerto Rico. You can check the area number chart for the new, non-sequential numbers now being used by these states. Note, too, that additional numbers have been *designated* for other states, but are not yet in use.

We are presenting a table which indicates the highest group number in use for any area number as of October 1, 1997, courtesy of the SSA. You will find this information very useful if you wish to construct an SSN that will appear valid. And to make sure you understand the logic of this number system, you should study the following examples and the remarks to see clearly how important—and telling—the group number is.

**Example #1** New Hampshire residents (area numbers 001—003) are currently being assigned group number 90 (003-90-1234). Following the rule of Odd-Even-Even-Odd, you can make the following conclusions about SSNs with area numbers 001-003:

1. Any SSN with an odd group number less than 10 may be valid.
2. Any SSN with an even group higher than 90 is invalid (003-96-1234).
3. Any SSN with an even group less than 10 is invalid (003-06-1234).
4. Any SSN with an odd group greater than 10 is also invalid (003-27-1234).

**Example #2** North Dakota (area numbers 501—502) is presently being assigned group number 23. With this fact you can make the following assumptions about SSNs with these area numbers:

1. Any SSN with an odd group number less than 10 may be valid.
2. Any SSN with an even group number may also be valid (502-34-1234, 501-02-1234).
3. Any SSN with an odd group number greater than 23 is invalid (502-79-1234).

### Rule No. 2: Group Rollover

All SSNs with a given group number are issued throughout the entire range of a state's *area numbers* before any with the next group number are issued. The progression of area numbers is from lowest to highest. Using North Dakota (above) as an example, here is what this rule looks like in practice:

1. 501-23-1234 was followed by 501-23-1235.
2. 501-23-9999 was followed by 502-23-0001, not 501-25-0001.
3. 502-23-9999 was followed by 501-25-0001.

In this numbering system the group controls the area, not the other way around. In the case of North Dakota each group number actually controls 20,000 SSNs, split between the area numbers of 501 and 502. In a state with ten area numbers, each group number would control 100,000 SSNs.

New York has 85 area numbers (050—134), with each group number containing 850,000 SSNs. To date the highest group number issued in New York is 86, still less than *half* the possible number of SSNs that can be issued within that state's range of area numbers. Applying what we learned above, no SSN issued in New York will have any even group numbers higher than 86, or between 02—08, or any odd numbers between 11—99. So, are we all clear now on what group numbers are and how they work...? Let's hope so!

## Social Security Numbers

The third block of numbers (called "Serial Numbers") is simply a sequential number assigned as the card was issued. Logically it could be any number between 0001 and 9999. Your choice here. It would probably be good form, however, to create a number that *does* appear random, and not some variation of your birthdate or actual number, your favorite "lucky numbers", or numbers remarkable in some other way.

Another NOTE: No SSN has ever been issued with a serial number of 0000, or a group number of 00, or an area number of 666. Likewise, no SSNs have ever been issued in the 800 or 900 series of area numbers. The series 700 through 728 was assigned only to railroad workers through 1963, and then discontinued. A made-up SSN displaying any of these unassigned numbers would automatically invite uncomfortable questioning by a knowledgeable investigator.

### HIGHEST GROUP NUMBERS NOW IN USE—BY AREA NUMBER & STATE

001—003	90	New Hampshire	416—419	47	Alabama
004	98	Maine	420—424	45	Alabama
005—007	96	Maine	425—426	83	Mississippi
008	82	Vermont	427—428	81	Mississippi
009	80	Vermont	429—430	93	Arkansas
010—030	80	Massachusetts	431—432	91	Arkansas
031—034	78	Massachusetts	433—437	95	Louisiana
035	66	Rhode Island	438—439	93	Louisiana
036—039	64	Rhode Island	440—441	11	Oklahoma
040—047	96	Connecticut	442—448	08	Oklahoma
048—049	94	Connecticut	449—467	99	Texas
050—109	86	New York	468—473	33	Minnesota
110—134	84	New York	474—477	31	Minnesota
135—154	02	New Jersey	478—479	27	Iowa
155—158	98	New Jersey	480—485	25	Iowa
159—211	76	Pennsylvania	486—496	13	Missouri
212—220	49	Maryland	497—500	11	Missouri
221—222	88	Delaware	501—502	23	North Dakota
223—227	79	Virginia	503—504	27	South Dakota
228—231	77	Virginia	505—508	37	Nebraska
232—233	45	North Carolina/ West Virginia	509—511	15	Kansas
			512—515	13	Kansas
234—236	43	North Carolina/ West Virginia	516	31	Montana
			517	29	Montana
237—246	85	North Carolina	518	53	Idaho
247—251	99	South Carolina	519	51	Idaho
252—258	99	Georgia	520	37	Wyoming
259—260	97	Georgia	521—524	99	Colorado
261—267	99	Florida	525	99	New Mexico
268—283	02	Ohio	526—527	99	Arizona
284—302	98	Ohio	528—529	99	Utah
303—309	19	Indiana	530	99	Nevada
310—317	17	Indiana	531	39	Washington
318—327	94	Illinois	532—539	37	Washington
328—361	92	Illinois	540—543	51	Oregon
362—376	21	Michigan	544	49	Oregon
377—386	19	Michigan	545—573	99	California
387—390	17	Wisconsin	574	23	Alaska
391—399	15	Wisconsin	575	79	Hawaii
400—406	51	Kentucky	576	77	Hawaii
407	49	Kentucky	577—578	29	Wash. DC
408—409	83	Tennessee	579	27	Wash. DC
410—415	81	Tennessee	580	31	Virgin Islands

## Social Security Numbers

581—584	99	Puerto Rico	648—649	12	New Mexico
585	99	New Mexico	650	05	Colorado
586	33	Guam, Amer. Samoa, N. Mariana Islands, Philippines	651—653	03	Colorado
			654—657	01	South Carolina
587	81	Mississippi	658	None	South Carolina
588	None	Mississippi	659—665	None	Louisiana
589—594	69	Florida	667—675	None	Georgia
595	67	Florida	676—679	None	Arkansas
596—598	54	Puerto Rico	680	03	Nevada
599	52	Puerto Rico	681—690	None	North Carolina
600—601	71	Arizona	691—699	None	Virginia
602—622	98	California	700—723	18	RR Retirement
623—626	96	California	724	28	RR Retirement
627—635	58	Texas	725—726	18	RR Retirement
636—645	56	Texas	727	10	RR Retirement
646	38	Utah	728	14	RR Retirement
647	36	Utah	729—999	None	UNASSIGNED

### GETTING A NEW SSN

There are a number of ways to obtain a new Social Security Number. Each method has its own advantages and disadvantages, as well as varying levels of difficulty. We can't recommend any one way over another, however, since anyone's needs and situations must be considered individually. One method may be perfect for one person, but perhaps unnecessary or impossible for another. You will simply have to study the different methods described here to see if any particular one is suitable for your purposes.

### ROLL YOUR OWN...

The first and easiest way is to construct your own new SSN using the facts and data from the preceding section. This could be your "disposable" SSN to use in all the places that have no right to your real SSN. If you compose the number correctly, the most an informed person could conclude would be that your new SSN seemed to match your background and that the number is not an invalid number.

If you do decide to construct your own SSN, keep in mind the following information:

1. Select a valid **area number** that matches your claimed background, that is, the state in which you resided at the time you most likely would have obtained your SSN.
2. Select a valid **block number** that is *not higher* than the highest number issued for the area number you have selected. You can determine this from the chart.
3. Select a **block number** that was issued *since* your claimed date of birth.\*\*\*
4. Select a valid **serial number** (can't be 0000). It should be a number you can remember easily, but also not a "dead" number (see Death Index, below).

**\*\*\*Special Note:** This could be tricky. Even though Social Security Numbers have been issued now for over sixty years, the states have gone through their allotted block numbers at different rates, and are at many different points on the list of sequenced block numbers. Here is the easiest way to select an *appropriate* block number:

If your background is the same **state** as that in which you obtained your "real" SSN, you would be safe in using the same block number. If you are taking a few years off your age, select a block number two digits higher, for example, from 20 to 22. Don't forget that SSNs go through the sequence of allotted area numbers before the block number is changed. (You could take the years off, also, by simply going one or two digits "up" in the area number, if this is possible for your state.)

## Social Security Numbers

---

If your background is from a different state you will need to refer to the list of block numbers showing the highest number that has been issued to date for that particular state. You will obviously not select a higher block number, but rather one that "goes back" to the approximate time when you might have applied for the SSN. As you know there are 99 possible block numbers, but *only those within the issued sequence for your particular state* are valid. For reference here is the issuing sequence for all states:

Five odd numbers:	01 through 09
Forty-five even numbers:	10 through 98
Four even numbers:	02 through 08
Forty-five odd numbers:	11 through 99

Let's look at a couple examples to see how this might work:

**Example 1.** You claim a background from Nebraska. The chart shows that the highest group number issued is 37, and that it has now been used for all area numbers, 505 through 508. What this means is that in a little over 60 years Nebraska has gone through the first three groups of block numbers, or 54 digits ( $5+45+4$ ), plus the first 14 digits (11 through 37) of the last group of block numbers, for a total of 68 digits. If we wanted to "average" this statistic we could say that Nebraska has advanced at least one block number per year since SSNs were issued in that state. If you want to claim that your SSN was issued, say, 20 years ago, a logical choice of block number would be 20 digits less than 68, or 48. On the scale of consecutive block number digits, the 48th digit is 94 (first five are odd numbers, then the next 43 are even numbers—a total of 48 digits). A very *logical* choice for your SSN's block number would thus be 94.

**Example 2.** You moved to California as a teenager and soon got your first job ten years ago, around 1989. We see from the chart that California has gone through the entire 99 digits of the block number series using the area numbers 545 through 573. A new series of area numbers, 602 through 626, has now advanced into block number 98. This means that California has gone through the first 99 digits plus an additional 50 digits (five odd plus 45 even) for a total of 149 digits.

Again, if we average the 149 digits into approximately 60 years, we find that California has gone through about 2.5 block numbers per year. In the ten years since you applied for your SSN, about 25 block numbers have been used. If we deduct 25 block numbers from 98 (even numbers only, remember) we arrive at block number 48, which was very possibly the highest block number in use about ten years ago.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** These examples are meant only to illustrate a reasonable process for ascertaining the likely block number in use within a few years in the past. It may or may not prove accurate depending on population trends and recent changes in the laws relating to issuance of SSNs to young children.

Another way to get a fix on what block number was in use in different states in past years would be to inquire of people you know from other states who might be about your same age. Just ask them what the middle two digits of their SSNs are, and you'll be close enough.

As a final aid to any calculations you might want to make regarding block numbers we offer the following chart which simply numbers *sequentially* the actual issuing order of block numbers. This will make your math a bit more certain. This is the order in which block numbers are issued after a state's area numbers have been filled.

You would not want to use this number, however, in situations involving the IRS, such as employment, since verification checks will ultimately be made. Employers must report earnings at least quarterly, and the IRS has an open door to Social Security records. If you did supply your disposable SSN to a new employer, soon after the first quarter for which your earnings were reported he would receive a notice that your SSN was "incorrect." Naturally, he's going to expect you to supply your "correct" SSN. You might finesse your situation for another three months, but if your SSN doesn't fly, you might.

## Social Security Numbers

Order	Block No.								
1	01	21	40	41	80	61	23	81	63
2	03	22	42	42	82	62	25	82	65
3	05	23	44	43	84	63	27	83	67
4	07	24	46	44	86	64	29	84	69
5	<u>09</u>	25	48	45	88	65	31	85	71
6	10	26	50	46	90	66	33	86	73
7	12	27	52	47	92	67	35	87	75
8	14	28	54	48	94	68	37	88	77
9	16	29	56	49	96	69	39	89	79
10	18	30	58	50	<u>98</u>	70	41	90	81
11	20	31	60	51	02	71	43	91	83
12	22	32	62	52	04	72	45	92	85
13	24	33	64	53	06	73	47	93	87
14	26	34	66	54	<u>08</u>	74	49	94	89
15	28	35	68	55	11	75	51	95	91
16	30	36	70	56	13	76	53	96	93
17	32	37	72	57	15	77	55	97	95
18	34	38	74	58	17	78	57	98	97
19	36	39	76	59	19	79	59	99	99
20	38	40	78	60	21	80	61		

If you only wanted the job for a few months, however, you would simply take your SSN with you, and the employer would never be the wiser. Many years later, when you decide to retire, you can actually apply for earnings credit based on the fictitious SSN, so long as you can document its use and the earnings. After all, the SSA is only there to help!!

Likewise, if your state's department of motor vehicles isn't now requiring an SSN with your application for a license, or renewal, it soon will be. You can count on having the SSN you submit verified during the application process. You will find more on this SSN use in our chapter on Drivers Licenses.

### CAUTION: THE DEATH INDEX

Another verification procedure, which can directly affect your use of a disposable, SSN is the practice of checking it against what is officially called the Social Security Death Master File. The unofficial name is the "Death Records Index," or simply, the "Death Index." The Death Index is simply the listing of all known persons who had an SSN and who are now dead. The primary users have always been banks, as they are obligated to assist in the orderly settlement of accounts of deceased persons, and to make sure their safe deposit boxes are closed. Because banks are already in the practice of clearing SSNs with the Death Index, your disposable SSN will receive the same treatment. Imagine your surprise should the manager tell you that your number is already dead. This is an embarrassment you should try to avoid. The solution is to check your number first, to make sure it's not already in the Death Index. We will show you how to this.

The Death Index has always been part of SSA's record keeping, but in recent years there has been increasing interest by the public, especially because of its genealogical content. Under the Freedom of Information Act, SSA has been compelled to release it to anyone who can pay the price, currently \$1725 for a one-time order of the file. A quarterly subscription costs \$6,900, but updates on a quarterly, semi-annual, or annual basis are also available. The file is available on magnetic tape and CD-ROM formats. If you want to purchase this file, contact:

## Social Security Numbers

---

U.S. Department of Commerce  
National Technical Information Services  
5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161  
Tele: 1-800-553-6847 FAX: 1-703-321-8199 Website: <http://gits.gov>

The Death Index contains over 50 million records created from SSA payment records. The following information is available for each decedent (if the data are available to SSA): The SSN, name, date of birth, date of death, state or county of residence, ZIP code of last residence, and ZIP code of lump sum payment. The SSA does not have a death record for all persons, so the absence of a particular person is not proof that this person is alive.

*Of course* you don't actually have to *BUY* this service to take advantage of it. In fact, you can use it for free, or at very little cost. There are several possibilities.

The first is to write SSA directly that you simply "want to learn if the following SSN has been reported to the Death Master File." Give them the number (your composed SSN), a money order for \$7.00, and your return address. Send your letter to: Freedom of Information Officer, 3-A-6 Operations Building, 6401 Security Blvd., Baltimore, MD 21235. Their records are arranged by the SSN, so you don't actually need to supply any information beyond the actual SSN you are inquiring about. Since deceased person's have no privacy rights, and if SSA finds that indeed your SSN has been reported, you will receive a copy of that person's SS-5 (original Application for a Social Security Card) with that person's name, place of birth, and parents' names that were given when he or she applied for the number.

(The reverse situation is also possible. If you want to find out the SSN of a deceased person, send a money order for \$16.50, along with the person's full name, date and place of birth, and parents' full names, if known. They will search their records and send you a copy of the original SS-5 plus the SSN that was issued to that person.)

About 1990 the Mormon Church purchased the Death Records Index, and has since placed copies in their libraries across the country. We know of many individuals who have been graciously assisted in their search for genealogical information by this church. They do not charge for access to these records, and the kindly ladies might just invite you home for lemonade and apple pie. They are very skilled at "family history" information, and could be a real resource should you need them. They're also very nice people!

The third area of assistance with the Death Index is on the Internet. We have not done business with these folks, so all the usual precautions would apply. You can at least see what they have to offer. You can check out these services:

Ancestry.com	<a href="http://www.ancestry.com/ssdi/advanced.htm">http://www.ancestry.com/ssdi/advanced.htm</a>
Ancestry HomeTown	<a href="http://www.ancestry.com/">http://www.ancestry.com/</a>
Banner Blue/Broderbund	<a href="http://www.familytreemaker.comfacds.html">www.familytreemaker.comfacds.html</a> .

A fourth possibility is CSRA, 23 Rocky Knoll, Irvine, CA 92715. They offer their version of the Nationwide Death Index, which can be accessed by telephone (\$8 per search with credit card) and also online (\$1 per search after payment of a \$25 sign-up fee).

There are undoubtedly other services providing access to the Death Index, and we would hope that our readers would advise us of them as they are discovered. You certainly don't have to pay a fortune to find out this kind of information, and competition will likely keep charges in the reasonable range.

You have no duty to provide your SSN to anyone unless there is a lawful obligation to do so, such as when filing your 1040, filling out a W-4 for employment, applying for a U.S. passport, or actually applying for Social Security benefits. Many individuals and organizations may ask for your SSN, but they will be in no position to *verify* your number directly with SSA. You can refuse to give them your real SSN (and they in turn may refuse to give you the service you seek...), but why jeopardize your privacy by appearing so "different," and therefore worthy of notice? Go



## Social Security Numbers

---

ahead and give them your *throwaway* SSN, make them happy, and get what it is that you want from them. They will have no access to any "master file" of SSNs, and wouldn't make any effort to verify it anyway. Chances are they are simply asking for it because the designer of the business form they use happened to include this request, and now Susie Clerk is expecting you to "fill out the form." Feel free to give it to her, and smile.

### GETTING A NEW SSN FROM SSA ITSELF

You can also get a new SSN directly from SSA, but you must meet some rather specific and demanding criteria. We will detail these below, but you should realize that even if SSA provides you with a new SSN, it will be "cross-referred" (to use their term) electronically with your original SSN. This may not offer you the necessary level of security or privacy you seek, since you could almost count on the "linked" SSNs slipping out later into the wrong hands. If your old SSN brought you troubles, it will function more like an "evil twin." You may never know when it might pop up and bite you in the rear. But we don't want to misspeak here. You should know that there definitely are situations which justify the issuing of new SSNs, and we are providing this information directly from SSA itself.

In all applications for new SSNs, the burden is very much on the applicant to document and prove the need for a new SSN. Think of the bureaucrats at SSA as more than just "father confessors," however. These folks will expect little short of groveling with the heart of a penitent before acceding to your request for a new SSN. They will want full documentation, third party information, and conformity to their own parameters of what constitutes the right "level of evidence." Ready for the details?

#### Evidence Requirements

The level of evidence required to justify the assignment of a new SSN depends on the nature of the request.

The first way a new SSN can be assigned is based on SSA records themselves in cases of (1) sequential SSNs issued to members of the same family; (2) scrambled earnings cases; and (3) wrong number cases. You might consider these justifications a form of bookkeeping by SSA—they just want to keep their files in order, making sure all the proper earnings are credited to the correct SSNs. Their own clerks sometimes make mistakes in processing original applications, files can get mixed, and some individuals are assigned SSNs incorrectly. The remedy for SSA is to issue new SSNs to some of these cases. If you happen to find yourself in a situation that resembles these, you can make a rather straightforward request for a new SSN, and they might even thank you for bringing it to their attention. (But don't forget: these people seldom smile.)

If you find you can avail yourself of this number-change possibility, it would behoove you to ask if your new SSN will be "cross-referred" to the old SSN. If the error was totally their fault, such as assigning you an SSN already issued to someone else (it happens!), you could argue that no possible good could ever come from having the erroneous number linked to yours. But just for the record, the SSA states, "*For integrity reasons, SSA policy is to cross-refer electronically in our record all SSNs assigned to an individual.*" There is one stated exception, however, which we will detail shortly.

A second way to obtain a new SSN is to claim religious or cultural objection to certain numbers or digits in the assigned SSN. You must provide a signed, written statement thoroughly explaining the basis for the objection. You will have to demonstrate that you believe certain numbers/digits in your SSN negatively influence other aspects of your life. The objection must be firmly rooted in your religious beliefs or cultural traditions, and the objectionable numbers/digits must actually exist in your SSN.

Examples: Objection to the digits "666" is a *religious* based objection (Revelation 13:18, the "Sign of the Beast"). The digits do not have to be consecutive, either. Also, the number "13" can be shown to be a *culturally* based objection, and can be accepted with proper documentation.

## Social Security Numbers

---

But the following "religious/cultural" objections will not work: Objection to certain numbers/digits which are *derived* by adding, subtracting, dividing or multiplying the digits in the SSN to get a certain number or digit, for example, "999" turned upside down becomes "666", or "2" plus "4" equals "6". Objection to certain numbers/digits because they sound like objectionable words in another language is not a religious or culturally based objection. Objection to the SSN in its entirety or to certain digits because you personally perceive them to be "unlucky" is not a cultural/religious objection (it is instead a "personal problem").

The third way to obtain a new SSN is to provide evidence that shows you are being disadvantaged by the misuse of your SSN. This is definitely a viable possibility for obtaining a new SSN, but the path goes through a veritable minefield of bureaucratic interpretation. You will have to know and understand *exactly* what is expected of you, and the reasons and justifications which will work and those that will *not* work. We have gained the following information from SSA sources directly, and will now explain just how this method can be used.

You will first have to understand what SSA means by the terms they use to define this procedure.

**MISUSE** of your SSN means that the number has been used with criminal or harmful intent and must be the cause of your problems. It is **not** misuse for a credit bureau to use your SSN as an identifier for recordkeeping purposes. It is **not** misuse for an apartment complex to use your SSN to check your credit history or possible criminal background. It **IS** misuse for someone else to apply for a credit card with your SSN; but using only your name and other identifying information is not misuse. For someone to furnish your SSN to a police officer when stopped for a traffic violation is misuse of your SSN; furnishing only the name of another person is not SSN misuse.

**DISADVANTAGED** by misuse of your SSN means that the misuse has caused you to be subjected to a negative economic or personal hardship. The disadvantage has to be recent (has affected you in the last year), or ongoing (happened further in the past, but continues still). You are **disadvantaged** if the past misuse of your SSN causes you to be arrested whenever you are stopped for a traffic violation. (The disadvantage of the SSN misuse is ongoing.) You are **disadvantaged** if misuse of your SSN caused a recent application for a home mortgage to be denied. You are **not disadvantaged** if your SSN was misused to obtain credit two years ago, but the credit bureau corrected the credit report or added a cautionary statement to contact you first, and you were not denied credit subsequent to the correction of your credit report.

To make any of these claims you will need **third party evidence** documenting actual SSN misuse, as well as your evidence that you have been disadvantaged by the misuse. The evidence must show that the disadvantage is recent or ongoing (it has affected you in the last year, or it happened in the past but continues). The evidence can show that the SSN misuse occurred in the past but the *disadvantage must be recent*. Third party evidence is the information from an unbiased, impartial source other than the principal parties involved, such as the results of a police investigation. The evidence should show that the misuse of the SSN is the cause of the problem.

Sufficient third party evidence includes but is not limited to: 1) Police records/reports that show incidences of misuse of the SSN by other individuals for illegal purposes, such as traffic violations. The report must be the result of an investigation not solely based on your allegations to the police; 2) Letters of verification from prosecuting or district attorneys (not your own attorney), banks, businesses or firms involved in the dispute such as utility companies, hospitals and stores showing misuse of the SSN; 3) Letters from creditors or credit bureaus which clearly state that someone other than you used the SSN to obtain credit.

**NOTE:** All letters and reports submitted as evidence must be dated and signed by the writer and must be on official letterheads, as appropriate to the situation. SSA will verify the source if there is any question as to authenticity.

Sufficient third party evidence that establishes *recent disadvantage* includes but is not limited to: 1) Letters from credit bureaus or companies denying credit to you; 2) Credit reports showing negative information/remarks such as "referred for collections" or "overdue". 3) Letters from businesses demanding payment for purchases or services you did not authorize; 4) Court documentation such as a warrant, ticket or other notice showing that you have been arrested or detained or are required to appear in court.

## Social Security Numbers

---

If you request a new SSN for any of the above reasons your application will be approved by the Field Office (local SSA office you can visit in person). It will require the signatures of the clerk who conducts your in-person interview as well as that of a "management designated" employee. Suffice to say the SSA does not consider these requests by any means "routine." You can count on close attention to your application, so be prepared.

The **fourth way** to obtain a new SSN is based a claim of harassment, abuse or life endangerment. Individuals who are being harassed, abused or whose lives are endangered by others can request a new SSN if they believe it will offer protection by preventing the abuser from locating them through their current SSN. Typically, in cases like these the victim has already made efforts on their own to escape the abuse through a change of name and address, perhaps several times.

If you believe you might qualify under this method of SSN change, there are several elements in your evidence that you will have to prove. Don't forget, the burden is entirely on you to convince the SSA that your situation qualifies, so read carefully.

### -----A VERY IMPORTANT UPDATE-----

It is now easier for battered women and other victims of abuse to change their SSNs to avoid being tracked. Vice President Al Gore announced in early November 1998, that victims would be able to get new SSNs by providing written evidence of domestic violence from a local shelter, a treating physician or law enforcement official. Until now, as you have already read, the SSA required victims to prove not only that they were abused but *that their abuser had misused the victim's SSN*.

So there will be no misunderstanding, we have the following statement from SSA regarding this change in policy:

The change in policy is that the applicant will **no longer be required to prove the harasser/abuser is misusing (or has misused) the SSN** to carry out the harassment/abuse or cause the individual harm, or absent evidence of SSN misuse, that the harassment/abuse is of an extremely severe nature and extent. The individual requesting a new SSN based on harassment/abuse or life endangerment must still provide evidence that he/she is being harassed/abused/endangered.

Below is a summary of what is still required to support the request for a new SSN in these situations:

- A mandatory in-person interview if the applicant is age 18 or older.
- The applicant's signed statement thoroughly explaining the reasons for needing the new SSN and what steps he/she has taken to escape/avoid the abuser.
- Current credible third party evidence documenting the harassment/abuse/life endangerment.
- Evidence needed for an original SSN (i.e., age, identity, and U.S. citizenship or lawful alien status).
- Evidence documenting the individual's old and new identities, if the individual has changed his/her name.
- A signed application.

The decision to approve or deny the individual's request for a new SSN in these cases will still be made in our central office in Baltimore, MD.

In cases that do not demonstrate current or prior SSN misuse, SSA will consider requests for new SSNs based on the **extremely severe nature and extent of the harassment/abuse/endangerment**, if they can reasonably presume the abuser will do anything, including misusing the victim's SSN to locate him or her to carry out the harassment/abuse/endangerment. We will leave to your imagination the kinds of situations which might qualify under this heading. Suffice to say there are individuals who could well take advantage of this justification for changing their SSN, and for their own protection they should do so.

It is also the policy of SSA to extend protection to other members of the victim's household. Thus, if one family member meets the requirements for a second SSN and new SSNs are

## Social Security Numbers

---

requested for other family members in the same household, it is not necessary to establish harassment/abuse/endangerment for each member of the household. It is assumed that the abuse is likely affecting all members of the same household, and that everyone should be protected equally.

If minor children are involved, they can receive new SSNs, also, if the requesting parent states that he/she has legal custody, and there is not a court ruling showing otherwise or the court records are unavailable. You will have to pay any fees necessary for obtaining copies of court records. If the other parent later secures legal custody of the child, he/she will have to request information about the child's new name (if there is one) and SSN from SSA's Privacy Officer, who will review the case first before responding directly.

The application for a new SSN based on this kind of evidence can be made at your local SSA office, but the approval will come from headquarters. The old and new SSNs will not be cross-referred on the system (electronically), but will be *manually* cross-referred in a secured headquarters location. The reason for this should be obvious, namely, that at some future date a claim for disability or retirement might be made, and the records of both SSNs should be used to determine eligibility, level of benefit, etc. Until that time, however, you will have to assume that the two SSNs will in fact remain apart and not available through some electronic link-up.

If you already have two SSNs and want a third, you will have to present evidence that subsequent to the date the second SSN was assigned, you continued to be harassed or abused, and the abuser has found out the new SSN and name, if it was changed. But note: SSA will not assign a third SSN just because you changed your name after you obtained the second SSN. (You should do that before applying for a second SSN; it's also good "evidence" of your need for protection.) In this regard, they will also not delete your name from the record of the second SSN; again, their reason being to maintain the integrity of your file.

You will have to attend an in-person interview to begin the application for a new SSN on the basis of harassment, abuse, or life endangerment. On Form SSA-795 you will be asked to provide the following information:

1. Your reason for wanting a new SSN.
2. How your SSN is being misused.
3. The nature and severity of the harassment/abuse or possible life endangerment.
4. What you have done to escape/avoid the harassment/abuse, etc.
5. Why you believe a new SSN will protect you.

The clerk will advise you that it would be best to change your name before applying for the new SSN so there will be no record of the old name on the new SSN. You will also be told that you will have to be able explain later, when applying for benefits, why you have two SSNs, and that you will have to identify yourself under both the old and new names if the SSNs are under two different names.

### GETTING AN SSN "LATE IN LIFE"

The perennial problem facing many paper trippers is needing to apply for a new Social Security Number "late in life." Until only a few years ago most people would have obtained an SSN sometime in their late teens. Today, of course, parents have the option of securing SSNs for their newborns should they want to claim them as dependents on their federal tax returns. It just doesn't seem "normal" if someone now in his late twenties, or even older, appears at an SSA office and casually seeks to apply for an SSN. He must produce paperwork and submit to a personal interview with at best a very suspicious bureaucrat. "You've *never* had a Social Security Number before...?" "Uh, well, yeah, I never did get one. Can you help me?"

At the end of this chapter you will find the full application for an SSN, including explanatory remarks, requirements, etc. We don't want to bore you here with those details; you can study the forms for yourself. What you need most is your "story" of why you are now, at this stage in life, finally applying for an SSN.

To begin with, it is perfectly legal to apply for an SSN at any age. It is also perfectly legal NOT to have an SSN. If you have no obligation to pay income taxes, don't need a bank account, don't need a drivers license, and plan to take care of your own retirement, you could con-

## Social Security Numbers

---

ceivably live your entire life without an SSN of your own. Chances are you already have an SSN, however, but now find it necessary, for whatever good reason, to obtain a NEW SSN, directly from the good folks at SSA. And the easiest way to get a new number is if you've never had one before, right? Of course. So let's consider some reasonable situations why you, now thirtysomething, are at the SSA window applying for your first SSN...

1. Women definitely have an easier time of convincing an SSA clerk why they never applied for their SSN until "later in life." Easiest reason: They never had to get a job. Daddy took care of everything. (Or maybe their pimp did.) They were married to criminals who provided a cash-only type existence. They have been perpetual students abroad, and now face the unpleasant reality of having to function in an uneducated world. They might have been religious novices who finally discovered they were not cut out for the celibate scheme of boredom and sacrifice. They perhaps only just discovered that their family trust fund was no longer solvent, thanks to their accountant making off with all the tax-exempt bonds. Whatever will I do now...? And it was only about thirty or so years ago that most women *didn't* have a job, but stayed home in Pleasantville. Yes, it's true!
2. Men are expected to have a job, which means paying income taxes, which means having an SSN. Why wouldn't a man have a tax-paying form of employment? First, he could also be from a wealthy family living off tax-exempt investments, for which no 1040 is required. The right attitude would help with this situation, with an absolute disdain for even having to "appear" in such a place, let alone "ask" for assistance from an inferior.
3. Men can also use the extended-education-abroad ploy, especially if they appear to be the "learned" type (befuddled, quizzical, even helpless). The religious experience is also valid for men, since most established religious orders do not participate in Social Security programs, and members do not typically have taxable income. A jovial piety would seem appropriate in this situation.
4. A variation of the "abroad" excuse is simply to state that the person has been living abroad for a number of years, period. Perhaps he was employed by non-U.S. companies, and never knew that he had to file a federal tax return, and thus needs to get an SSN. Maybe he just lived off the kindness of strangers who found him irresistibly charming. Maybe his foreign benefactor finally died, and the family kicked him out. There must be any number of interesting reasons for living outside the U.S., and if the living was so great why would anyone want to come back just to pay taxes...?
5. At the other end of the social spectrum are individuals who have been incarcerated or institutionalized for an extended period, and whose social worker or parole officer has directed them to apply for their SSN so they can become taxpayers—at last. Again, the right appearance and attitude can carry the day. One of our readers wrote us that his Hell's Angels "persona" coupled with this "information" always got results: He would tell the nervous bureaucrat that he had just been released, thanks to a legal technicality, from the state hospital for the criminally insane. He added that he actually liked it with all the wackos, but that having to come get an SSN so he could get a job was starting to get him "upset," and that he couldn't predict what might happen if he didn't get his medication within the next 30 minutes, because he forgot to take it that morning, and, you know, the reason they put me there in the first place was that I got so mad at a guy I tore him apart with my bare hands, and he actually looked a lot like you. Stare, stare
6. Another "inmate" actually took along his prison release papers to show that his previous employment did not require an SSN, and that now he had to comply with his parole by getting a paying job. And he really didn't want to go back to prison....

## Social Security Numbers

---

7. We've also heard of people who simply state that they've always worked (hustled) for cash and have never paid taxes. They have now decided to "go legit" and want to do regular banking with checks, credit cards, etc. Or perhaps the IRS has gotten to them and convinced them that paying taxes is the "honest, American" thing to do. In any event, they easily talk themselves into a late in life SSN after inviting the clerk to check out the fine line of Rolex watches they're selling out in the parking lot. The friendly salesman approach will be most effective. Smile.
8. A "loophole" exists in the current rules for application for an SSN. If you are 18 or older you must apply in person. If you are an infant or incapable of applying for yourself, those "responsible" for you must supply *their* SSNs on your application. If, however, you are under 18 and can apply for yourself, you can mail in your application just like everybody used to do in the old days. What some people will do is secure a school ID (just like it says in the instructions), a birth certificate showing their age to be under 18, and mail in their application. They will receive their new SSN by mail within a few weeks.

Won't there be "problems" using such a number? you ask. The answer is no. Earnings will be reported, and taxes paid. The IRS will gain a new taxpayer. The number is a "real" SSN. When it comes time to retire, the person could rely on his original number (assuming he had at least seven years of income credit paid into Social Security), and "add" to it the earnings under the second SSN. Many people have worked with different SSNs during their careers, and the SSA is used to people making such claims. All the person has to do is *prove* that he was the same person all along. If the right records were kept it will be no problem. The parallel situation to this, which SSA has dealt with all along, was that of women who never obtained an SSN of their own, but might later have claimed benefits under two or more husbands' SSNs. SSA just needs the right records to "document" the claim.

### THE FORMS YOU WILL NEED TO USE

The balance of this chapter includes the actual SSA forms used for application for a Social Security card. The instructions are essentially self-explanatory. As we've always said, "Give them the paper they want, and you'll get the paper you want."

UDPATE-----UPDATE-----UPDATE-----UPDATE-----UPDATE-----UPDATE

We have noted in several places throughout this book the pending crisis resulting from the federal government's two-fisted blow against privacy and freedom, namely the requirement that the states place SSN on drivers licenses and that the Department of Health and Human Services create a "unique health identifier" for individuals. We have pointed out these obvious evils and speculated that forces would rise up against them.

And indeed they have! In late 1998 Congress included in its appropriation to the Department of Transportation a provision against using any funds in this fiscal year to implement a Congressional mandate that, in essence, would require states to place the SSN on all drivers licenses after October 2000. Similarly, the funding for DHHS includes language saying that no funds may be used to "promulgate or enact any final standard...providing for the assignment of a unique health identifier for an individual" until Congress specifically authorizes this. The public objected, with very good reason, and Congress backed off.

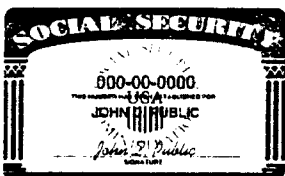
As we speculated, conservative Christians, civil libertarians, and even state bureaucrats and legislators (gotta protect their turf, you know!!) deluged the departments with objections, enough so that Rep. David M. McIntosh, R-Ind., convened a hearing Sept. 17 of his Government Oversight Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs to allow witnesses to blast the schemes. There is now sentiment in Congress to repeal both measures. We certainly hope they do.

## SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

### Application for a Social Security Card

Inside is the form you need to apply for a Social Security card. You can also use this form to replace a lost card or to change your name on your card. This service is free. But before you go on to the form, please read through the rest of this page. We want to cover some facts you should know before you apply.

#### IF YOU HAVE NEVER HAD A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER



If you were born in the U.S. and have never had a Social Security number, you must complete this form and show us documents that show your age, citizenship, and who you are. Usually, all we need from you are:

- Your birth certificate; AND
- Some form of identity, such as a driver's license, school record, or medical record. See page 2 for more examples.

We prefer to see your birth certificate. However, we will accept a hospital record of your birth made before you were 5 years old, or a religious record of your age or birth made before you were 3 months old. **We must see original documents or certified copies. Uncertified photocopies are not acceptable.** You may apply at any age, but if you are 18 or older when you apply for your first Social Security card, **you must apply in person. Please see the special requirements on page 4 if you were born outside the U.S., if you are not a U.S. citizen or if you need a card for a child.**

#### IF YOU NEED TO REPLACE YOUR CARD

To replace your card, all we usually need is one type of identification and this completed form. See page 2 for examples of documents we will accept. If you were born outside the U.S., you must also submit proof of U.S. citizenship or lawful alien status. Examples of the documents we will accept are on page 4. **Remember, we must see original documents or certified copies.**

#### IF YOU NEED TO CHANGE YOUR NAME ON YOUR CARD

If you already have a number, but need to change your name on our records, we need this completed form and a document that identifies you by both your old and new names. Examples include a marriage certificate, a divorce decree or a court order that changes your name. Or, we will accept two documents—one with your old name and one with your new name. See page 2 for examples of documents we will accept. If you were born outside the U.S., you must also show proof of U.S. citizenship or lawful alien status. Examples of documents we will accept are on page 4.

#### HOW TO APPLY

First complete this form, using the instructions on page 2. Then take or mail it to the nearest Social Security office. Be sure to take or mail the originals or certified copies of your documents along with the form. We will return your documents right away.

#### IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about this form, or about the documents you need to show us, please contact any Social Security office. A telephone call will help you make sure you have everything you need to apply for your card.

---

**DOCUMENTS THAT  
SHOW YOUR  
IDENTITY**

Here are some examples of identity documents that we will accept.

- Driver's license
- U.S. government or state employee ID card
- Your passport
- School ID card, record, or report card
- Marriage or divorce record
- Health insurance card
- Clinic, doctor, or hospital records
- Military records
- Court order for name change
- Adoption records
- Church membership or confirmation record (if not used as evidence of age)
- Insurance policy

We will NOT accept a birth certificate or hospital record as proof of your identity. We will accept other documents if they have enough information to identify you. **Remember, we must see original documents or copies certified by the county clerk or other official who keeps the record.**

---

**HOW TO COMPLETE  
THE FORM**

Most questions on the form are self-explanatory. The questions that need explanation are discussed below. The numbers match the numbered questions on the form. **If you are completing this form for someone else, please answer the questions as they apply to that person.** Then, sign your own name in question 16.

1. Your card will show your full first, middle, and last names **unless you show otherwise.** If you have ever used another name, show it on the third line. You can show more than one name on this line. Do not show a nickname unless you have used it for work or business.
2. Show the address where you want your card mailed. If you do not usually get mail at this address, please show an "in care of address", for example, c/o John Doe, 1 Elm Street, Anytown, U.S.A. 00000.
3. If you check "other" under Citizenship, please attach a statement that explains your situation and why you need a Social Security number.
5. You do not have to answer our question about race/ethnic background. We can issue you a Social Security card without this information. However, this information is important. We use it to study and report on how Social Security programs affect different people in our nation. Of course, we use it only for statistical reports and do not reveal the identities of individuals.
13. If the date of birth you show in item 6 is different from the date of birth you used on an earlier application, show the date of birth you used on the earlier application on this line.
16. If you cannot sign your name, sign with an "X" mark and have two people sign beneath your mark as witnesses.



# SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

## Application for a Social Security Card

Form Approved  
OMB No. 0960-0066

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Please read "How To Complete This Form" on page 2.
- Print or type using black or blue ink. DO NOT USE PENCIL.
- After you complete this form, take or mail it along with the required documents to your nearest Social Security office.
- If you are completing this form for someone else, answer the questions as they apply to that person. Then, sign your name in question 16.

<b>1 NAME</b> <small>To Be Shown On Card</small>  FULL NAME AT BIRTH <small>IF OTHER THAN ABOVE</small>  OTHER NAMES USED	FIRST _____ FULL MIDDLE NAME _____ LAST _____ FIRST _____ FULL MIDDLE NAME _____ LAST _____
<b>2 MAILING ADDRESS</b> <small>Do Not Abbreviate</small>	STREET ADDRESS, APT. NO., PO BOX, RURAL ROUTE NO. _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____
<b>3 CITIZENSHIP</b> <small>(Check One)</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Citizen <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Alien Allowed To Work <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Alien Not Allowed To Work <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Student Allowed Restricted Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Conditionally Legalized Alien Allowed To Work <input type="checkbox"/> Other (See Instructions On Page 2)
<b>4 SEX</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
<b>5 RACE/ETHNIC DESCRIPTION</b> <small>(Check One Only—Voluntary)</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian, Asian-American Or Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Black (Not Hispanic) <input type="checkbox"/> North American Indian Or Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> White (Not Hispanic)
<b>6 DATE OF BIRTH</b> MONTH DAY YEAR _____	<b>7 PLACE OF BIRTH</b> <small>(Do Not Abbreviate)</small> CITY _____ STATE OR FOREIGN COUNTRY _____ FCI _____
<b>8 MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME</b>	FIRST _____ FULL MIDDLE NAME _____ LAST NAME AT HER BIRTH _____
<b>9 FATHER'S NAME</b>	FIRST _____ FULL MIDDLE NAME _____ LAST _____
<b>10 Has the person in item 1 ever received a Social Security number before?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (If "yes", answer questions 11-13.) <input type="checkbox"/> No (If "no", go on to question 14.) <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know (If "don't know", go on to question 14.)	
<b>11 Enter the Social Security number previously assigned to the person listed in item 1.</b> □ □ □ - □ □ - □ □ □ □	
<b>12 Enter the name shown on the most recent Social Security card issued for the person listed in item 1.</b> FIRST _____ MIDDLE _____ LAST _____	
<b>13 Enter any different date of birth if used on an earlier application for a card.</b> MONTH DAY YEAR _____	
<b>14 TODAY'S DATE</b> MONTH DAY YEAR _____	<b>15 DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER</b> ( ) _____ AREA CODE _____
<small>DELIBERATELY FURNISHING (OR CAUSING TO BE FURNISHED) FALSE INFORMATION ON THIS APPLICATION IS A CRIME PUNISHABLE BY FINE OR IMPRISONMENT, OR BOTH.</small>	
<b>16 YOUR SIGNATURE</b> _____	<b>17 YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE PERSON IN ITEM 1 IS:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Self <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Or Adoptive Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE (FOR SSA USE ONLY)							
NPN		DOC		NTI		CAN	
PBC	EVI	EVA	EVC	PRA	NWR	DNR	UNIT
EVIDENCE SUBMITTED					SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF EMPLOYEE(S) REVIEWING EVIDENCE AND/OR CONDUCTING INTERVIEW  _____ DATE _____ DCI _____ DATE _____		

Form SS-5

---

**IF YOU ARE A  
UNITED STATES  
CITIZEN BORN  
OUTSIDE THE U.S.**

If you are a United States citizen who was born outside the U.S., we need to see your consular report of birth (FS-240 or FS-545), if you have one. We also need to see one form of identification. See page 2 for examples of identity documents we will accept.

If you do not have your consular report of birth, we will need to see your foreign birth certificate and one of the following: a U.S. Citizen ID card, U.S. passport, Certificate of Citizenship, or a Certificate of Naturalization. Remember, you must show us the original documents.

---

**IF YOU  
ARE NOT A  
U.S. CITIZEN**

If you are not a U.S. citizen, you must show us your birth certificate or passport, and the documents given to you by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). **We must see original documents, not photocopies.** Examples of INS documents are: your Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-151 or I-551) or Form I-94. Because these documents should not be mailed, you should apply in person.

Even though you may not be authorized to work in this country, we can issue you a Social Security card if you are here legally and need it for some other reason. Your card will be marked to show that you cannot work, and if you do, we will notify INS.

---

**IF YOU NEED A  
CARD FOR A CHILD  
OR SOMEONE ELSE**

If you apply for a card for a child or someone else, you need to show us that person's original or certified birth certificate and one more document showing the person's identity. For example, for a child we will accept a doctor or hospital bill, a school record or any similar document that shows the child's identity. For an adult, see page 2 for examples of identity documents we will accept.

**Also, if you sign the form, we need to see some kind of identification for you.** Please see the list on page 2 for examples of documents we will accept. Be sure to answer the questions on the application form as they apply to the person needing the card.

---

**THE PAPERWORK/PRIVACY ACT AND YOUR APPLICATION**

The Social Security Act (sections 205(c) and 702) allows us to collect the facts we ask for on this form. We use most of these facts to assign you a Social Security number or to issue you a card. You do not have to give us these facts, but without them we cannot issue you a Social Security number or a card. Without a number, you could lose Social Security benefits in the future and you might not be able to get a job.

We give out the facts on this form without your consent only in certain situations that are explained in the Federal Register. For example, we must give out this information if Federal law requires us to, if your Congressman or Senator needs the information to answer questions you ask them, or if the Justice Department needs it to investigate and prosecute violations of the Social Security Act.

We may also use the information you give us when we match records by computer. Matching programs compare our records with those of other Federal, State, or local government agencies. Many agencies may use matching programs to find or prove that a person qualifies for benefits paid by the Federal government. The law allows us to do this even if you do not agree to it.

Explanations about these and other reasons why information you provide us may be used or given out are available in Social Security offices. If you want to learn more about this, contact any Social Security Office.

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requires us to notify you that this information collection is in accordance with the clearance requirements of section 3507 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. We may not conduct or sponsor, and you are not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

We estimate that it will take you about 8 minutes to complete this form. This includes the time it will take to read the instructions, gather the necessary facts and fill out the form. If you have comments or suggestions on this estimate, write to the Social Security Administration, ATTN: Reports Clearance Officer, 1-A-21 Operations Bldg., Baltimore, MD 21235-0001. Send only comments relating to our "time it takes" estimate to the office listed above. All requests for Social Security cards and other claims-related information should be sent to your local Social Security office, whose address is listed under Social Security Administration in the U.S. Government section of your telephone directory.

## Chapter XII

# PASSPORTS

All countries issue passports to their citizens who travel abroad. The passport is essentially a document describing the bearer and identifying him with the country that issued it. In a practical sense passports are "international ID," recognized from country to country as legitimate personal identification, which facilitates travel beyond the borders of the holder's home country. Passports typically have between twelve and twenty pages for the printing of visa stamps and any other "official" markings required at airports, border crossings or other places the traveler might be questioned about his "purpose" for being where he is. Ultimately the passport is also the ticket for him to get back into the home country without being challenged as a "foreigner."

This is the plain-vanilla version of passports. Governments would have you think that their passports are sanctified by God, and that only truly deserving individuals can ever hope to acquire one. It's as if they are dispensed as favors to a groveling populace. Indeed, in many totalitarian countries passports are rarely issued at all—the rulers don't allow people to leave, period. In many third world countries the clerks and bureaucrats who process passport applications make very comfortable livings thanks to their being able to "assist" the few wealthy people who can afford to travel. But we will have more to say about these types later in the chapter.

The truth is there is a very dark side to passports. The crumbling of the feudal system in Europe (which tied people to the land and the lord who owned it) brought demands from the upper crust that the hordes of "masterless rabble" carry identification documents to keep them in their place, rather than roam uninhibited throughout the countryside. By the 1550s "internal passports" cropped up in Germany. In the 1700s the document law "intended to sharpen controls on beggars, vagabonds and 'other evil rabble'" was extended to foreigners for the first time.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century foreigners were often scrutinized with suspicion, always more so on the brink of wars. The specifics of the international system we know today began in World War I as a "temporary" security measure, but turned out not to be temporary at all. Not until World War II, however, did U.S. citizens need a passport to ensure their reentry after travels abroad. The Nazis required German Jews to turn in their passports in 1938, and returned them stamped with a big red "J"—an act that made it more difficult for them to get out, and with consequent results. During the Red Scare of the 1950s the U.S. government refused to issue passports to "suspected" Communists, stifling their ability to move about freely. It took a federal lawsuit to stop the practice.

The rise of the Nation State has produced a "need to control" the people who comprise it. Government has a growing need to keep track of each and every person within its borders. It needs to know whom to conscript for the military, whom to keep inside to limit "brain drain," who is eligible for state benefits, and where to find everyone for tax purposes. Today, the passport system acts as a tremendous security fence that keeps in those who "belong" and keeps out those who don't. Thus modern states have expropriated from individuals the legitimate means of movement.

The result has been to deprive people of the freedom to move across certain spaces, and to make them dependent on states for the authorization to do so. People have also become dependent on states for the possession of an "identity" from which they cannot escape. It would not be an exaggeration to say that people have become prisoners of their identities, which, through the use of passports, can effectively limit their opportunities for coming and going.

**Philosophical consideration:** Is it fundamentally more democratic for the state to be the gatekeeper of people's movements, or should such power be granted to private entities accountable to no one? We see a genuine similarity between the feudal system and that represented by the growing profusion of gated communities. Don't we see a local restraint on freedom of movement which the nation-state, in its most altruistic form, had largely eliminated? Is money the new passport...?

### The U.S. PASSPORT

The State Department tells us that only 14 percent of all Americans ever obtain a U.S. passport. Americans, it seems, are a bunch of stay-at-homes. Even more telling, more than half of all Americans are born and die in places less than 50 miles apart. And we've got a big country, folks! So, for those who want to know, we offer the official details for obtaining a U.S. passport.

You can pick up an application, the Form DSP-11 shown in this chapter, at any of some 900 post offices, over 2500 courts and 13 Passport Agencies throughout the United States. The post offices are usually more convenient since they will be near where you live and work. They will tend to be the "main" post office for your area, and it's always a good idea to call first for their "open" hours, since many times only one clerk is assigned and he may have the same lunch hour you have. If you are 13 or older, you will have to apply in person. Once you have completed the form (*don't sign it until the clerk tells you to*) you will need to take along the following items:

**1. Proof of U.S. Citizenship.** This can be a previous U.S. passport or a certified copy of your birth certificate, which should show a registrar's raised, embossed, impressed, or multi-colored seal and the date the certificate was filed with the registrar's office.

If you have neither a passport nor a certified birth certificate, you can bring a notice from the registrar of the state where you were born that no birth record exists. You will need as many as possible from the following: a baptismal certificate, hospital birth record, early census, and school record or family Bible record. These records will have to show your full name and date and place of birth. If you don't have these records, you can still call the passport agent for other documents that can also be used.

**2. Proof of Identity.** This can be a previous U.S. passport, a Certificate of Naturalization or Citizenship, a valid driver's license, government or military I.D., or corporate I.D.

These items should have your picture on them and the name you are using.

**3. Two Photographs.** The photos must be recent (taken within the last six months), identical, 2" X 2", and either color or black & white.

They must show a front view, full face, on a plain, light (white or off-white) background. Vending machine photos will not be accepted.

**4. Social Security Numbers.** Although an SSN is not required for issuance of a passport, Section 603E of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 requires that the applicant provide this information. Passport Services in turn gives this to the IRS routinely.

Failure to provide your SSN could subject you to a \$500 penalty from the IRS. It would be safe to surmise that the list of SSNs submitted with new passport applications is run regularly against that of taxpayers "in trouble" for one reason or another with the IRS. The thinking of the IRS is obvious: You owe taxes and you want to leave the country? Better we should talk first... (Don't they talk like this in the Mafia?)

**5. Fees.** You can have a ten-year passport for \$65. Persons under 18 can get a five-year passport for \$40. Both these charges include a \$10 execution fee. Post offices and passport agencies accept cash, checks or money orders, but courts are not obligated to accept cash.

If you must have your passport within ten days you can pay an additional \$30 expedite fee and provide proof of the need for this service (copy of airline tickets should work). Be sure to include appropriate postage for overnight return of your passport.

#### More Useful Information about U.S. passports

You can apply by mail if you meet certain requirements. If you already have a passport and it is your most recent one, and it was issued within the past 12 years, and you were over 18 at the time it was issued, you can use Form DSP-82, which you can get from almost any travel agent or post offices that accept applications. This "Application For Passport By Mail" will require your most recent passport, two identical passport photos, and a \$55 fee (\$30 expedite fee

## Passports

---

can be added if this service is needed). The \$10 execution fee is waived for eligible applications by mail.

If you are applying in a new name you will have to provide a certified copy of the court order, adoption decree or marriage certificate. Photocopies are not accepted. You will have to apply in person if your name has been changed by any other method. Mail-in applications need to be sent to: National Passport Center, P.O. Box 371971, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7971.

If your passport has been damaged, mutilated, or altered in any way, you will not be able to apply for renewal by mail. You will have to use the regular Form DSP-11 and apply in person.

You should apply several months before anticipated travel, and allow even more time if you will need visas from foreign consulates. If you provide a departure date on your application the passport office will give this consideration in processing your passport promptly. If no date is supplied, they will assume you are not planning any immediate travel and take whatever time they need. You will receive your new passport by mail at whatever address you provide.

For your own security you should take the following steps if you plan to maintain a passport. Make several copies of the identification page; take one with you and keep the others in a safe place, which can be accessed quickly if needed. Take two extra passport photos with you on your trip, and also keep an additional set with the stored copies of the ID page. Provide an address inside the passport to which it can be mailed in case it gets lost (and someone is kind enough to return it.) If you plan to visit many countries and will need additional pages for visas you can request these extra pages with your application. You can also request a 48-page passport at the time you apply.

The newest format of the U.S. passport has anti-forgery features intended to stop smugglers, criminals and illegal immigrants from misusing the 15,000 or so passports reported stolen every year. The State Department claims that the digitized photograph and data page represent the biggest improvement in passport technology in 17 years. The computer-generated images make the passport much less vulnerable to photo substitution.

U.S. law requires a valid passport to enter or leave the country. But there are some nice exceptions to this law. Tourists can travel within U.S. territories and between North, South, and Central America (except Cuba) without a passport. This is an extension of the idea of "walking across the border" to Mexico and Canada. Of course you should always carry at least a photo ID and birth certificate. But why use a passport unless you have to? Most travelers prefer to use their passports simply because it's the kind of document that "speaks all languages," and carries the clout to get past truculent border guards and petty "inspectors" so common in Latin America. So perhaps the best advice is take your passport along, but present it only as a last resort.

An ever-present danger in foreign travel is having your passport lost or stolen. Officially, you need to report this *in writing* to the U.S. Department of State, Passport Services, 1111 19<sup>th</sup> St. N.W., Suite 500, Washington, DC 20522-1705, or to the nearest passport agency. If you are abroad report it to local police authorities and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

You are probably aware of the practice of "selling" U.S. passports, which are then reported lost or stolen. Tourists are approached by very convincing operators who offer \$3-5,000 in cash if the passport holder will simply leave his passport under the pillow and a few days later report the loss. There are hundreds of wrinkles in this game, but the foreigner gets a passport he can sell for much more, and the tourist goes home with some extra nice souvenirs. Except for the hassle of having to make the report, the replacement passport is easily obtained at the nearest consulate. Be prepared, however, to give a detailed description of how, when and where the passport was lost. Was it the taxi ride, or the late night dancing, or was it room service..?

Finally, all individuals, even newborn infants, must obtain a passport in their own name. In the "old" days an entire family could travel on one passport, everybody together in a "group" shot. Maybe they finally figured out that too many scams were being run under the family concept, and they needed to single out people individually for customs, immigration, etc. But then, maybe they just wanted to increase revenues by issuing more passports. So now, families can make \$20-30,000 and put some away for the kids' college funds.... Don't think it doesn't happen.

### FOREIGN or "SECOND" PASSPORTS

Fifteen years ago I suggested to an *American* attorney, whom I regarded as *very bright*, that the concept of paper tripping could be expanded greatly if Americans could obtain passports from foreign countries. I knew he had already traveled extensively in Europe and the Orient, so I felt his experience could be brought directly to the project I had in mind. My suggestion, however, was met with the blankest expression I've ever seen on an otherwise intelligent face. The concept of an American possessing and using a non-American passport made absolutely no sense to him—at all. WHY? Why would anyone want to do *that*?

It took a few moments of my describing various American-in-a-foreign-place scenarios for him to catch on. I had to remind him of his own recent experiences, which *he* had told *me* about. Hadn't he been trailed across Europe by FBI operatives who simply had to inquire about "the American?" Hadn't his "secret" accounts been accessed because they had been opened with the ID from an *American passport*? Hadn't he been detained on reentry to the U.S. by customs agents who seemed to know just about every detail of his recent travels? Hmmm.

Well, the light did go on. The attorney, who will remain nameless at his request, put his legal research talents, writing skills and extensive international social contacts to good use and produced the first edition of The Passport Report. It has since gone through twelve editions and remains the only authoritative source of information on how individuals can go about obtaining passports from over a hundred different countries. There is no other book in print that even comes close to covering this subject in such range and detail.

The content of The Passport Report goes far beyond our concerns here, but its thesis is of paramount interest. Simply put, when you travel outside your own country, why carry with you whatever political and/or economic "baggage" your country might impose on its passport holders? More simply, the only reason you carry a passport *out* of your country is so that you can get back *in*. What you do *outside* your country is really your business alone.

At this point the typical American attitude is one of befuddlement and incipient panic. Isn't that illegal? Couldn't I lose my citizenship? What if I get in trouble overseas? Won't they "know" I'm really an American? Why *not* just use my regular American passport? Why *would* I want to travel on a "foreign" passport, anyway? Huh? Huh?

As we noted above only one American in seven ever gets a U.S. passport. The vast majority stay home and watch Jerry Springer. Real "travelers" might do a day trip to Vancouver or Tijuana, but that's about it. Gotta get back to MTV, you know. The concept of a non-U.S. passport transcends anything they could consider "normal." In fact, they can't even imagine it.

But the rest of the world has no trouble with this concept at all. In fact, it's quite a widespread practice, and hardly raises an eyebrow overseas. Through historical happenstance we have been fortunate, really, in not having to "reach out" to the rest of the world. They all want to come to us. We have a "stay-at-home" attitude because we can *afford* to have it. For most of the Twentieth Century America has been equated with "the best of everything," and we have bought the notion too. If our passport is the best, why would we want any other?

America may not be the New Rome, but we are the only Super Power, and our influence goes far beyond mere military "presence." English is in fact the World Language (business, banking, air travel, science, education, politics, publishing, entertainment, etc., etc.) If you live in a non-English speaking country and you do not learn English, you will be consigned to a cultural backwater the rest of your life. You ain't gonna make it. The hottest overseas job is that of teaching English. If you are a reasonably educated native speaker, you can work in virtually any country you choose. The pay may not be the greatest, but it will be above the local standard, and you will enjoy an endless array of "perks." Foreigners respect their teachers, and often show how grateful they are with gifts and personal favors.

But there's a growing dark side to this American hegemony in world affairs. Our paranoid "War on Drugs" has obviously been a failure, but the fallout has affected much more than the addicts/criminals it was intended to interdict. Ordinary business people and law-abiding property owners have been subjected to *criminal* prosecution thanks to aggressive enforcement of new "money laundering" and "asset seizure/forfeiture" laws aimed *originally* at the drug trade. Bankers and accountants have been forced to become informers for the IRS. Our jails and prisons are filled to capacity with "drug offenders" who could be treated more effectively in non-prison environments. (Don't forget how "educated" these people become after a few years of "doing time," and how they will be returning soon to a community near you.)

## Passports

---

The ability and the desire of government agencies to go after "financial crime" has been spearheaded by the establishment of what is called FinCEN, or the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network. You may not have heard of this as-yet headless monster, but it is the active combination and cooperation among federal law enforcement agencies (FBI, IRS, DEA, BATF, and any others who care to join) to share and compare financial data on selected targets to facilitate prosecution under the new laws just mentioned. The slightest violation of a banking law or financial reporting requirement can trigger a "swat-team" attack on all a person's finances and assets, culminating not only in fines and possible imprisonment, but also in forfeiture of ALL a person's property.

Once a person is enmeshed in one of these proceedings the burden falls on him to prove he didn't violate any law if he expects to regain any of his property. This is *civil* forfeiture pursued under criminal statutes, so constitutional guarantees have gone out the window. The public has the notion that only "rich people" and "drug traffickers" have been the targets of these prosecutions, but the truth is that the vast bulk of fines and seizures have been exacted on ordinary people of even modest means. Law enforcement types "know" they can steal the mobile home, truck or pile of cash from the elderly mother whose wayward son carelessly left a joint on the dashboard, and know too that the family won't have the resources to fight back. (In case you didn't know it, many *local* law enforcement agencies are now flush with newfound money thanks to aggressive pursuit of "seizure" laws.)

When you tie this new focus of federal law enforcement with the always vigilant pursuit by the IRS of tax avoidance schemes like trusts, offshore corporations and banking, you should begin to see why many Americans are looking for ways to prevent becoming targets themselves. They know that the IRS claims jurisdiction *worldwide* on any American's income and that the IRS is gaining more and more "cooperation" overseas as it prevails on government after government to go after "money laundering" (and benefit themselves in the process). The solution isn't simply to run off to some foreign tax haven, but rather to conduct financial affairs as a non-American. This is where our interest in foreign passports begins.

To paraphrase our Paper Trip saying, "Overseas, you are who your passport says you are." An American in Geneva carrying an Irish passport will be believed to be Irish. And an American's way of speaking English will not give him away, either. Non-native speakers of English can almost never guess where a native speaker is from, whether it's the U.S., Australia, South Africa, Ireland, or the U.K. To a German all English sounds the same. To the French all English sounds the same, and—of course—they don't care! The point is that your passport declares unequivocally what citizenship/nationality you have, and that's as far as anyone looks. Do you begin to see how and why a foreign passport could be useful to an *American* overseas?

### Advantages of having a Second Passport

Governments cannot be trusted. Owning only one passport makes you dependent on the actions of that one government. Having a second passport can give you insurance against negative events which that government might precipitate at any time. It can help protect your wealth against predatory attack at "home." Confiscatory taxes, civil asset forfeiture, enforcement of financial crime legislation, and the constant erosion of financial privacy are all government actions aimed at making your private wealth public. Truly, government is more interested in taking your wealth than helping you preserve it.

Declared residence is the standard by which most countries determine tax liability. The IRS, however, levies on all Americans, no matter where they live. The only way out is for Americans to acquire an alternative citizenship and renounce U.S. citizenship. Actually, a growing number of Americans are doing just this. They are taking up residence in tax haven countries which tax only on local income, which for many of these individuals is zero. Their worldwide income is theirs to enjoy—in full.

If you travel to certain unstable parts of the world your passport can single you out for hostile treatment, exactly as happened in Iraq when many "western" passport holders were not allowed to leave the country. Saddam intended to use them as human shields during the allied bombings. If these people had had passports from innocuous countries with no strategic value, they would have been kicked out at the first whiff of trouble, or would have at least been able to escape across the border.

## Passports

---

Hijackers, kidnappers and terrorists typically single out hostages from wealthy western countries, but determine this only by the passports they are carrying. If you are carrying the passport of a country with no international disputes or of little media interest, you will be met with much less hostility. Even the wrong visa stamps can cause problems. If you advise the Passport Office that your travel plans include visits to both Israel and neighboring Arab countries, you can have two passports issued, one for the Israeli visa, and the other for the various Arab visas. If you have an Israeli visa stamp in your passport, you are the enemy of militant Moslems. If you have a Turkish visa stamp, you are hated by the Cypriots. If you have an Iranian visa stamp you are the enemy of Iraqis. And so on, and so on.

What if you woke up one day, as in a Kafka novel, to find a dictator had assumed power, that troops were patrolling the streets, private wealth was to be nationalized, that mobs were attacking business owners, that individuals were being beaten and robbed, and that exit visas were now required to leave the country? (This happens every month or so in Africa.) If you were a citizen of that country, you might well be stuck there with all the unpleasant consequences. But if you already had the passport of another country, you could well be on the next plane out—to anywhere. The very safety of you and your family could well depend on your having a "foreign" passport. This situation may not occur in the U.S., but the option of leaving in a hurry is the same.

Passport holders are often restricted by "forbidden" travel (e.g., Cuba), or face the prospect of being denied visas based on the nationality of their passport. A second passport can eliminate this problem and open up many visa-free travel opportunities.

Holders of second passports do not reveal their travel itineraries or likely activities abroad when they return "home." Customs will see only the visa from the first country visited and assume that was the extent of your travels. Second passport holders have no problem overseas opening up bank accounts, conducting business, or engaging in other activities perhaps not "permitted" by the home government. The presence of certain visas in a passport is always an invitation to more close questioning, as well. You were in Denmark (porn)? Holland (drugs)? Switzerland (money laundering)? Thailand (sex)? Lebanon (terrorist)? You get the idea.

In many countries foreigners cannot own real estate or conduct local business. But if that "foreigner" acquires the passport of that country, all questions cease. The passport holder can thus establish an "escape haven" where he can go to reside, make a living, invest in real estate, and avail himself of local services—if he ever has to.

### Some Finer Points about Second Passports

Americans can hold foreign passports legally without jeopardizing U.S. citizenship. You can also drive around the country and go to the beach without jeopardizing U.S. citizenship. The point is that U.S. citizenship is not so easily "lost," like a lot of people have always believed. True, immigrants who wish to become citizens must cross more than a few barriers to be admitted into the Promised Land, and face complications for even slight oversights during the naturalization process. But a native-born American doesn't "lose" his citizenship nearly so easily. In fact, it takes an *overt act*, such as a declaration of renunciation for this to occur. Even then, if taxes are still owed, or it is alleged that the renunciation is an effort to evade taxes, he is "still" a U.S. citizen, and can be pursued until they are paid!

This was perhaps a muddy area of the law until the early Fifties. The State of Israel had just been born, and the leaders were anxious to accommodate the Jews who wished to settle in the new land. Under their "Law of Return" settlers were given passports after only six weeks of residence, this being the designated time for a settler to have "returned." Whether or not they wanted the passport it was provided anyway. (This might have been a natural reaction to the recent Nazi experience when passports were denied when passports were marked or denied.)

At this same time the "Red Scare" was upon us, and the issue of "loyalty" became a hot political button. Communists and "fellow travelers" were singled out for blacklisting and even denial of travel privileges (no passport granted, since the destination was likely to be COMMUNIST RUSSIA). Somehow the notions of Communist-Foreigner-Loyalty-Passports became very tangled (Nixon got his start from all this) and it took a federal court decision to clarify matters somewhat. No, the court said, American Jews who went to Israel and subsequently received an Israeli passport did not jeopardize, much less renounce their U.S. citizenship. It was something



## Passports

---

given without their actually seeking it, and it would take an affirmative act (renunciation) for someone to "lose" American citizenship.

The concept of **dual citizenship** makes it difficult for Americans to understand the legality of possessing a foreign passport. Most countries of the world explicitly recognize dual citizenship, which means that a person can claim citizenship in two or more countries. They have no problem with this since considerations like taxation and residence are clearly defined.

It is the U.S. that has a "problem" with dual citizenship, and as a result is the exception on the world scene. We make our new citizens "renounce all loyalties" to former governments, rulers, kings, blah blah blah. We say "one country, one citizenship." But even so, these new U.S. citizens are *still* recognized by their former homelands as "belonging" to the old country, thanks to their concept of dual citizenship. Most probably never return, but they could if they wanted to.

Case in point: Mexico will now allow any Mexican citizen, no matter where in the world he lives (East Los Angeles, etc.) to vote in national elections! If you were born a Mexican, you just never leave the 'hood, man. Do you think these Chicanos are going to lose their U.S. citizenship if they decide to mail home a ballot or two? They can always "go back home" and function as Mexican citizens, and they know that. For them, nothing was ever lost. In fact they can enjoy the best of both worlds, and what's wrong with that?

We have included this information, not to be a treatise on citizenship or immigration, but to illustrate how and why passports do represent much more than simply pieces of paper. They carry not only the symbolic power of the countries that issue them, but also the practical attributes that enable holders to function abroad in ways they might not previously have considered. We believe this is especially useful for Americans who have always been conditioned to think, "My country, right or wrong." Such an attitude is both xenophobic and impractical given the way the world *really* is. Foreign passports can, and do, add a new level of abstraction to life.

### Methods for Obtaining A Second Passport

There are two basic ways to obtain foreign passports. The first is to qualify on the basis of some **social, historical, relationship, or religious criterion**. Applying for these passports will cost typically little more than your time to make inquiries at the appropriate consulates or embassies, fill out necessary forms, and mail in your application materials. Any fees are usually very modest. In most instances the issuing countries are cordial and gracious in welcoming back someone who shares so much concern and love for the "old country." Here are some examples:

1. Citizenship and passports can be obtained automatically on the basis of family lineage. One of the best examples is that of Ireland. If you have one Irish grandparent (born in Ireland), you can qualify for Irish citizenship and receive a passport in the process.
2. Marriage is also a fast track to a foreign passport. Most countries allow spouses to obtain passports after only a short period of residence. What happens after that is what happens in any marriage, we suppose. (Foreigners have scammed U.S. citizens for years to get U.S. passports, and most get away with it.)
3. Religious affiliation allows Jews to obtain an alternative citizenship and passport from Israel.
4. Spain has a variation of the Jewish "Law of Return" by which it offers an expedited track to citizenship and passport. New World residents of Spanish ancestry ("criollos") can "return" to Mother Spain and become Spanish citizens (with full EU reciprocity) in about a fifth the time it would take anyone else. (It would be a good idea if you spoke Spanish, however.)

The second method for obtaining a foreign passport is essentially **economic**. There are two basic *economic* ways of securing a second passport from many countries, but they will require an investment in time or money, or both. Here is a general outline of how these plans work.

The first group of plans usually requires a **period of residence**. Some countries will "sell" residence (often with a tax holiday) which can lead to citizenship and passport. Australia, Canada, Gibraltar, New Zealand and the UK exchange residence rights for internal investment. But eligibility can also depend on age, education, life skills, and other criteria. Countries like Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay grant residence to wealthy persons who can then qualify for a pass-

## Passports

---

port under local laws. (Actually a LOT of countries are very accommodating to wealthy "immigrants," including the United States!!)

The second category of economic plans involves **economic contribution**. Some governments reward economic contributions by waiving residence requirements and granting immediate citizenship and a passport. Two such "Economic Citizenship Programmes" are currently being offered by Dominica and St. Kitts & Nevis, two small Caribbean island countries. Many such opportunities have been offered in the past, and will continue to be available in other countries. Why? The economies and political fortunes of many small nations are so fragile that they will often turn to such inducements to secure outside money. They will offer "hurricane bonds and other "development projects to wealthy outsiders whose payments will then provide the instant citizenship and passport they seek. Prices? Anywhere between \$10,000 and \$100,000. Take your checkbook. If you can afford the ticket, however, these are truly instant passports.

If you decide to go after a foreign passport, you would be wise to adopt a new name for your overseas identity. This will not be challenged, as this is the perfect time for the country to "enroll" its new citizen, and it will be their record keeping they are concerned about, not that of your previous country. In fact, as part of the U.S. naturalization process, new citizens are simply asked to state whatever name they now wish to be known by, and many do decide to adopt new names, or at least an "Americanized" version of their former name. If you were challenged you could always state that you are doing it for the privacy and protection of your family. ("Family" is a BIG plus in the Latin world, and will gain you lots of points in any dealings with officials.) Your choice of name, hint, hint, might be guided by ethnic considerations as well. Choosing a name that fits the culture will bring smiles all around.

You must be aware that there are lots of offshore sharks waiting to take advantage of this newfound opportunity for disgruntled citizen/taxpayers. You may notice ads in certain international newspapers and magazines offering "passport services" and such. They know most people are quite ignorant of passport programs, and that they really don't want to take the time to find out for themselves. They will offer "exactly" what you want, of course, just send the up-front money. Consider yourself warned.

Our best advice: Contact government agencies directly yourself. If there are legitimate programs available, they will be happy to send you the details. You should make your initial inquiry concerning immigration and possible investment opportunities. This will give you the contact information to make more specific inquiries about residence and passport. Don't show all your cards at once. After all, aren't you approaching them because you like the country and want to contribute to their economy as best you can...? Look at the situation from their standpoint.

### **Best Source of More Information: The PASSPORT REPORT**

Earlier in this chapter we mentioned The Passport Report, written by our well-traveled attorney friend. Without exaggeration this is the **ONLY** book that deals with the subject of foreign passports from the perspective you have just read. Over 400 pages, covering 120+ countries, the unique information in The Passport Report covers everything you need to know:

- The first step: Psychological preparation.
- How to determine which passport suits you best.
- Eliminating taxes with your second passport.
- Secret banking passports.
- Documents you can use in lieu of passports.
- Securing financial privacy with a second passport.
- How to apply; exact requirements for dozens of countries.
- Useful contact names and telephone numbers.
- Economic citizenship programs with "instant" passports.
- New country passports. Avoid the wrong passports.
- Case histories, dealing with passport providers.
- Alternative citizenship, extradition, and more.

The Passport Report is available from Eden Press for \$100, plus \$11.00 postage and handling. The book is published in England and will be sent directly to customers from the publisher. We list this book as Item # 510 in our Privacy Catalog.

## Passports

---

### Camouflage Passports

Certain parts of the world are much more dangerous than others, and travel within those areas can be exceptionally dangerous. South America, Southeast Asia, Africa and the Middle East present extra dangers to any traveler wandering about with any well-known Western country's passport. Hijackers, kidnappers, robbers and thieves seem to find travelers from "rich" Western countries particularly good pickings, and easily target their victims based on the passport they are carrying. If you suddenly found yourself in a threatening situation would *you* really want to be carrying a U.S. passport? Probably not!

Ideally your passport should be presented *only* in situations for which it is required, such as crossing borders, clearing customs, etc. You shouldn't wave it at the hotel clerk, much less take him up on his offer to "hold" it for you in the hotel safe. Savvy travelers have all kinds of tricks for protecting valuable items, including passports, and they don't include showing them off to strangers.

What you need is a camouflage passport that will serve two purposes:

1. Identify you with a "no name" country that will generate no interest on the part of anyone who happens to see it or request it, and,
2. Serve as your "real" passport in all those situations for which your legal passport is not actually required.

Fortunately, camouflage passports are available *by mail* from at least two sources which we consider reliable. They are very convincing in appearance and carry the names of countries that no longer exist, at least in the same name. Even better, these passports come with additional ID cards, even a drivers license, for a total package of very acceptable identification. We don't want to describe these items too completely, however, in order to help them retain their security and usefulness. You can request these companies' brochures and applications, which in turn will illustrate what they offer and let you, place your order directly. A complete package of camouflage passport and supporting ID is around \$400, with several additional offers of interest.

The two sources we can recommend are:

Scope International, 230 Peppard Road, Emmer Green Reading, Berks, RG4 8UA, U.K.  
Tele: +44 1189 463419 Fax: +44 1189 483450 Email: [scopemail@compuserve.com](mailto:scopemail@compuserve.com)

US FAXBACK SERVICE  
1-213-960-4312 (For information and application)

### Some Final Thoughts

It shouldn't take too much thought to realize that once you secure a legal foreign passport you could actually use it to return to the U.S. as a "tourist." Your new name would not be on any "lookout" list, and you could go about your business as you wish. The only disadvantage is that a record of your entry would be made, and technically the INS would then "know" about your passport, even though they wouldn't be able to associate it with your old name, etc.

In some countries it is against the law for unmarried couples to share the same hotel room, and to force the issue would bring all kinds of unwanted attention. Here's the perfect use for a camouflage passport that shows a "family" or at least a married person. This is especially important for women travelers since many of the old macho rules are still observed in much of the world, not just Latin America. Unmarried, unattached women just don't "compute" as legitimate travelers. A camouflage "married" passport to show the hotel help will divert possibly suggestive and certainly undue questions.

It should be absolutely obvious at this point that should you pursue application for a foreign passport that you do so with your mouth shut. It's no body's business but yours. Use a new MFS if necessary and a company name as a front. If anyone ever asked about all the foreign mail you receive, have a cover story that's bland but believable. "We're thinking of opening several offices overseas, and we need to know what they will expect of us. We still don't know what countries might be best."

## **Passports**

---

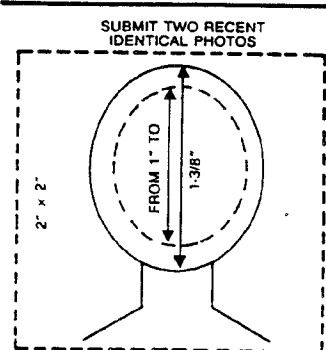
Finally, when you do obtain a foreign passport you should strongly consider storing it out of the country. It certainly makes no sense to keep it where someone else might accidentally discover it. Foreign MFSs generally offer a wide range of services, and "holding" you mail is definitely one of them. They also tend to be very discreet and should be able to suggest even safer means of storage. An offshore attorney or bank can also provide safekeeping. Before you leave on your travels you can instruct them to forward it to another location if necessary. Needless to say, you do not need to tell them anything more than that the package is simply some legal papers you will need for your business. You might want to use a courier service for even more secure delivery.

The world of foreign passports opens up new roads for paper tripping, and we expect to hear from many new travelers soon. Their stories we will look forward to sharing with our readers in future editions of *The Paper Trip* III.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
APPLICATION FOR ☐ PASSPORT ☐ REGISTRATION  
SEE INSTRUCTIONS—TYPE OR PRINT IN INK IN WHITE AREAS

1. NAME FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ MIDDLE NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
2. MAILING ADDRESS  
STREET \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_  
COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_ IN CARE OF \_\_\_\_\_  
3. SEX ☐ Male ☐ Female 4. PLACE OF BIRTH City, State or Province, Country \_\_\_\_\_  
5. DATE OF BIRTH Mo. Day Year  
6. SEE FEDERAL TAX SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER  
LAW NOTICE ON REVERSE SIDE  
7. HEIGHT Feet Inches 8. COLOR OF HAIR 9. COLOR OF EYES 10. (Area Code) HOME PHONE 11. (Area Code) BUSINESS PHONE  
12. PERMANENT ADDRESS (Street, City, State, ZIP Code) \_\_\_\_\_  
13. OCCUPATION \_\_\_\_\_

14. FATHER'S NAME BIRTHPLACE BIRTH DATE U.S. CITIZEN ☐ YES ☐ NO  
15. MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME BIRTHPLACE BIRTH DATE U.S. CITIZEN ☐ YES ☐ NO  
16. TRAVEL PLANS (Not Mandatory)  
COUNTRIES DEPARTURE DATE LENGTH OF STAY  
17. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ISSUED A U.S. PASSPORT? YES ☐ NO ☐ IF YES, SUBMIT PASSPORT IF AVAILABLE. ☐ Submitted  
IF UNABLE TO SUBMIT MOST RECENT PASSPORT, STATE ITS DISPOSITION: COMPLETE NEXT LINE  
NAME IN WHICH ISSUED PASSPORT NUMBER ISSUE DATE (Mo., Day, Yr.) DISPOSITION



18. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN MARRIED? ☐ YES ☐ NO DATE OF MOST RECENT MARRIAGE Mo. Day Year  
WIDOWED/DIVORCED? ☐ YES ☐ NO IF YES, GIVE DATE Mo. Day Year  
SPOUSE'S FULL BIRTH NAME SPOUSE'S BIRTHPLACE

19. IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, NOTIFY (Person Not Traveling With You) RELATIONSHIP  
(Not Mandatory) FULL NAME (Area Code) PHONE NUMBER  
ADDRESS

20. TO BE COMPLETED BY AN APPLICANT WHO BECAME A CITIZEN THROUGH NATURALIZATION  
I IMMIGRATED TO THE U.S. I RESIDED CONTINUOUSLY IN THE U.S. DATE NATURALIZED (Mo., Day, Yr.)  
(Month, Year) From (Mo., Yr.) To (Mo., Yr.)  
PLACE

21. DO NOT SIGN APPLICATION UNTIL REQUESTED TO DO SO BY PERSON ADMINISTERING OATH  
I have not, since acquiring United States citizenship, performed any of the acts listed under "Acts or Conditions" on the reverse of this application form (unless explanatory statement is attached). I solemnly swear (or affirm) that the statements made on this application are true and the photograph attached is a true likeness of me.

Subscribed and sworn to (affirmed) before me  
Month Day Year

(SEAL)

X

- ☐ Clerk of Court or  
☐ PASSPORT Agent  
☐ Postal Employee  
☐ (Vice) Consul USA At \_\_\_\_\_

(Sign in presence of person authorized to accept application)

(Signature of person authorized to accept application)

22. APPLICANT'S IDENTIFYING DOCUMENTS ☐ PASSPORT ☐ DRIVER'S ☐ OTHER (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
ISSUE DATE EXPIRATION DATE PLACE OF ISSUE No.  
Month Day Year Month Day Year ISSUED IN THE NAME OF

23. FOR ISSUING OFFICE USE ONLY (Applicant's evidence of citizenship)

- ☐ Birth Cert. SR CR City Filed/Issued:  
☐ Passport Bearer's Name:  
☐ Report of Birth  
☐ Naturalization/Citizenship Cert. No.:  
☐ Other:  
☐ Seen & Returned  
☐ Attached

APPLICATION APPROVAL

Examiner Name

Office Date

24

FEE \_\_\_\_\_ EXEC \_\_\_\_\_ POST \_\_\_\_\_

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
**PASSPORT APPLICATION**

**FEDERAL TAX LAW:**

Section 6039E of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 requires a passport applicant to provide his/her name (#1), mailing address (#2), date of birth (#5), and social security number (#6). If you have not been issued a social security number, enter zeroes in box #6. Passport Services will provide this information to the Internal Revenue Service routinely. Any applicant who fails to provide the required information is subject to a \$500 penalty enforced by the IRS. All questions on this matter should be referred to the nearest IRS office.

**ACTS OR CONDITIONS**

(If any of the below-mentioned acts or conditions has been performed by or applies to the applicant, the portion which applies should be lined out, and a supplementary explanatory statement under oath (or affirmation) by the applicant should be attached and made a part of this application.)  
I have not, since acquiring United States citizenship, been naturalized as a citizen of a foreign state; taken an oath or made an affirmation or other formal declaration of allegiance to a foreign state; entered or served in the armed forces of a foreign state; accepted or performed the duties of any office, post, or employment under the government of a foreign state or political subdivision thereof; made a formal renunciation of nationality either in the United States or before a diplomatic or consular officer of the United States in a foreign state; or been convicted by a court or court martial of competent jurisdiction of committing any act of treason against, or attempting by force to overthrow, or bearing arms against, the United States, or conspiring to overthrow, put down, or to destroy by force, the Government of the United States; or having been naturalized, within one year after such naturalization, returned to the country of my birth or any other foreign country to take up a permanent residence.

**WARNING:** False statements made knowingly and willfully in passport applications or in affidavits or other supporting documents submitted therewith are punishable by fine and/or imprisonment under provisions of 18 USC 1001 and/or 18 USC 1542. Alteration or mutilation of a passport issued pursuant to this application is punishable by fine and/or imprisonment under the provisions of 18 USC 1543. The use of a passport in violation of the restrictions contained therein or of the passport regulations is punishable by fine and/or imprisonment under 18 USC 1544. All statements and documents submitted are subject to verification.

**PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT:**

The information solicited on this form is authorized by, but not limited to, those statutes codified in Titles 8, 18, and 22, United States Code, and all predecessor statutes whether or not codified, and all regulations issued pursuant to Executive Order 11295 of August 5, 1966. The primary purpose for soliciting the information is to establish citizenship, identity, and entitlement to issuance of a United States Passport or related facility, and to properly administer and enforce the laws pertaining thereto.

The information is made available as a routine use on a need-to-know basis to personnel of the Department of State and other government agencies having statutory or other lawful authority to maintain such information in the performance of their official duties; pursuant to a court order; and, as set forth in Part 171, Title 22, Code of Federal Regulations (see *Federal Register*, Volume 42, pages 49791 through 49795).

Failure to provide the information requested on this form may result in the denial of a United States Passport, related document, or service to the individual seeking such passport, document, or service.

**HOW TO APPLY FOR A U.S. PASSPORT.** U.S. passports are issued only to U.S. citizens or nationals. Each person must obtain his or her own passport.

**IF YOU ARE A FIRST-TIME APPLICANT,** please complete and submit this application in person. (Applicants under 13 years of age usually need not appear in person unless requested. A parent or guardian may execute the application on the child's behalf.) Each application must be accompanied by (1) **PROOF OF U.S. CITIZENSHIP**, (2) **PROOF OF IDENTITY**, (3) **TWO PHOTOGRAPHS**, (4) **FEES** (as explained below) to one of the following acceptance agents: a clerk of any Federal or State court of record or a judge or clerk of any probate court accepting applications; a designated postal employee at a selected post office; or an agent at a Passport Agency in Boston, Chicago, Honolulu, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle, Stamford, or Washington, D.C.; or a U.S. consular official.

**IF YOU HAVE HAD A PREVIOUS PASSPORT,** inquire about eligibility to use Form DSP-82 (mail-in application).

Address requests for passport amendment, extension of validity, or additional visa pages to a Passport Agency or a U.S. Consulate or Embassy abroad. Check visa requirements with consular officials of countries to be visited well in advance of your departure.

**(1) PROOF OF U.S. CITIZENSHIP.**

(a) **APPLICANTS BORN IN THE UNITED STATES.** Submit previous U.S. passport or certified birth certificate. A birth certificate must include your given name and surname, date and place of birth, date the birth record was filed, and seal or other certification of the official custodian of such records. A record filed more than 1 year after the birth is acceptable if it is supported by evidence described in the next paragraph.

**IF NO BIRTH RECORD EXISTS,** submit registrar's notice to that effect. Also submit an early baptismal or circumcision certificate, hospital birth record, early census, school, or family Bible records, newspaper or insurance files, or notarized affidavits of persons having knowledge of your birth (preferably with at least one record listed above). Evidence should include your given name and surname, date and place of birth, and seal or other certification of office (if customary) and signature of issuing official.

(b) **APPLICANTS BORN OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES.** Submit previous U.S. passport or Certificate of Naturalization, or Certificate of Citizenship, or a Report of Birth Abroad, or evidence described below.

**IF YOU CLAIM CITIZENSHIP THROUGH NATURALIZATION OF PARENT(S),** submit the Certificate(s) of Naturalization of your parent(s), your foreign birth certificate, and proof of your admission to the United States for permanent residence.

**IF YOU CLAIM CITIZENSHIP THROUGH BIRTH ABROAD TO U.S. CITIZEN PARENT(S),** submit a Consular Report of Birth (Form FS-240) or Certification of Birth (Form DS-1350 or FS-545), or your foreign birth certificate, parents' marriage certificate, proof of citizenship of your parent(s), and affidavit of U.S. citizen parent(s) showing all periods and

places of residence/physical presence in the United States and abroad before your birth.

(2) **PROOF OF IDENTITY.** If you are not personally known to the acceptance agent, you must establish your identity to the agent's satisfaction. You may submit items such as the following containing your signature AND physical description or photograph that is a good likeness of you: previous U.S. passport; Certificate of Naturalization or of Citizenship; driver's license (not temporary or learner's license) or government (Federal, State, municipal) identification card or pass. Temporary or altered documents are not acceptable.

**IF YOU CANNOT PROVE YOUR IDENTITY** as stated above, you must appear with an **IDENTIFYING WITNESS** who is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident alien who has known you for at least 2 years. Your witness must prove his or her identity and complete and sign an Affidavit of Identifying Witness (Form DSP-71) before the acceptance agent. You must also submit some identification of your own.

(3) **TWO PHOTOGRAPHS.** Submit two identical photographs of you alone, sufficiently recent to be a good likeness (normally taken within the last 6 months), 2 x 2 inches in size, with an image size from bottom of chin to top of head (including hair) of between 1 and 1-3/8 inches. Photographs must be clear, front view, full face, taken in normal street attire without a hat or dark glasses, and printed on thin paper with a plain light (white or off-white) background. They may be black and white or color. They must be capable of withstanding a mounting temperature of 225° Fahrenheit (107° Celsius). Photographs retouched so that your appearance is changed are unacceptable. Snapshots, most vending machine prints, and magazine or full-length photographs are unacceptable.

(4) **FEES.** Submit \$65 if you are 18 years of age or older. The passport fee is \$55. In addition, a fee of \$10 is charged for the execution of the application. Your passport will be valid for 10 years from the date of issue except where limited by the Secretary of State to a shorter period. Submit \$40 if you are under 18 years of age. The passport fee is \$30 and the execution fee is \$10. Your passport will be valid for 5 years from the date of issue, except where limited as above.

Pay the passport and execution fees in one of the following forms: checks—personal, certified, traveler's; bank draft or cashier's check; money order, U.S. Postal, international, currency exchange; or if abroad, the foreign currency equivalent, or a check drawn on a U.S. bank.

Make passport and execution fees payable to Passport Services (except if applying at a State court, pay execution fee as the State court requires) or the appropriate Embassy or Consulate, if abroad. No fee is charged to applicants with U.S. Government or military authorization for no-fee passports (except State courts may collect the execution fee). Pay special postage if applicable.

## Chapter XIII

# MAKE YOUR OWN ID

What? After all this, we want to talk about do-it-yourself ID? In a word, YES! Of course we're not suggesting cranking out your own Social Security card or state drivers license. Leave these "official" items to government sources.

What you *can* do for yourself is acquire all kinds of "back-up" ID for your new identity. Consider any or all of the following ID forms potentially useful in various situations.

1. **Business cards.** Design your own to fit whatever business or occupation you are representing. Include your name, title, address, telephone, fax, and any other information you feel is appropriate. Printers will do this kind of job "no questions asked."
2. **Health insurance cards.** Pay for any kind of health insurance and you will receive an ID card, often resembling a credit card. You can use any name. No verification will be made.
3. **Diplomas, Degrees, Certificates, and Awards.** These blank forms can be obtained from a number of mail order companies. Our book, I.D. by Mail, illustrates many examples and lists a number of good sources. Some will even create custom documents with whatever date—and data—you provide.
4. **Photo ID cards.** There are hundreds of these kinds of cards available through the mail order companies featured in I.D. by Mail. They can portray any kind of job, occupation, or company affiliation you wish. Some can even be accompanied by badges, which are typically associated with law enforcement and private investigation.
5. **"State ID" cards.** These very convincing ID cards portray the name of a state or Canadian province. When used in an "out-of-state" context, they will typically be given full acceptance. A person "visiting" in Oregon will likely be given the benefit of the doubt if the only ID he has is a "Texas" State ID card. There is no on-line verification of state ID cards among the states, but a clerk (or cop) won't let on to that. This kind of card can also be obtained from several firms listed in I.D. by Mail.
6. **Credit cards.** If you already have an American Express card, Visa or MasterCard, contact the issuer and tell them that you wish to apply for a "Company Card." (American Express calls theirs the "Corporate Card," but non-incorporated companies can request one just the same.) Once you obtain this card, they will automatically solicit additional cards for your "employees." These names can be anyone you wish since no SSNs will be required. This is because the account, technically, remains your responsibility; the issuance of the additional cards is merely for the convenience of your company. The additional "employee" cards will not trigger the establishment of any new credit files, either. No SSN, remember?

A variation of this process is to request an *additional name* for use on an already issued credit card. Most banks will issue the card with "no questions asked." If they insist that the additional name also be a "co-applicant," however, they will also require that person's SSN, and the game is up. Just decline their offer.

## Make Your Own ID

---

Even though credit cards are probably the least reliable form of ID, we all know they are the perfect "second ID" in countless situations, especially financial. Clerks never look past the general appearance of the card and the fact that your "name" is on it. And don't forget to forbid anyone copying down your credit card number under any circumstance, unless it's for an actual purchase with the card.

7. Another good ID card is a "**Check Cashing**" card used by many people who do not maintain a bank account for depositing/cashing checks. These services almost always issue you a photo ID card for use whenever you come back for repeat business. Even if you never intend to use it, it is very convincing ID. Of course, there's no verification of any of the data you give them, either. Their business is strictly a percentage of the check you're cashing. That's it.
8. "**Working ID**" that indicates your occupation, employment, or status of some kind can always be added to your collection. Besides the many possibilities illustrated in I.D. by Mail, you might enjoy the countless "freelance" opportunities that membership in the *International Freelance Photographers Organization* can bring. This kind of ID can gain you special entry into many public events ("Press," "Event Photographer," etc.), and is offered in an amazing variety of ID items, very professional and convincing. Contact them at: IFPO, P.O. Box 777, Lewisville, NC 27023. Tell them to send you an application for membership. They'll be happy to hear from you. Come to think about it, any kind of "freelance" occupation (writer, artist, performer, musician, "trainer," consultant and photographer) is the perfect ticket for low-profile living. A great way to answer, "And where do you work?" "I'm a spiritual advisor, here's my ID..."
9. The *American Automobile Association (AAA)* provides membership cards in a credit card format, which are always believable. After all, they do provide great roadside emergency help, as well as many other travel benefits. The annual fee is reasonable, and you receive a most acceptable ID. You might apply under your Level Two driver's license, but later order "guest memberships" for "employees" under Level One names.

A recent book from Paladin Press entitled Acquiring New ID details very specific methods of using computer-aided techniques for creating custom ID of all kinds. You would need to be somewhat computer-savvy, but we're convinced the results would be worth the effort. Of course you could also hire a local computer geek to take on a "creative assignment" which you would direct. He will need a good scanner, color printer, and one or two of the art programs mentioned in this special book. (If you did put someone to work on such a project it would behoove you to produce a goodly quantity for future use as well.)

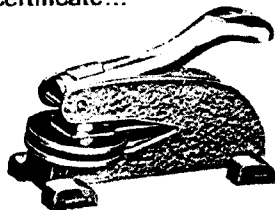
If you want to produce documents such as diplomas, certificates, awards, or other records with fine quality, full color, lithographed borders, the best source for blank stock is the following firm: **GOES LITHOGRAPHING COMPANY, 42 w. 61<sup>st</sup> St., Chicago, IL 60621**. You can call them at **312-684-6700** for a sample pack of their materials, as well as references to their local distributors. When it comes time to print up the documents you want, take your selected samples to your printer and he will order the stock. Of course you could also send blank stock through any good copier or computer printer to add on whatever text you produced on screen. The point is that the quality of a lithographed border will make any document truly outstanding. Once you see the vibrant colors of these borders, your imagination will soar. They are much more convincing than anything off a color copier or printer, period.

Another tool you will want to add to your collection is a custom-made **embossing seal**. These are much easier to obtain than you might think. One of the principal firms in this business is **Justrite**, and their catalog and ordering instructions can be found at most quick-print shops, or other businesses that advertise "Seals—Corporate, Notary" in the Yellow Pages. Many large, business-oriented stationery stores will also take orders for your seal. As with business cards, the providers of embossing seals will produce what you require, "no questions asked." Justrite

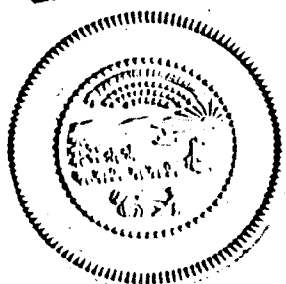


## Make Your Own ID

has stock dies of state seals, to which your custom wording can be added around the outer perimeter. Note that these illustrations could all be produced with legends such as "Vital Records," "State Records Office," "Department of Health—Vital Records," etc., etc. A raised, embossed seal might be just the touch needed for that otherwise dull-looking birth certificate...

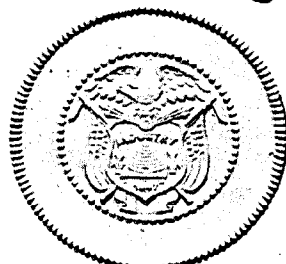


Die #23  
Mississippi

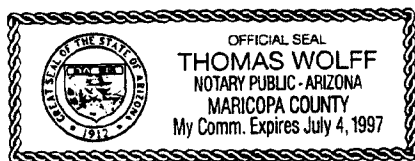
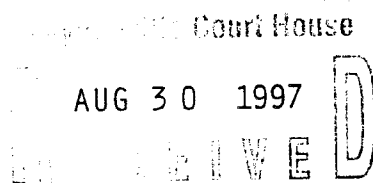
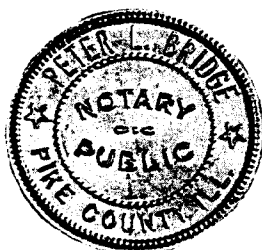


Die #15  
Kansas

*Justice*

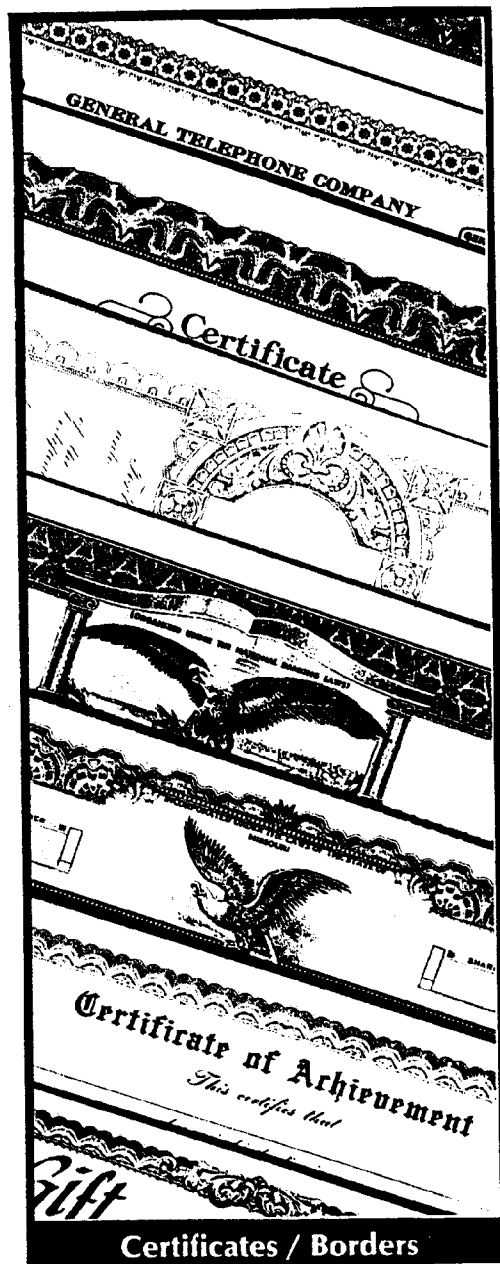


Die #46  
Utah



COPY

**Schwaab, Inc.**



GOES PRINTED PRODUCTS

Another "final touch" you can add to certain documents and certificates is rubber-stamping. Some stamps you can find ready-made at stationery stores, but you can also order any kind of custom rubber stamp, too. Many printers, office supply stores, and even mail forwarding services will take orders for any kind of stamp you want them to have made. You can also order direct from this firm: Schwaab, Inc., P.O. Box 26069, Milwaukee, WI 53226-0069. Call their toll-free number for a catalog and ordering instructions: 1-800-935-9877. Shown here are samples of the kinds of self-inking stamps they make. Actually, they will make any kind of stamp you want if you provide the artwork.

## Make Your Own ID

### AND NOW, I.D. BY MAIL...!

At this point you might want to consult the many listings for privately issued and manufactured ID available through our book, **I.D. BY MAIL**, still only \$24.95 by mail. This is the only book in print which covers this very special subject, and it can lead you quickly to the forms of ID you are seeking. You will find ID cards of all kinds, blank documents including birth certificates, baptismal certificates, diplomas, college degrees, and many other very useful ID products. Some firms will produce "made-to-order" documents as well. On the following page we have reproduced samples of some of the hundreds of different items currently available. **I.D. BY MAIL** includes the names and addresses of the ID firms, as well as illustrations of their products, prices, etc.



Public Law 97-398  
97th Congress

An Act

To amend title 18 of the United States Code to provide penalties for certain false identification related crimes.

Dec. 31, 1982  
[H.R. 6946]

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "False Identification Crime Control Act of 1982".*

SEC. 2. Chapter 47 of title 18 of the United States Code is amended by adding at the end the following:

False  
Identification  
Crime Control  
Act of 1982.  
18 USC 1001  
note.  
18 USC 1028.

"§ 1028. Fraud and related activity in connection with identification documents

"(a) Whoever, in a circumstance described in subsection (c) of this section—

"(1) knowingly and without lawful authority produces an identification document or a false identification document;

"(2) knowingly transfers an identification document or a false identification document knowing that such document was stolen or produced without lawful authority;

"(3) knowingly possesses with intent to use unlawfully or transfer unlawfully five or more identification documents (other than those issued lawfully for the use of the possessor) or false identification documents;

"(4) knowingly possesses an identification document (other than one issued lawfully for the use of the possessor) or a false identification document, with the intent such document be used to defraud the United States; or

"(5) knowingly produces, transfers, or possesses a document-making implement with the intent such document-making implement will be used in the production of a false identification document or another document-making implement which will be so used;

"(6) possesses an identification document that is or appears to be an identification document of the United States which is stolen or produced without authority knowing that such document was stolen or produced without authority;

or attempts to do so, shall be punished as provided in subsection (b) of this section.

"(b) The punishment for an offense under subsection (a) of this section is—

"(1) a fine of not more than \$25,000 or imprisonment for not more than five years, or both, if the offense is—

"(A) the production or transfer of an identification document or false identification document that is or appears to be—

"(i) an identification document issued by or under the authority of the United States; or

"(ii) a birth certificate, or a driver's license or personal identification card;

"(B) the production or transfer of more than five identification documents or false identification documents; or

"(C) an offense under paragraph (5) of such subsection;

"(2) a fine of not more than \$15,000 or imprisonment for not more than three years, or both, if the offense is—

"(A) any other production or transfer of an identification document or false identification document; or

"(B) an offense under paragraph (3) of such subsection;

and

"(3) a fine of not more than \$5,000 or imprisonment for not more than one year, or both, in any other case.

"(c) The circumstance referred to in subsection (a) of this section is that—

"(1) the identification document or false identification document is or appears to be issued by or under the authority of the United States or the document-making implement is designed

Finally, there is Public Law 97-398, which is the federal government's response to the wilful making of ID which, might be confused with the government-issued variety. We will not attempt a legal analysis of this law passed in 1982, but it does focus primarily on the commercial production and distribution of ID products and "implements." The mailing of ID products is controlled if the document bears a birthdate or age, and it does not also bear the legend (in not less than 12-point type) "NOT A GOVERNMENT DOCUMENT." We are reproducing the complete text of this law here for your own reading and understanding. If you feel it might pertain to your own activity, by all means have an attorney analyze it for you. Now read this:

or suited for making such an identification document or false identification document;

"(2) the offense is an offense under subsection (a)(4) of this section; or

"(3) the production, transfer, or possession prohibited by this section is in or affects interstate or foreign commerce, or the identification document, false identification document, or document-making implement is transported in the mail in the course of the production, transfer, or possession prohibited by this section.

**Definitions.**

"(d) As used in this section—

"(1) the term 'identification document' means a document made or issued by or under the authority of the United States Government, a State, political subdivision of a State, a foreign government, political subdivision of a foreign government, an international governmental or an international quasi-governmental organization which, when completed with information concerning a particular individual, is of a type intended or commonly accepted for the purpose of identification of individuals;

"(2) the term 'produce' includes alter, authenticate, or assemble;

"(3) the term 'document-making implement' means any implement or impression specially designed or primarily used for making an identification document, a false identification document, or another document-making implement;

"(4) the term 'personal identification card' means an identification document issued by a State or local government solely for the purpose of identification; and

"(5) the term 'State' includes any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and any other possession or territory of the United States.

"(e) This section does not prohibit any lawfully authorized investigative, protective, or intelligence activity of a law enforcement agency of the United States, a State, or a political subdivision of a State, or of an intelligence agency of the United States, or any activity authorized under title V of the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970 (18 U.S.C. note prec. 3481)."

SEC. 3. The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 47 of title 18 of the United States Code is amended by adding at the end the following:

"1028. Fraud and related activity in connection with identification documents."

SEC. 4. (a) Chapter 83 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end thereof the following:

18 USC 1738

"§ 1738. Mailing private identification documents without a disclaimer

**Penalties**

"(a) Whoever, being in the business of furnishing identification documents for valuable consideration, and in the furtherance of that business, uses the mails for the mailing, carriage in the mails, or delivery of, or causes to be transported in interstate or foreign commerce, any identification document—

"(1) which bears a birth date or age purported to be that of the person named in such identification document; and

"(2) knowing that such document fails to carry diagonally printed clearly and indelibly on both the front and back "NOT A GOVERNMENT DOCUMENT" in capital letters in not less than twelve point type;

shall be fined not more than \$1,000, imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

Identification document

"(b) For purposes of this section the term 'identification document' means a document which is of a type intended or commonly accepted for the purpose of identification of individuals and which is not issued by or under the authority of a government."

(b) The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 83 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new item:

"1738. Mailing private identification documents without a disclaimer."

Approved December 31, 1982.

## Chapter XIV

# TRENDS & DEVELOPMENTS

The subject of paper tripping would not be complete without referring to trends and developments that may affect our options down the road. We include the following items to illustrate not only possible problems and challenges, but also opportunities for paper tripping in the future.

The more you know about what's happening in the world of ID the better. Being tipped off to potential difficulties can give you a tactical edge before it's "too late." Consider these items perhaps straws in the wind that may aid you in preparing carefully and properly well in advance of need.

### ERRATA

There is growing interest in controlling and limiting the use of SSNs in the marketplace. Legislation was proposed in the House (HR 1813), Feb. 1998, that would limit credit bureaus' abilities to market SSNs freely, as well as other identifying information. It would also prohibit commercial use of SSNs without consent, and would bar state motor vehicle departments from selling or renting SSNs. The credit bureaus will fight this, but there IS public concern, at last.

Sustained applause greeted Clinton's proposed Consumer Bill of Rights when he said, "You have the right to keep your medical records confidential." (Jan. 27, 1998.) The same sentiment was expressed in countless theatres when Jack Nicholson's character in *"As Good As It Gets"* cut loose with the judgmental, "Damn HMOs!" People resent being "controlled" in their choices, yet still subjected to third-party review, and potential abuse, of their medical records.

The concern about employers discriminating against anyone on the basis of genetic information led Vice President Gore to urge Congress to pass legislation based on a report by the Departments of Labor, Justice, and Health and Human Services and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. *"Genetic Information and the Workplace"* surveyed employers planning to use genetic information, and cited incidents of abuse. This wolf is already howling.

Wisconsin has banned the practice of schools and universities using the SSN as a student identifier. Assembly member Marlin S. Schneider (sponsor of the new law) is also pushing a proposal which "will significantly alter the way in which personally identifiable information is treated in this country." His proposal would create a *property interest* in personal information by requiring written consent before it could be sold, rented, exchanged, or otherwise disclosed by commercial entities. Good luck battling the credit bureaus and the minions of the ever-expanding "information" world. Doesn't this guy know computers thrive on INPUT? ?

Which is exactly what happened in early 1998. The British retailer and credit reporting giant, Great Universal Stores of London, which already owns Experian credit bureau in the U.S., acquired Metromail, one of the largest direct mailers in the U.S. This merger combined the financial information on 160 million Americans with the targeted demographic address and telephone lists on 94 million households. Not to worry? Both U.S. companies, before the merger, were cited by the Federal Trade Commission for violating consumer-protection laws. Targeted marketing can now use high-powered scopes for bulls-eye shots every time. And we can assume many of the same foxes are still in the hen house, too.

Prescription drugs are being "pushed" by direct marketing. Ignoring any pretense of patient privacy, McKesson Corp. in San Francisco is aggressive in capturing addresses of customers at some 2000 ValuRite retail stores and bombarding them with refill reminder letters by mail. Wholesalers are no longer limiting themselves to selling through the doctor's office, but are mar-

## Trends & Developments

---

keting directly to those who have prescriptions, and even urging drugs upon patients who have mental illnesses, according to *The New York Times*. Just think: If it doesn't take long for your mail carrier to figure out your reading interests, likely occupation, and companies to whom you owe money, how long before he "knows" you're a cancer patient or a likely schizo?

As we've noted earlier the Health Insurance Portability Act of 1996 mandates a "unique health identifier" for all Americans, a "code" to follow you around from cradle to grave. The Clinton administration has backed off implementation (sensing the political firestorm that will erupt if one were announced), saying it will wait until Congress passes measures to "protect privacy." But could privacy ever be protected once our most personal secrets are plugged into a centralized data bank *accessible* to millions of people? Are we to ignore the very real trend of government and others keeping track of us for many different purposes, not all of them benign?

Presumably the political justification for this person-number is to assist doctors and hospitals in preventing mistaken diagnoses and dangerous treatments, and to aid in the fight against medical and insurance fraud. Our present fragmented system, however, of multiple records filing systems (doctors' offices, hospitals, insurance companies, etc.) may seem haphazard and inefficient, but it also frustrates snoops. Putting all these records together could put your most intimate health concerns in the hands of anyone who can click a mouse.

Let's cut to the heart of the matter. This proposal could quickly and easily become "mandatory identification" for many other purposes completely unrelated to health care. Under the original Social Security law the SSN was supposed to be used for no other purposes than actual Social Security system. But today the SSN is used to track down deadbeat dads, prevent the hiring of illegal aliens, identify virtually all financial and tax matters, and, if the Department of Transportation has its way, become a required feature on all drivers licenses. Unlike the SSN, which doesn't require that you carry a card per se, the "unique health identifier" could quickly function as a kind of Nazi-like "internal passport."

**Are Americans ready for this?** Let's hope not. Tell the religious Fundamentalists that the "Mark of the Beast" is about to be put upon them, and they should have the right reaction. Tell the survivalist crowd that they will now have to "report" to one more government agency and they might redefine the term "survive." In 1964 the Free Speech Movement protests at the University of California, Berkeley, were sparked by students who vehemently objected to the administration's imposing student ID numbers (really!) based on IBM card format (an early form of computer data entry). They brought the university to a halt with the cry of "I'm a person. Do not fold, staple, or mutilate!" The spirit of this protest helped kindle the late 60's widespread campus demonstrations against the Johnson/McNamara War in Vietnam. The blessings of that war are too numerous to list, of course, but the one abiding lesson from the debacle is that the government can be wrong.

Our observation? If the federal government persists in yoking Americans with an individual identifier, it will not be passively accepted, and shouldn't be. It has all the potential to destroy our very (American) sense of personal freedom and bring about all kinds of unintended consequences. Creative individuals will find ways to fight back effectively, be assured. Doesn't the Bible say something about "sowing the wind, reaping a whirlwind?"

An evolving computer technology is called "data mining." Ultra-fast computers take massive amounts of information and process it to yield entirely new lists with specific characteristics. Run the system on medical records and you can tell which drugs work better on which cross-sections of the population. Run it on credit card records and you will discover which restaurants in a town have the most repeat business. There is no guarantee, however, that this technology will be used to benefit consumers over businesses striving for ever more precise targeted marketing campaigns. In fact, it is the perfect tool for "triangulating" individuals. If a person is found on Lists A, B, C, and D, he will very likely have the desired characteristics expected of the new List E, which will place him under the cross-hairs of the firm that now wants to get to know him better, maybe a lot better.

We might regard marketing and advertising as relatively harmless, but what about investigative firms that will certainly have access to the same technology? It won't take them long to do most of their "searches" with keystrokes, and *names on lists* will be open prey.

## **Trends & Developments**

---

The solution for paper trippers is to maximize use of Level One ID as described earlier in this book. Be aware that any record with your "name" on it can easily become some list compiler's data entry. What becomes of it down the road, thanks to data mining, might be something that could bite you in the butt. So why arm the opposition? Deny them personal data whenever you can, and when you do give it, use data that will not connect with the real you.

The image of Big Brother monitoring everyone by video camera has become a debunked practice. Many cities and police departments have tried the practice, but ended up dismantling their systems.

New York City installed TV monitoring in Times Square in 1973 but found that response time based on the camera images didn't allow for catching criminals. After 22 months--and only ten arrests--they took down the cameras.

Atlantic City, NJ abandoned TV surveillance in 1978 without ever arresting a single suspect. (Sea air also corroded their equipment.)

Miami Beach tried it in 1980, but declared it a failure in 1984. Citizens complained that police officers should be on the street, not watching TV monitors. They tried civilian "watchers" but they quickly became bored. Soon no one was monitoring the monitors...

Palm Beach, FL considered installing video cameras to "patrol" the access bridges, but the police chief argued against the idea, and the town council dropped it.

A study by the marketing department at UCLA in the early 80s discovered that the more a retail establishment displays video surveillance hardware, the more some individuals feel the challenge to shoplift. Many police departments concur with this observation.

The system in Boston has brought the police to remark, "The criminals get used to the cameras and tend to move out of sight."

The use of photography in traffic situations is perhaps a few degrees more constructive. Still cameras that catch drivers going through obvious red lights do help reveal these idiots to the proper authorities, who can then instruct them in the error of their ways. It's always galling to get a traffic citation, but do you really want these types broadsiding you? Some people deserve to learn a lesson or two, and they won't have much to say about it in court after the judge takes a look for himself. There is no "privacy" defense here, either, since the prevailing legal view is that anyone in public has no "expectation of privacy."

Six states require credit bureaus to provide a free copy of a credit report to a consumer who requests it, even by the Internet. The states are New Jersey, Georgia, Massachusetts, Vermont, Colorado, and Maryland.

In New Jersey and California drivers have the choice of listing a post office box, or the address of an acquaintance on their drivers licenses and motor vehicle registration files. This trend will likely spread to other states as legislatures wise up to the "stalking" potential of having residence addresses readily available to any and all.

A company called SearchSoftware America has developed a software product, the Data Clustering Engine, that can combine records from multiple data bases to eliminate duplicates and group data based on household, individual, or any other criteria. It accomplishes this despite mistakes in spelling, foreign names, variations in data, and out-of-order words. It can be used for discovering relationships and patterns in data for fraud investigations, customer information, or data base marketing.

Bell Atlantic offers a service called "Star 54" that allows a stranger to call a number and input your home telephone number and for 75 cents the computer will give the person your name and complete address. The service can be blocked, however, by calling 888-579-0323. Paper trippers, of course, will never have a phone listed in their real name, or a telephone number linked to their residence. That's why we have cellular phones and voice mail, folks.

## Trends & Developments

---

We've all heard the horror story that someday "government" will require the implanting of microchips in humans as a means of identification. Naturally, we would "never go along with it," but the practice has already begun with "OrthoID," an international children's identification process. Parents would be offered peace of mind, supposedly, by knowing that the encoded microchip bonded to their child's tooth would enable identification through a matching of recorded information on the Internet. Another company offers a bracelet intended to be worn by children so that they can be located and tracked by satellite. Both of these idiocies are perfect examples of computer "solutions" looking for "problems." Only in virtual reality will computers save you. In "real" reality, only common sense will save you. And with no common sense, you're not going to make it anywhere, period.

Surfing the Web and playing on the Internet are hardly anonymous pursuits. Once you provide a Zip code, name or birth date you have become data fodder for countless strangers who will do as they please with your "privacy." Providing such data opens up a treasure trove of information on you and your family. Any two pieces of data, like your Zip code and birth date, allow access to a third, a process known as triangulation. Combined with public census information they can quickly learn your income and family size as well as medical records, which are stored by Zip code in case of an epidemic. For these reasons Internet users should simply learn to practice paper tripping: never give out your true identity. Give them a Level One ID—disposable.

The War on Drugs is a failure. If U.S. military and law enforcement agencies had slowed the flow of drugs into this country, the shortage would push up prices on the street, but prices have declined. Meanwhile, non-violent offenders are being incarcerated on a vast scale. More than half a million people are arrested annually for merely possessing marijuana, a drug far safer than many legal ones. The number of drug offenders behind bars (at public expense) has increase 700 percent since 1980.

Prohibition was also a failure. Repeal of the Volstead Act initiated an overnight reduction in crime. Even alcohol consumption declined as it lost its "forbidden" appeal. But so intense is the paranoia about drugs that the option of tolerance is treated as unthinkable. The drug warriors will not moderate their policy, acting like the generals and politicians who led us into Vietnam. "If we only redouble our efforts, we can achieve whatever we want." At least Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense under Herr Johnson, has admitted Vietnam was a mistake.

The War on Drugs has led to perversions of the law as well with implementation of rules defining "money laundering" and greatly extending the application of civil asset seizure and forfeiture. Victims of these new "enforcement" techniques more often than not have had nothing to with "drugs" at all, but became targets more from mere ignorance than any criminal intent.

The proponents of continuing the War on Drugs appear oblivious to the real harm they are causing our society, preferring to imprison ever greater numbers of people, strip them of their assets, and consign them to lives of diminished expectations. To be sure this activity provides growing employment opportunities for the broad "law enforcement" community, from the cops, federal agents, jailers, prison management, to (criminal) defense attorneys, probation/parole officers, judges and courts. These folks want the War to last forever. They love it! With all their arrogance and hubris, however, they are truly the people the Greeks had in mind when they said, "Those whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad." An abyss of apocalyptic proportions awaits this country if it can't get its thinking straight. Most people sent to prison eventually get out, and it would be hard to say that the experience makes most of them any kinder or gentler.

The U.S. prison population increased almost 100,000 nationally in 1997, to more than 1.7 million inmates. This means that one out of every 155 U.S. residents was behind bars. In mid-1977 there were 1.1 million state prisoners, over 560,000 jail inmates, and almost 100,000 federal prisoners. It is generally believed that the overall increase of 577,000 inmates since 1990 is due to harsher sentencing laws and *more drug arrests*.

The War on Drugs is feeding our prison system with primarily non-violent individuals who will ultimately emerge as street-wise, maybe not so non-violent, potential "real" criminals. The one thing all inmates have is time, and a lot of them use it to learn from other inmates. And



## Trends & Developments

---

what do they learn? Why, they're learning "HOW TO DO IT BETTER NEXT TIME," folks. What else is there to talk about? Our little marijuana smokers and speed freaks now get to socialize with car thieves, robbers, "real" drug dealers, and other types who are perhaps better where they are. The sex-offenders are typically shunned, but the scammers and white-collar crime types are revered as "professors." You may not want to think of our prisons as "schools," but they definitely are. And it's only a matter of time before everybody "graduates" to a new start in life—near you.

Which brings us to the recent determination by the U.S. Supreme Court that the so-called "Megan's Laws" in New York and New Jersey are constitutional, and that the notification requirements are not unconstitutional added punishment. These laws are in place in 45 states and allow authorities to notify residents when paroled sex offenders move into their communities.

There are continuing challenges to these laws in many states, and the Court did not rule on the merits of the law itself, which means that it still may hear future challenges. But communities everywhere have begun their own forms of notification, regarding it a "non-punitive goal" of public safety, and not an additional punishment for parolees.

Without debating the merits of these laws or the justifications for their implementation, we would simply point out that surely not all sex offenders are the same or represent equal levels of danger to the communities in which they live. Surely some were convicted after what might have been nothing more than a youthful "experience," did their time, and have since determined to "sin no more." Do these individuals deserve to be painted with the same brush as a confirmed pedophile or rapist?

If they don't, yet are nevertheless consigned to a life of harassment and closed doors, we can fully understand why they might want to use options in The Paper Trip III to create some distance between their old selves and the new ones they want to become. Truly, if they "sin no more," where's the harm? Don't we really want *better* people among us, *especially* if they've already suffered the ignominy of prison? Again, let's get our thinking straight!

When the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department culled its sex-offender list to meet the requirements of California's "Megan's Law" they found incorrect information on about two-thirds. With about 90 high-risk offenders on the list some were long dead, others in prison, and many who had "vanished." When deputies went to listed addresses, the residents claimed never to have heard of the offenders. One deputy with ten known offenders in his area found only one living at his listed address. People convicted of sex offenses in California since 1944 must register annually, but the new database lists addresses of only "high-risk" offenders.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service has introduced INSPASS, a high-tech identification system that checks a person's biometrics—such as hand and retina scans—for the purposes of getting frequent travelers quickly through Customs. People must apply for and register with the system voluntarily, but they must provide detailed personal information that becomes part of the government's databases.

Despite the nominally benign purposes, the federal government is simply amassing more and more information about individual citizens in centralized databases. You didn't hear the recent stories of IRS agents intimidating taxpayers, and in some cases selling private tax data? You didn't hear that the Clinton administration has been suspected of inappropriately using the FBI files of 900 persons? Do you think it's wise that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has issued "rules" that would require all state drivers licenses, by Oct. 1, 2000, contain a person's SSN that can be "read visually or by electronic means" and that the states verify the numbers with SSA?

The adding of more and more personal information in government files adds up to a dangerous combination, which ultimately leads to the ability to produce a private dossier on any subject in those files. We know we can't trust government always to "do the right thing" so why give them tools to make their malfeasance even easier? To let mid-level bureaucrats in the Transportation Department determine what might easily become a national ID card is insanity.

The insanity is made all the more perverse if the Congress (and the President) do not disavow this possibility and stand aside as unelected officials have their way. The linking of

## Trends & Developments

---

state drivers licenses with the SSN will produce a de facto national ID. The national ID will become the link to all other personal data files, and with just a few keystrokes vast amounts of data could instantly become available for purposes that have nothing to do with driving down the highway or applying for retirement. If we can't trust government now, we won't be able to tolerate the alternative with a national ID card. Let's just say NO, and mean it!

A California Superior Court jury found in favor of a man who said he was unable to get work for four years because of an erroneous background report that labeled him a shoplifter. Brontl W. Kelly alleged that he was reduced to poverty and homelessness because a major retailer had passed the report to an agency that specializes in background checks and provides such information to potential employers. Kelly was awarded \$73,680.

Retailers will soon be able to use a new computerized credit-rating system to decide not only whether they will take your check, but how big a check you can write. Banks will also use it to decide whether they will let you open a checking account, and what kind of fees you will pay. Deluxe Corp., the country's biggest check printer, has joined with Fair, Isaac & Co., a credit-scoring company, and Acxiom Corp., a data warehouse, to create the new system for rating a merchant's risk of accepting an individual's check and debit cards.

Deluxe will gather information from banks about bounced checks and related payment problems. Acxiom will combine that data with other financial information and give it to Fair, Isaac, which will use it to generate a rating. Deluxe sends back the rating to the retailer's computer. The clerk never sees the actual rating but is instructed, based on predetermined criteria, whether to accept or reject the transaction.

We'll watch what happens to this concept—in practice. We already know how error-prone credit reports are, and how cavalier the credit reporting agencies are about "accuracy." Frankly, it's hard to imagine that banks (the most "timid" businesses in the world) and merchants (who above all are sensitive to public opinion) could *possibly* align themselves with an industry known best for its rude indifference to consumers. This will be interesting, indeed.

Public records about you are for sale, and the states are doing a lot of selling. Motor vehicle departments not only generate lots of money from licensing and car registrations, but also have developed a profitable sideline business talking to strangers about you. While they will sell most of what they know about you, they don't ask your permission, and for the most part don't tell you about it afterward. They will tell insurance companies about your speeding tickets, provide a newspaper with details of your latest dance with a light pole, and give your home address to a supermarket tracking cars in their parking lot. California's DMV answered about 30 million requests in 1997 and earned over \$50 million doing so. At least nine other state agencies in California routinely sell much of the information they collect.

Most of the information being sold all-too-willingly to private companies has long been publicly available, but computerization has made it manageable, and therefore valuable. Many new services with databases on hold are ready to provide "background" information to anyone who can punch in a credit card number, no questions asked. The potential dangers from having detailed personal information fall into the wrong hands should be obvious, but officials express concern only for how much "good" comes from having the practice yield such enormous benefits to the public. The moral: keep your name out of public records. Use Level One ID.

In the 25 years since the passage of the U.S. Privacy Act (1974) our government and lawmakers seem to have forgotten the two basic principles that guided its formulation. The first is a restriction on the government from taking computer data gathered for one purpose (say, the census) and using them for another purpose (say, tax collection). The second precept is that unique numerical identifiers should be avoided because they make dossier preparation temptingly easy. This is why the ACLU still gets upset when the SSN is used beyond its original intent.

Fourteen states permanently bar ex-offenders from voting—Alabama, Arizona, Delaware, Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington and Wyoming. Overall, 3.9 million Americans (about one in 50 adults) are temporarily or permanently disenfranchised because of a felony conviction. In Florida one out of three black men can't vote because of a criminal record. The U.S. leads the democratic countries of

## **Trends & Developments**

---

the world in both the absolute and proportional numbers of people denied the right to vote because of felony convictions, and only U.S. state laws bar voting for life. Interesting to note, however, is that four states—Maine, Massachusetts, Utah and Vermont—allow prisoners to vote.

The FBI now has a national database of DNA, which can be accessed by all the states' law enforcement agencies. This database started out with only sex offenders, but the trend will be to include more and more criminal types, even suspects. Currently, all states require people convicted of serious sexual offenses to donate blood samples, but differ on other groups such as people convicted of violent felonies, juvenile offenders and parolees. Four states—Virginia, Wyoming, New Mexico and Alabama—require all people convicted of a felony to provide DNA samples. Louisiana allows DNA to be taken from people merely arrested in a crime, a practice that has not yet been tested in the courts.

There are two objections to this development, both valid and both deserving of careful resolution. The first is the scientific concern that DNA evidence must be interpreted, not by a civil service clerk, but by an expert. Kary B. Mullis, winner of the 1993 Nobel Prize in chemistry for inventing the polymerase chain reaction, the major method used to analyze DNA, was the expert witness for the defense in the O.J. Simpson trial. He has stated that the FDA would never allow, scientifically, what the FBI did in the trial. "DNA is little blue spots that need to be interpreted, not numbers on a Social Security card that can be easily compared. An expert witness is not required for an SSN because it's data. But for DNA the data itself requires an expert witness to interpret. I don't think the FBI or any of the DNA labs—at least any I've seen close-up—is really scientifically valid, not yet. I've said that several times under oath."

The second question concerns civil liberties. The DNA databanks represent another case of the camel's nose under the tent. This new police method infringes on privacy and reduces people to data. A person will tend to become less a person and more a DNA type. With three other national databases now being established (new employees, medical patients, and drivers license holders), just how long will it take before government operatives decide that "in the interest of justice" the DNA database should be connected on line as well?

So far Congress has not addressed these issues, but the concerns about accuracy of the matching procedure(s) and the determining of who is to be included in the database are fundamentally serious ones. Keep your eyes and ears open as this trend evolves.

A national system of instant background checks for gun buyers began Nov. 30, 1998. The FBI and state governments now require background approvals not just for handgun buyers but also those who buy rifles and shotguns, plus the 2.5 million annual transactions when an owner retrieves a firearm from a pawn shop. Federal law bans gun purchases by people convicted or under indictment on felony charges, fugitives, the mentally ill, those with dishonorable military discharges, those who have renounced U.S. citizenship, illegal immigrants, illegal drug users and those convicted of domestic violence misdemeanors or under domestic violence restraining orders. State laws add other categories.

Under the new system, 27 states have decided to do some or all of the checks themselves. The FBI will do the checks for the rest. In the FBI system a gun dealer will telephone one of two toll-free numbers and supply the buyer's name, sex, race, date of birth and state of residence. If no record is found in a computer check, approval for the sale will be given to the dealer within three minutes. If a record is found the call will be automatically transferred to FBI examiners who will check the record, and advise the dealer to deny the sale or delay it for further checking. Up to three days are allowed for further checking. To date, 62% of disapprovals resulted from the buyer being a convicted or indicted felon.

The day after this program began the National Rifle Association sued in federal court to bar the FBI from keeping lists of law-abiding citizens who buy guns. The Justice Department wants to maintain the lists for six months "to permit audits to assure that all gun purchases are truly legitimate." The NRA maintains that lists should be kept only of people barred by law from owning guns, and further, that the Brady Act forbids establishing a registry of gun buyers and directs the Justice Department to "destroy all records." We have learned that the FBI originally wanted to keep all computer-search records for 18 months, but that Congressional pressure resulted in the compromise of "only" six months.