

# INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

## Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the 2022 Interim

September 20, 2022

### Call to Order and Roll Call

The 4th meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Transportation was held on Tuesday, September 20, 2022, at 1:00 PM, in Room 149 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Jimmy Higdon, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll. The minutes from the committee's August 16, 2022, meeting were approved.

Present were:

Members: Senator Jimmy Higdon, Co-Chair; Representative Ken Upchurch, Co-Chair; Senators Karen Berg, Johnnie Turner, Phillip Wheeler, Mike Wilson, and Max Wise; Representatives Josh Branscum, Kevin D. Bratcher, Randy Bridges, Jonathan Dixon, Ken Fleming, Samara Heavrin, Thomas Huff, Derek Lewis, Bobby McCool, Shawn McPherson, Charles Miller, Ruth Ann Palumbo, Sal Santoro, Tom Smith, Cherlynn Stevenson, Ashley Tackett Laferty, Walker Thomas, Susan Westrom, and Buddy Wheatley.

Guests: Matt Cole, Commissioner, Department of Vehicle Regulation, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC); Sarah Jackson, REAL ID Project Manager, Office of the Transportation Cabinet Secretary, KYTC; Captain Marshall Johnson, Driver Testing Branch, Kentucky State Police (KSP); Shannon Frey, Services and Volunteer Coordinator, St. John Center; and George Eklund, Education and Advocacy Director, Coalition for the Homeless.

LRC Staff: Dana Fugazzi, Ashley Nash, and Christina Williams.

### Regional Driver's License Issuance

Matt Cole, Commissioner, Department of Vehicle of Regulation, KYTC and Sarah Jackson, REAL ID Project Manager, Office of the Transportation Cabinet Secretary, KYTC, updated the committee on regional driver's license issuance. There are now 32 driver licensing regional offices in Kentucky. The newest regional offices include locations in Bellevue, Covington, Independence, Lexington (Spindletop), London, Maysville, Pikeville, and Pineville. There are three options available for renewing credentials: visiting a regional or pop-up office, renewing online, or renewing by mail.

Pop-up driver licensing offices visit counties throughout the state where a regional office is not located. In the first nine months of 2022, the pop-up program has held more

than 160 local events in Kentucky's 94 pop-up eligible counties. With its local partners, the program will host a total of 220 events in 2022. The Pop-up Driver Licensing Program also helped Eastern Kentuckians in the aftermath of the July flooding. The program's disaster-related services spanned nearly 700 business hours over 23 days, with more than 40 KYTC employees from regional offices across the state working in the affected areas and credentials were issued to more than 3,300 Kentuckians.

Several legislators expressed their gratitude to the KYTC employees for their efforts in ensuring the regional driver's license office transition has been a success.

In response to a question asked by Representative Branscum concerning glitches with online renewals, Commissioner Cole stated improvements have been made with the online renewal process. He stated one issue that has arisen is the online system will not currently renew expired credentials, but that issue is being addressed. Ms. Jackson stated another issue being looked into is that some people will attempt to renew their credentials with a picture that is older than 16 years old, which the system will not accept.

In response to a question asked by Chairman Higdon, Ms. Jackson stated a person may renew their standard license or identification card, or their REAL ID license or REAL ID identification card online. Currently, a change of address is not able to be completed online, but is able to be completed through mail-in renewals. Reporting a lost or stolen credential may also be done by mail. Commercial driver's licenses (CDLs) must be renewed in person per federal regulation, however, that may change in the future.

In response to a question asked by Chairman Higdon, Ms. Jackson stated KYTC has not ruled out the addition of more regional offices, but for now, they are holding at 32 regional offices for further evaluation of the process and the daily volume of visitors in those offices before any additions are made.

### **Regional Driver's License Testing**

Captain Marshall Johnson, Driver Testing Branch, KSP, updated the committee on regional driver's license testing. There are 27 regional driver testing locations, as well as one pending in Bellevue. Instructions for scheduling appointments online are located on the KSP driver testing website at [Kentuckystatepolice.org/driver-testing](https://kentuckystatepolice.org/driver-testing). Schedules release three weeks at a time, and this timeframe is automatically maintained. For example, on Tuesday, September 20, 2022, at 8:00 AM, the scheduling system will release new appointments three weeks out, for Tuesday, October 11, 2022. When applicants consume all of these appointments, the "No Availability" message will appear. The following morning at 8:00 AM, October 12 appointments will automatically release. Appointments will generate at 8:00 AM every day the office is operational.

On July 5, 2022, testing availability was expanded by allowing applicants to schedule testing appointments at any testing location they choose. Written test availability

increased significantly for some locations, but road test appointments saw a decrease in availability statewide. To compensate, the ratio of written tests to road tests is carefully monitored and adjusted. Training and software updates are ongoing and both are expected to increase efficiency and testing capacity.

Eleven locations are now using tablets for administering the written tests. Eventually all locations will be outfitted with tablets. Kentucky State Police has added staff to improve wait times and availability.

Captain Johnson gave statistics comparing the number of tests administered year-to-date (January 1 to September 15) for 2022 against the same period in 2021. The total number of all skills test administered declined three percent, from 64,744 in 2021 to 62,820 in 2022. Motorcycle testing was up, while tests in vehicles decreased.

As for written tests, there was a 2.3 percent increase from 2021 to this year, with the KSP administering 115,769 to date. Written testing in all areas (regular operators, motorcycles, CDLs, and CDL add-on endorsements) increased in 2022.

Captain Johnson thanked the committee members as well as the KYTC employees for their cooperation and aiding in the smooth driver testing transition.

In response to a question asked by Chairman Higdon, Captain Johnson stated the full personnel expansion efforts will begin on October 1, 2022.

Chairman Higdon urged for a possibility of having the written and knowledge test taken at a local location to eliminate one of the two trips needed to a regional testing office.

In response to a question asked by Senator Berg, Captain Johnson stated the testing numbers are reflective of pre-pandemic numbers.

In response to a question asked by Senator Berg, Captain Johnson stated KSP has adjusted the scheduling window a number of times, and are not opposed to further adjustment. He added the three week scheduling window was set because historically when scheduling was allowed to be set beyond a two week period, there were more no-shows to appointments. The window was extended out to three weeks so that people would be able to plan a little further out than just a two week period.

In response to a question asked by Representative Tackett Laferty, Captain Johnson stated he would defer to KYTC the issue of testing still being a possibility on the scheduled day if the correct documentation is not brought to the initial written test. Representative Tackett Laferty suggested the possibility of the person bringing the correct documents when they return for the skills portion of the test, and the person still being allowed to take their written test. Captain Johnson stated if KSP can work it out that the person does not

have to make two trips simply because of a document, they will test them as KSP does not want to impose any greater strain than necessary. Captain Johnson stated KSP will work with people when it comes to documents in connection with KYTC and the requirements that are in place for that.

**ID's and Driver's Licenses for Individuals without a Fixed Permanent Address (2023 RS BR 222 Sponsored by Representative Randy Bridges)**

Representative Randy Bridges, District 3, presented BR 222 for the 2023 Regular Session, which expands and modifies procedures for the issuance of personal IDs and driver's licenses for individuals without a fixed permanent address. Representative Bridges was joined by Shannon Frey, Services and Volunteer Coordinator, St. John Center and George Eklund, Education and Advocacy Director, Coalition for the Homeless, in briefing the committee on the issue. Identification cards are essential to obtaining housing, getting a job, opening a bank account, picking up a prescription, voting, going to the doctor, providing proof of identification to law enforcement, and accessing government buildings. The proposed bill will lower the ID cost from \$10 to \$5, allow homeless youth to independently obtain an ID without parental consent in limited circumstances, and allow for driver's license renewal for homeless individuals. Kentucky could guarantee low-cost IDs for people experiencing homelessness for approximately \$25,000 per year. Under the proposed bill, an unsheltered person needs a birth certificate, a social security card, and a social service provided form stating that they lack a fixed address. A social service provider could include shelters, health clinics, or other organizations that serve the homeless.

A driver's license could be needed for an unsheltered person because people who lose their housing often still have a car and a job. Creating a pathway to renew their driver's license will help them to get back into housing faster and prevent them from needing more expensive interventions. This proposed bill will not impact REAL ID, it will only change how some people establish residency for a standard ID or driver's license. Official documents must also still be provided such as a birth certificate or a social security card to get an ID or a license.

In response to a question asked by Chairman Higdon, Mr. Eklund stated that under this proposal, requirements for establishing identity and proof of citizenship or legal presence remain the same in obtaining a homeless ID as for a person with a fixed address.

In response to a question asked by Chairman Higdon, Mr. Eklund stated the address that is used on the ID obtained by the homeless person would be the address of the social service provider from which the applicant obtained the form required for the application.

In response to a question asked by Chairman Higdon, Ms. Frey stated the St. John Center provides a bus ticket for their homeless population to the Nia Center on Broadway in Louisville to turn their paperwork in to obtain the credential.

Senator Wheeler shared his concern that Chairman Higdon also voiced about minors obtaining IDs without parental consent. Mr. Eklund and Ms. Frey assured the committee minors receiving these IDs would not be rebellious runaways, but minors needing extensive aid and resources without any parental support.

With no other business to come before the committee, Chairman Higdon adjourned the meeting at 2:05 P.M.