



December 1, 2007

Information Alert

From INTRAA and the National Center for Transgender Equality

Indiana BMV Stops Practice of Using Gender to Invalidate Driver Licenses

The Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) has agreed to immediately discontinue using gender mismatches solely as a reason for invalidating driver licenses. Indiana Transgender Rights Advocacy Alliance (INTRAA) and the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) successfully worked with officials at the Indiana BMV to bring about this policy change.

On November 6th, the Indiana BMV began issuing warning letters to people in the BMV database whose information did not match Social Security Administration's (SSA) records. Information compared between the two databases included name, Social Security number, date of birth, and **gender**. Letters instructed recipients to resolve discrepancies within 30 days or risk losing their driving privileges.

INTRAA and NCTE brought to the Indiana BMV's attention that Social Security uses a different standard for changing gender markers than what the BMV uses. Because of these differing standards, some transgender people legitimately have an Indiana driver license or identification card with one gender marker and SSA records with a different gender marker. Through the work of INTRAA and NCTE, Indiana BMV Commissioner Ron Stiver realized the difficulties surrounding gender marker verification and issued an immediate policy change. The newest policy is that gender mismatches will be ignored by the BMV.

Indiana driver license and identification card holders who have other SSA mismatches besides gender, such as name or date of birth, will still need to resolve those discrepancies. Those with mismatches besides gender, and who fail to get their SSA and BMV records to match, will be sent a second letter. This second letter will advise them that unless the mismatch is resolved their driving license will become invalid, effective 30 days from the date of the second letter.

The Indiana BMV does not plan to issue "disregard" notices to people who received letters for gender-only mismatches. However, people who had gender *only* as a mismatch will not be issued a second letter. In the future people who have gender and a second type of information mismatch (for instance, name) will be sent letters that mention only the non-gender mismatches.

INTRAA and NCTE applaud the Indiana BMV for its quick response and for resolving a problem that affected a sizable proportion of transgender people in Indiana.

For more information on the Indiana BMV Social Security Online Verification program, go to <http://www.in.gov/bmv/4098.htm> .

If you have received one of these letters and are looking for information or assistance, please contact us at info@intraa.org or jotto@nctequality.org .

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