

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 5211

**FISCAL
NOTE**

By Delegates Moore, Jeffries, Chiarelli, Leavitt,

Phillips, Linville, Dittman, and Drennan

[Introduced February 05, 2026; referred to the

Committee on the Judiciary]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §3-1-34 and §17B-2-1 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as
2 amended, relating to elections and driver's licenses and identification cards; clarifying
3 when a license or identification card is not valid to vote; and requiring certain identification
4 cards to be stamped with an NC for noncitizen.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

CHAPTER 3. ELECTIONS.

ARTICLE 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS AND DEFINITIONS.

§3-1-34. Voting procedures generally; identification; assistance to voters; voting records; penalties.

1 (a) A person desiring to vote in an election shall, upon entering the election room, clearly
2 state his or her name and residence to one of the poll clerks who shall thereupon announce the
3 person's name and residence in a clear and distinct tone of voice. The person desiring to vote shall
4 present to one of the poll clerks a valid identifying document meeting the requirements of §3-1-
5 34(a)(1) or §3-1-34(a)(2) of this code, and the poll clerk shall inspect and confirm that the name on
6 the valid identifying document conforms to the name in the individual's voter registration record
7 and that, if the valid identifying document contains a photograph, the image displayed is truly an
8 image of the person presenting the document. If that person is found to be duly registered as a
9 voter at that precinct, he or she shall sign his or her name in the designated location provided at
10 the precinct. If that person is physically or otherwise unable to sign his or her name, his or her mark
11 shall be affixed by one of the poll clerks in the presence of the other and the name of the poll clerk
12 affixing the voter's mark shall be indicated immediately under the affixation. A ballot may not be
13 given to the person until he or she signs his or her name on the designated location or his or her
14 signature is affixed thereon.

15 (1) A document is a valid identifying document if it:

16 (A) Has been issued either by the State of West Virginia, one of its political subdivisions or
17 instrumentalities, or by the United States Government.

18 (B) Contains the name of the person desiring to vote; and

19 (C) Contains a photograph of the person desiring to vote: *Provided*, That a driver's license
20 or identification card issued in accordance with §17B-2-1(f)(4) of this code that does not contain a
21 photograph of the person desiring to vote is a valid identifying document: *Provided, however*, That
22 a driver's license or identification card issued with the designation "NC" on the back of the card or
23 temporary identification document under the restrictions category shall not be a valid identifying
24 document.

25 (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of §3-1-34(a)(1) of this code, the following documents, if
26 they contain the voter's name, shall be considered valid identifying documents, and a person
27 desiring to vote may produce any of the following:

28 (A) A valid West Virginia driver's license or valid West Virginia identification card issued by
29 the West Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles, including a driver's license or identification card
30 issued in accordance with §17B-2-1(f)(4) of this code.

31 (B) A valid driver's license issued by a state other than the State of West Virginia;

32 (C) A valid United States passport or passport card;

33 (D) A valid employee identification card with a photograph of the eligible voter issued by
34 any branch, department, agency, or entity of the United States Government or of the State of West
35 Virginia, or by any county, municipality, board, authority, or other political subdivision of West
36 Virginia;

37 (E) A valid student identification card with a photograph of the eligible voter issued by an
38 institution of higher education in West Virginia, or a valid high school identification card issued by a
39 West Virginia high school;

40 (F) A valid military identification card issued by the United States with a photograph of the
41 person desiring to vote; or

42 (G) A valid voter registration card that includes the voter's photograph issued by a county
43 clerk in the State of West Virginia or the Secretary of State. The county clerk or the Secretary of
44 State may not charge or collect a fee for the application or issuance of a voter registration card that
45 includes the voter's photograph.

46 (3) Any expired document identified in §3-1-34(a)(2) of this code is a valid identifying
47 document if presented by a registered voter 65 years of age or older: *Provided*, That the identifying
48 document was not expired on the registered voter's 65th birthday.

49 (4) In lieu of providing a valid identifying document, as required by this section, a registered
50 voter may be accompanied at the polling place by an adult known to the registered voter for at
51 least six months. That adult may sign an affidavit on a form provided to clerks and poll workers by
52 the Secretary of State, which states under oath or affirmation that the adult has known the
53 registered voter for at least six months, and that in fact the registered voter is the same person who
54 is present for the purpose of voting. For the affidavit to be considered valid, the adult shall present
55 a valid identifying document with his or her name, address, and photograph.

56 (5) A poll worker may allow a voter, whom the poll worker has known for at least six
57 months, to vote without presenting a valid identifying document.

58 (6) If the person desiring to vote is unable to furnish a valid identifying document, or if the
59 poll clerk determines that the proof of identification presented by the voter does not qualify as a
60 valid identifying document, the person desiring to vote shall be permitted to cast a provisional
61 ballot after executing an affidavit affirming his or her identity pursuant to §3-1-34(a)(6)(B) of this
62 code.

63 (A) The provisional ballot may be counted once the election authority verifies the identity of
64 the individual by comparing that individual's signature to the current signature on file with the
65 election authority and determines that the individual was otherwise eligible to cast a ballot at the
66 polling place where the ballot was cast.

67 (B) The affidavit to be used for voting shall be substantially in the following form:

68 "State of West Virginia

69 County of.....

70 I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that my name is; that I
71 reside at.....; and that I am the person listed in the precinct register under this name
72 and at this address.

73 I understand that knowingly providing false information is a violation of law and subjects
74 me to possible criminal prosecution.

75

76 Signature of voter

77 Subscribed and affirmed before me this..... day of, 20....

78

79 Name of Election Official

80

81 Signature of Election Official".

82 (7) A voter who votes in person at a precinct polling place that is located in a building which
83 is part of a state licensed care facility where the voter is a resident is not required to provide proof
84 of identification as a condition before voting in an election.

85 (8) The person entering voter information into the centralized voter registration database
86 shall cause the records to indicate when a voter has not presented a valid identifying document
87 and has executed a voter identity affidavit.

88 (9) If a voter participating in the Address Confidentiality Program established by §48-28A-
89 103 of this code, executes a voter identity affidavit, the program participant's residential or mailing
90 address is subject to the confidentiality provisions of §48-28A-108 of this code and shall be used
91 only for those statutory and administrative purposes authorized by this section.

92 (10) The Secretary of State shall educate voters about the requirement to present a valid
93 identifying document and develop a program to help ensure that all eligible voters are able to
94 obtain a valid identifying document.

95 (b) The clerk of the county commission may, upon verification that the precinct at which a
96 handicapped person is registered to vote is not handicap accessible, transfer that person's
97 registration to the nearest polling place in the county which is handicap accessible. A request by a
98 handicapped person for a transfer of registration must be received by the county clerk no later than
99 30 days prior to the date of the election. A handicapped person who has not made a request for a
100 transfer of registration at least 30 days prior to the date of the election may vote a provisional ballot
101 at a handicap accessible polling place in the county of his or her registration. If during the canvass
102 the county commission determines that the person had been registered in a precinct that is not
103 handicap accessible, the voted ballot, if otherwise valid, shall be counted. The handicapped
104 person may vote in the precinct to which the registration was transferred only as long as the
105 disability exists or the precinct from which the handicapped person was transferred remains
106 inaccessible to the handicapped. To ensure confidentiality of the transferred ballot, the county
107 clerk processing the ballot shall provide the voter with an unmarked envelope and an outer
108 envelope designated "provisional ballot/handicapped voter". After validation of the ballot at the
109 canvass, the outer envelope shall be destroyed and the handicapped voter's ballot shall be placed
110 with other approved provisional ballots prior to removal of the ballot from the unmarked envelope.

111 (c) When the voter's signature is properly marked and the voter has presented a valid
112 identifying document, the two poll clerks shall sign their names in the places indicated on the back
113 of the official ballot and deliver the ballot to the voter to be voted by him or her without leaving the
114 election room. If he or she returns the ballot spoiled to the clerks, they shall immediately mark the
115 ballot "spoiled" and it shall be preserved and placed in a spoiled ballot envelope together with
116 other spoiled ballots to be delivered to the board of canvassers and deliver to the voter another
117 official ballot, signed by the clerks on the reverse side. The voter shall then retire alone to the booth

118 or compartment prepared within the election room for voting purposes and there prepare his or her
119 ballot. In voting for candidates in general and special elections, the voter shall comply with the
120 rules and procedures prescribed in §3-6-5 of this code.

121 (d) A poll clerk shall, in the presence of the other poll clerk, indicate by a check mark, or by
122 other means, inserted in the appropriate place on the registration record of each voter the fact that
123 the voter voted in the election. In primary elections the clerk shall also insert on the registration
124 record of each voter a distinguishing initial or initials of the political party for whose candidates the
125 voter voted. If a person is challenged at the polls, the challenge shall be indicated by the poll clerks
126 on the registration record, together with the name of the challenger. The subsequent removal of
127 the challenge shall be recorded on the registration record by the clerk of the county commission.

128 (e) (1) A voter may not receive any assistance in voting unless, by reason of blindness,
129 disability, advanced age, or inability to read and write, that voter is unable to vote without
130 assistance. Any voter qualified to receive assistance in voting may:

131 (A) Declare his or her choice of candidates to an Election Commissioner of each political
132 party who, in the presence of the voter and in the presence of each other, shall prepare the ballot
133 for voting in the manner provided in this section and, on request, shall read to the voter the names
134 of the candidates selected on the ballot;

135 (B) Require the Election Commissioners to indicate to him or her the relative position of the
136 names of the candidates on the ballot. The voter shall then retire to one of the booths or
137 compartments to prepare his or her ballot in the manner provided in this section;

138 (C) Be assisted by any person of the voter's choice, other than the voter's present or former
139 employer or agent of that employer, the officer or agent of a labor union of which the voter is a past
140 or present member or a candidate on the ballot or an official write-in candidate; or

141 (D) If he or she is handicapped, vote from an automobile outside the polling place or
142 precinct by the absentee balloting method provided in §3-3-5(e) of this code in the presence of an
143 Election Commissioner of each political party if all of the following conditions are met:

144 (i) The polling place is not handicap accessible; and

145 (ii) Voters are not voting or waiting to vote inside the polling place.

146 (2) The voted ballot shall then be returned to the precinct officials and secured in a sealed

147 envelope to be returned to the clerk of the county commission with all other election materials. The

148 ballot shall then be tabulated using the appropriate method provided in §3-1-8 of this code as it

149 relates to the specific voting system in use.

150 (3) A voter who requests assistance in voting but who is believed not to be qualified for
151 assistance under the provisions of this section shall be permitted to vote a provisional ballot with
152 the assistance of any person authorized in this section to render assistance.

153 (4) One or more of the Election Commissioners or poll clerks in the precinct may challenge
154 the ballot on the ground that the voter received assistance in voting if when in his, her or their
155 opinion the person who received assistance in voting is not so illiterate, blind, disabled or of such
156 advanced age as to have been unable to vote without assistance. The Election Commissioner or
157 poll clerk or commissioners or poll clerks making the challenge shall enter the challenge and the
158 reason for such challenge on the form and in the manner prescribed or authorized by §3-3-1 et
159 seq. of this code.

160 (5) An Election Commissioner or other person who assists a voter in voting:

161 (A) May not in any manner request or seek to persuade or induce the voter to vote a
162 particular ticket or for a particular candidate or for or against any public question and shall not keep
163 or make any memorandum or entry of anything occurring within the voting booth or compartment
164 and shall not, directly or indirectly, reveal to any person the name of a candidate voted for by the
165 voter, which ticket he or she had voted, how he or she had voted on any public question, or
166 anything occurring within the voting booth, compartment, or voting machine booth except when
167 required by law to give testimony as to the matter in a judicial proceeding; and

168 (B) Shall sign a written oath or affirmation before assisting the voter on a form prescribed
169 by the Secretary of State stating that he or she will not override the actual preference of the voter

170 being assisted, attempt to influence the voter's choice, or mislead the voter into voting for
171 someone other than the candidate of voter's choice. The person assisting the voter shall also
172 swear or affirm that he or she believes that the voter is voting free of intimidation or manipulation.
173 There is no requirement that a person providing assistance to a voter is required to sign an oath or
174 affirmation where the reason for requesting assistance is the voter's inability to vote without
175 assistance because of blindness as defined in §5-15-3 of this code and the inability to vote without
176 assistance because of blindness is certified in writing by a physician of the voter's choice and is on
177 file in the office of the clerk of the county commission.

178 (6) In accordance with instructions issued by the Secretary of State, the clerk of the county
179 commission shall provide a form entitled "list of assisted voters", on a form as prescribed by the
180 Secretary of State. The commissioners shall enter the name of each voter receiving assistance in
181 voting the ballot, together with the poll slip number of that voter and the signature of the person or
182 the commissioner from each party who assisted the voter. If no voter has been assisted in voting,
183 the commissioners shall make and subscribe to an oath of that fact on the list.

184 (f) After preparing the ballot, the voter shall fold the ballot so that the face is not exposed
185 and the names of the poll clerks on it are seen. The voter shall announce his or her name and
186 present his or her ballot to one of the commissioners who shall hand the ballot to another
187 commissioner, of a different political party, who shall deposit it in the ballot box if the ballot is the
188 official one and properly signed. The Commissioner of Election may inspect every ballot before it is
189 deposited in the ballot box to ascertain whether it is single, but without unfolding or unrolling it so
190 as to disclose its content. When the voter has voted, he or she shall retire immediately from the
191 election room and beyond the 60-foot limit and not return except by permission of the
192 commissioners.

193 (g) Following the election, the oaths or affirmations required by this section from those
194 assisting voters, together with the "list of assisted voters", shall be returned by the Election
195 Commissioners to the clerk of the county commission along with the election supplies, records,

196 and returns. The clerk of the county commission shall make the oaths, affirmations, and list
197 available for public inspection and preserve them for a period of 22 months or until disposition is
198 authorized or directed by the Secretary of State or court of record. The clerk may use these
199 records to update the voter registration records in accordance with §3-2-18(d) of this code.

200 (h) Any person making an oath or affirmation required under the provisions of this section
201 who knowingly swears falsely or any person who counsels, advises, aids, or abets another in the
202 commission of false swearing under this section, is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction
203 thereof, shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or confined in jail for a period of not more than one
204 year, or both fined and confined.

205 (i) Any Election Commissioner or poll clerk who authorizes or provides unchallenged
206 assistance to a voter when the voter is known to the Election Commissioner or poll clerk not to
207 require assistance in voting, is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not
208 more than \$5,000 or imprisoned in a state correctional facility for a period of not less than one year
209 nor more than five years, or both fined and imprisoned.

CHAPTER 17B. MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVER'S LICENSES.

ARTICLE 2. ISSUANCE OF LICENSE, EXPIRATION AND RENEWAL.

§17B-2-1. Drivers must be licensed; types of licenses; licensees need not obtain local government license; motorcycle driver license; identification cards.

1 (a)(1) No person, except those hereinafter expressly exempted, may drive a motor vehicle
2 upon a street or highway in this state or upon a subdivision street used by the public generally
3 unless the person has a valid driver's license issued pursuant to this code for the type or class of
4 vehicle being driven.

5 (2) Any person licensed to operate a motor vehicle pursuant to this code may exercise the
6 privilege thereby granted in the manner provided in this code and, except as otherwise provided by
7 law, is not required to obtain any other license to exercise the privilege by a county, municipality, or

8 local board or body having authority to adopt local police regulations.

9 (b) The division, upon issuing a driver's license, shall indicate on the license the type or
10 general class or classes of vehicles the licensee may operate in accordance with this code, federal
11 law, or rule.

12 (1) Licenses shall be issued in different colors for those drivers under age 18, those drivers
13 age 18 to 21, and adult drivers. The commissioner is authorized to select and assign colors to the
14 licenses of the various age groups.

15 (2) Licenses, instruction permits, or identification cards issued to noncitizen legal residents
16 who have successfully satisfied all state and federal requirements for being lawfully present in the
17 State of West Virginia and United States shall be made distinguishable from those forms issued to
18 citizens by adding thereto the designation "NC" on the back of the holder's identification card or
19 temporary identification document under the restrictions section.

20 (c) The following drivers' licenses classifications are hereby established:

21 (1) A Class A, B, or C license shall be issued to those persons 18 years of age or older with
22 two years of driving experience who have qualified for the commercial driver's license established
23 by Chapter 17E of this code and the federal Motor Carrier Safety and Improvement Act of 1999
24 subsequent rules, and have paid the required fee.

25 (2) A Class D license shall be issued to those persons 18 years and older with one year of
26 driving experience who operate motor vehicles other than those types of vehicles which require
27 the operator to be licensed under the provisions of Chapter 17E of this code and federal law and
28 rule and whose primary function or employment is the transportation of persons or property for
29 compensation or wages and have paid the required fee. For the purpose of regulating the
30 operation of motor vehicles, wherever the term "chauffeur's license" is used in this code, it means
31 the Class A, B, C, or D license described in this section or Chapter 17E of this code or federal law
32 or rule: *Provided*, That anyone not required to be licensed under the provisions of Chapter 17E of
33 this code and federal law or rule and who operates a motor vehicle registered or required to be

34 registered as a Class A motor vehicle, as that term is defined in §17A-10-1 of this code, with a
35 gross vehicle weight rating of less than 8,001 pounds, is not required to obtain a Class D license.

36 (3) A Class E license shall be issued to persons who have qualified for a driver's license
37 under the provisions of this chapter and who are not required to obtain a Class A, B, C, or D license
38 and who have paid the required fee. The Class E license may be endorsed under §17B-2-7b of
39 this code for motorcycle operation. The Class E or G license for a person under the age of 18 may
40 also be endorsed with the appropriate graduated driver license level in accordance with §17B-2-
41 3a of this code.

42 (4) A Class F license shall be issued to those persons who successfully complete the
43 motorcycle examination procedure provided by this chapter and have paid the required fee but
44 who do not possess a Class A, B, C, D, or E driver's license.

45 (5) A Class G driver's license or instruction permit shall be issued to a person using bioptic
46 telescopic lenses who has successfully completed an approved driver training program and
47 complied with all other requirements of §17B-2B-1 *et seq.* of this code.

48 (d) All licenses issued under this section may contain information designating the licensee
49 as a diabetic, an organ donor, deaf or hard-of-hearing, as having any other handicap or disability,
50 or that the licensee is an honorably discharged veteran of any branch of the Armed Forces of the
51 United States, according to criteria established by the division, if the licensee requests this
52 information on the license. An honorably discharged veteran may be issued a replacement license
53 without charge if the request is made before the expiration date of the current license and the only
54 purpose for receiving the replacement license is to get the veterans designation placed on the
55 license.

56 (e) No person, except those hereinafter expressly exempted, may drive a motorcycle on a
57 street or highway in this state or on a subdivision street used by the public generally unless the
58 person has a valid motorcycle license, a valid license which has been endorsed under §17A-2-17b
59 of this code for motorcycle operation, or a valid motorcycle instruction permit.

60 (f) (1) An identification card may be issued to a person who:
61 (A) Is a resident of this state in accordance with §17A-3-1a of this code;
62 (B) Has reached the age of two years or, for good cause shown, under the age of two;
63 (C) Has paid the required fee of \$5 per year. The Division of Motor Vehicles may adjust this
64 fee every five years on September 1, based on the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor
65 Statistics most current Consumer Price Index: *Provided*, That an increase in such fee may not
66 exceed 10 percent of the total fee amount in a single year: *Provided, however*, That no fees or
67 charges, including renewal fees, are required if the applicant:

68 (i) Is 65 years or older;
69 (ii) Is legally blind; or
70 (iii) Will be at least 18 years of age at the next general, municipal, or special election and
71 intends to use this identification card as a form of identification for voting; and
72 (D) Presents a birth certificate or other proof of age and identity acceptable to the division
73 with a completed application on a form supplied by the division.

74 (2) The identification card shall contain the same information as a driver's license except
75 that the identification card shall be clearly marked as an identification card. The division may issue
76 an identification card with less information to persons under the age of 16. The division may issue
77 an identification card without a photograph pursuant to subdivision (4) of this subsection. An
78 identification card may be renewed annually on application and payment of the fee required by this
79 section.

80 (A) Every identification card issued to a person who has attained his or her 21st birthday
81 expires on the licensee's birthday in those years in which the licensee's age is evenly divisible by
82 five. Except as provided in paragraph (B) of this subdivision, no identification card may be issued
83 for less than three years or for more than seven years and expires on the licensee's birthday in
84 those years in which the licensee's age is evenly divisible by five.

85 (B) Every identification card issued to a person who has not attained his or her 21st

86 birthday expires 30 days after the licensee's 21st birthday.

87 (C) Every identification card issued to persons under the age of 16 shall be issued for a
88 period of two years and expire on the last day of the month in which the applicant's birthday
89 occurs.

90 (3) The division may issue an identification card to an applicant whose privilege to operate
91 a motor vehicle has been refused, canceled, suspended, or revoked under the provisions of this
92 code.

93 (4) Notwithstanding the provisions of this article to the contrary, the division may issue an
94 identification card without a photograph to an applicant who under oath or affirmation affirms,
95 subject to the laws of perjury and on a form supplied by the division, that the applicant is a member
96 of a recognized religious sect that has established tenets and teachings due to which the applicant
97 is conscientiously opposed to posing for a photograph. The form supplied by the division pursuant
98 to this subdivision shall advise the applicant that an identification card without a photograph may
99 not be acceptable for all identification purposes.

100 (g) For any person over the age of 50 years who wishes to obtain a driver's license or
101 identification card under the provisions of this section:

102 (1) A raised seal or stamp on the birth certificate or certified copy of the birth certificate is
103 not required if the issuing jurisdiction does not require one; and

104 (2) If documents are lacking to prove all changes of name in the history of any such
105 applicant, applicants renewing a driver's license or identification card under the provisions of this
106 section may complete a Name Variance Approval Document as instituted by the division, so long
107 as they can provide:

108 (A) Proof of identity;

109 (B) Proof of residency; and

110 (C) A valid Social Security number.

111 (3) The division may waive any documents necessary to prove a match between names,

112 so long as the division determines the person is not attempting to:

113 (A) Change his or her identity;

114 (B) Assume another person's identity; or

115 (C) Commit fraud.

116 (h) A person over the age of 70 years, or who is on Social Security Disability, who wishes to

117 obtain or renew a driver's license or identification card under the provisions of this section, may not

118 be required to supply a copy of a birth certificate if they can provide:

119 (1) Proof of identity;

120 (2) Proof of residency;

121 (3) A valid Social Security number; and

122 (4) One of the following identifying items:

123 (A) A form of military identification, including a DD214 or equivalent;

124 (B) A U.S. passport, whether valid or expired;

125 (C) School records, including a yearbook;

126 (D) A religious document, that in the judgment of the division is sufficient and authentic to

127 reflect that the person was born in the United States; or

128 (E) An expired driver's license, employment identification card, or other reliable

129 identification card with a recognizable photograph of the person.

130 (i) Any person violating the provisions of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon

131 conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than \$500 and, upon a second or subsequent

132 conviction, shall be fined not more than \$500 or confined in jail not more than six months, or both

133 fined and confined.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to require the designation "NC" on all lawful noncitizens' driver's licenses, identification cards, and temporary identification documents issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles for voter identification purposes and to ensure that all such licenses and identification cards issued are distinguishable from those of citizens' to ensure noncitizens are not capable of utilizing such documentation to vote.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law

and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.