

Driver Licensing Office Workload

QUARTERLY REPORT – JANUARY THROUGH MARCH 2024

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A DLO Workload Data-Q1 CY2024

Monthly workload and performance indicators by office level and statewide

Attachment B DLO Locations

Driver licensing office locations with operations and services information

The Department of Licensing (DOL) was directed through proviso in the 2023 transportation budget to report on a quarterly basis on the driver license office operations, associated workload, and comparative information from prior years.

SUMMARY

Driver Licensing Office Name Change

This quarter, DOL changed the name of licensing services offices (LSO) to driver licensing offices (DLO) to better describe their function and distinguish them from vehicle licensing offices.

REAL ID Enforcement

The Department of Homeland Security established May 7, 2025 as the full enforcement date of the REAL ID Act. After that date, persons will not be able to board a domestic flight or enter a restricted federal facility¹ without a REAL ID-compliant document.

Washington's Enhanced Driver License and Enhanced Identocard (EDL/EID) are REAL ID-compliant. Currently, 1.6 million Washington residents hold EDLs/EIDs which represents 24% of all active Washington licensees and ID cards. Demand for Washington EDLs/EIDs is forecasted to increase during fiscal years 2025 through 2029.

Persons seeking a first time EDL/EID must apply in person at a driver licensing office (DLO). The section of this report titled [Preparing for REAL ID Enforcement](#) covers the variety of improvements and efficiencies DOL is implementing to prepare for the challenges of REAL ID.

DOL2Go Mobile Licensing Unit

The DOL received funding in the 2023-2025 budget to develop a new program bringing licensing services to underrepresented and rural communities around Washington. Launched in July 2023, the DOL2Go mobile unit provides onsite ID card and driver licensing services to people with barriers to visiting our traditional offices. This could include people experiencing homelessness, emergency response such as wildfires, assisted living centers, and in service area gaps which are rural communities without a nearby driver licensing office.



¹ Restricted federal facilities include military bases, nuclear power plants, and areas of federal buildings where one currently must show ID and pass security.

During DOL2Go’s first three quarters, the unit issued 1,400 ID cards and driver licenses to Washington residents at 38 events, including assisting people experiencing homelessness, emergency response following a natural disaster, refugee support, and in communities located in service gap areas.

Workload and Wait Time Summary

Essential services were delivered this quarter through a combination of in-office, DOL2Go mobile office, online, phone and mail services. Over the previous three quarters, driver licensing office (DLO) staff turnover and position vacancies were at historic low levels. The existing DLO staff are fully trained and can efficiently process all types of transactions. These factors contributed to a higher daily average number of licensing services representatives at work who served more customers in a shorter amount of time this quarter compared to the first quarter of 2023. The DLO key workload and performance indicators for this reporting period and comparable periods in 2023 are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Driver Licensing Office Key Workload

Key Workload & Performance Indicators for Driver Licensing Offices Compares First Quarter 2024 to 2023

Workload in Quarter 1 (January - March)	CY 2024	CY 2023
Customers Served in DLO	427,822	403,582
January	137,998	144,848
February	139,318	134,315
March	150,506	124,419
Enhanced - Originals Issued	43,896	53,877
January	14,010	18,271
February	14,066	15,450
March	15,820	20,156
Initial Wait Time Average (minutes)¹	6	6
January	5	6
February	6	7
March	6	6
Customer Experience Time Average (minutes)²	14	17
January	14	17
February	14	17
March	15	16
LSRs in Service - Daily Average³	259	246
January	262	250
February	261	244
March	253	244

Table 1 Data Notes:

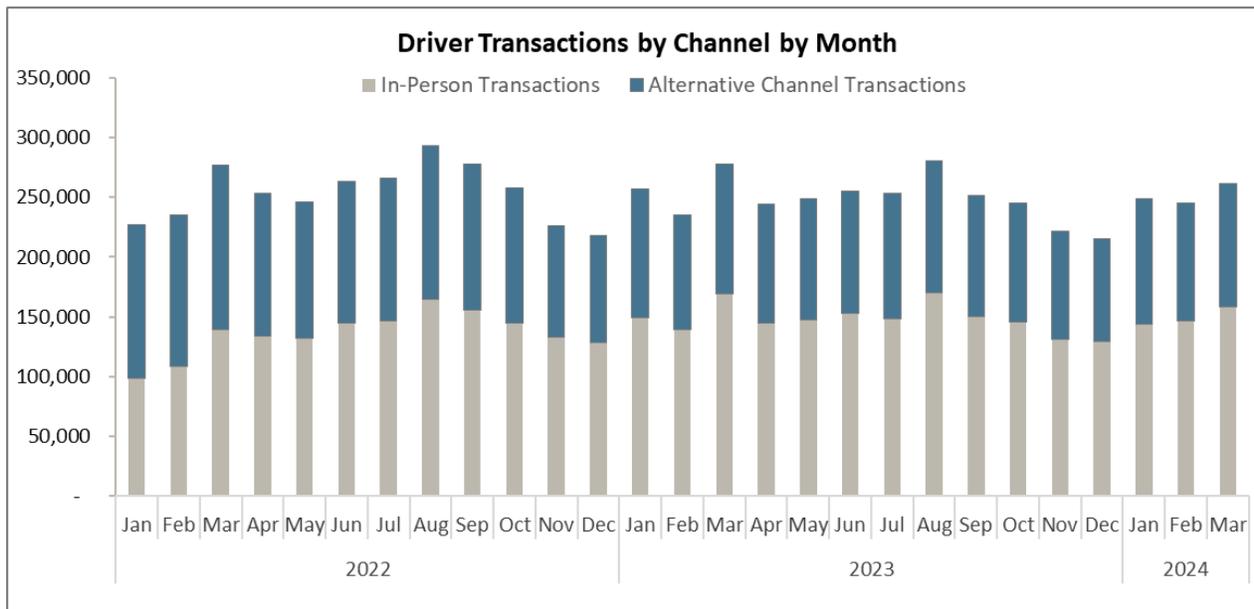
- 1 -Initial Wait Time Average: From check in to first service counter visit.
- 2 -Customer Experience Time Average: Total time customer spends in office from check in to end of transaction. Initial wait time is included here (may include subsequent wait time).
- 3 -LSRs In Service – Daily Average: Count of distinct Licensing Services Representatives working service counters during the day.

TRANSACTION AND CUSTOMER VOLUME

This quarter 756,000 transactions were conducted through a combination of in-person, online, mail and phone services. Driver licensing offices (DLO) and DOL2Go served 448,000 customers and 59% of transactions this quarter. Customer preference for in-person service at a DLO remains below the 72% pre-pandemic level.

Figure 1 below shows transaction distribution by service channel each month beginning January 2022. Transactions completed by mail and phone are a small portion of overall transactions, so they are combined with internet transactions and shown in the below chart as Alternative Channel Transactions.

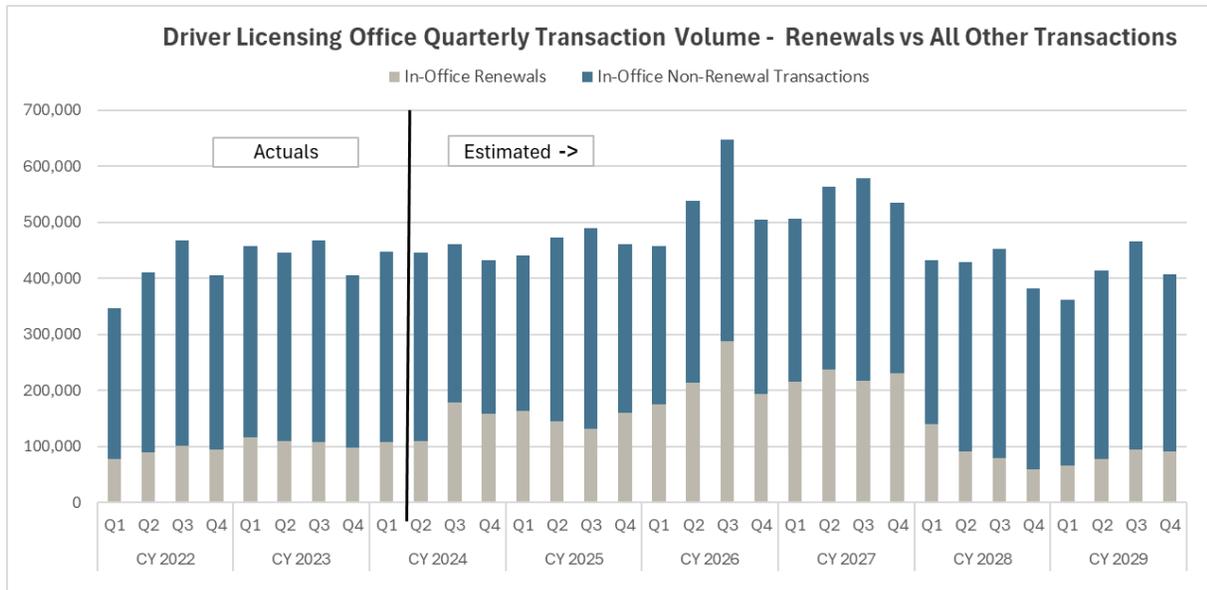
Figure 1 Monthly Distribution of Transactions by Service Channel



There will be a wave of customers coming into DLOs for license renewals in the years 2026 and 2027 at the same time as REAL ID increased volumes. The renewal wave is a remaining impact of the transition from a 5-year to a 6-year renewal cycle beginning in 2014 and the extensions issued during the pandemic. Looking forward, we can expect significantly higher in-office renewal volumes in March 2026 through December 2027 compared to previous years.

Figure 2 below shows the in-office renewal and non-renewal transactions by quarter, actual transactions during years 2022 and 2023 and estimated transaction volumes in years 2024 through 2029.

Figure 2 Driver License Office Quarterly Volume of Transactions



PREPARING FOR REAL ID ENFORCEMENT

The enforcement of REAL ID occurs in one year, on May 7, 2025. Demand for Washington EDLs/EIDs, which meet the federal REAL ID requirements, is forecasted to increase approaching the May 2025 enforcement date and through fiscal year 2028. Customers seeking a first time Washington EDL/EID must apply in person at a DLO. DOL is utilizing a variety of strategies to prepare for the challenges of REAL ID, including:

- [Customer education and outreach](#) as covered in the last section of this report.
- Providing information about REAL ID-compliant document options and the upcoming enforcement date on both electronic and paper vehicle and driver license renewal notices. Paper renewal notices also include a colored insert containing expanded REAL ID information in both English and Spanish.
- Implemented a new DLO lobby management system in Spring 2023 to more effectively manage customers visiting an office with an appointment or as a walk-in. Additionally, the system communicates with customers in multiple languages and offers customers contactless check-in for appointments using a mobile device. Customer feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.
- Installed cameras at each service counter in 36 of the largest DLOs, completed in April 2023. The cameras reduce the time customers spend in the offices by three minutes. Prior to installing a camera at each service counter, customers completed their transaction at

one service counter and waited to be called to a dedicated camera station where a photograph is taken.

- Reinstated express lines for simple transactions in medium and large DLOs. Express lines were utilized before the pandemic and proved to increase customer service capacity.
- A redesigned DOL website (dol.wa.gov) launched to the public in June 2023. The new site offers a more accessible and intuitive experience, even on mobile devices. The updated site contains improved content about Washington’s EDL/EID documents and the REAL ID Act.
- Planned improvements to DOL’s online services over the next 24 months. Improving usability and accessibility of our online services has the potential to reduce DLO customer volumes.
- Implemented an interactive REAL ID document checklist during summer 2022. The checklist enables customers to better prepare when applying for an EDL/EID and avoid multiple trips to the DLOs because of insufficient documentation.

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) STAFFING LEVELS

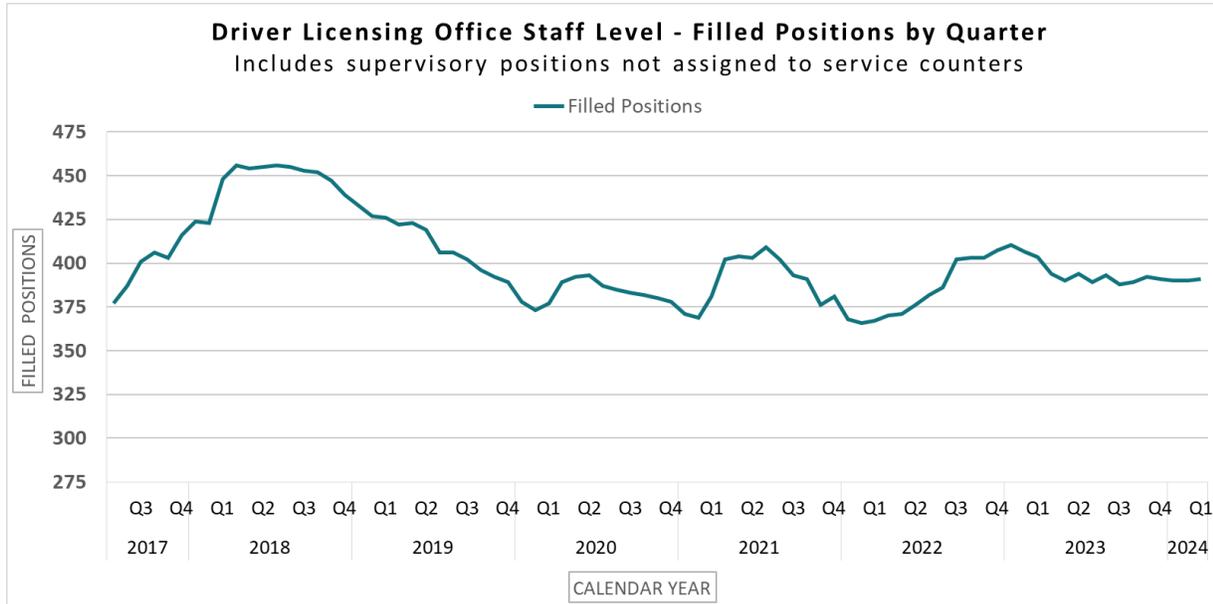
Increase Staffing Level for REAL ID Enforcement

The budget as passed the Legislature reduced the agency’s 2023-2025 biennial budget for DLO workload by \$7.1 million. DOL reduced DLO staffing during the second quarter of calendar year 2023 to align with the reduced funding level beginning fiscal year 2024.

The reduced funding restricts DOL’s ability to ramp up staffing ahead of the May 2025 REAL ID enforcement. Additionally, a significant increase in driver license renewals is expected in years 2026 and 2027 as explained in the [Transaction and Customer Volume](#) section of this report. The combination of these workloads is anticipated to exceed the performance target for acceptable wait time in the DLOs. DOL submitted a request for \$750,000 in the 2024 supplemental budget period to ramp up FTEs to manage anticipated DLO workload increases within acceptable service delivery times, however the request was not funded.

Figure 3 below shows the overall DLO staffing levels by quarter from July 2017.

Figure 3 Driver Licensing Office Filled Positions



ENHANCED DRIVER LICENSE AND ENHANCED ID DEMAND

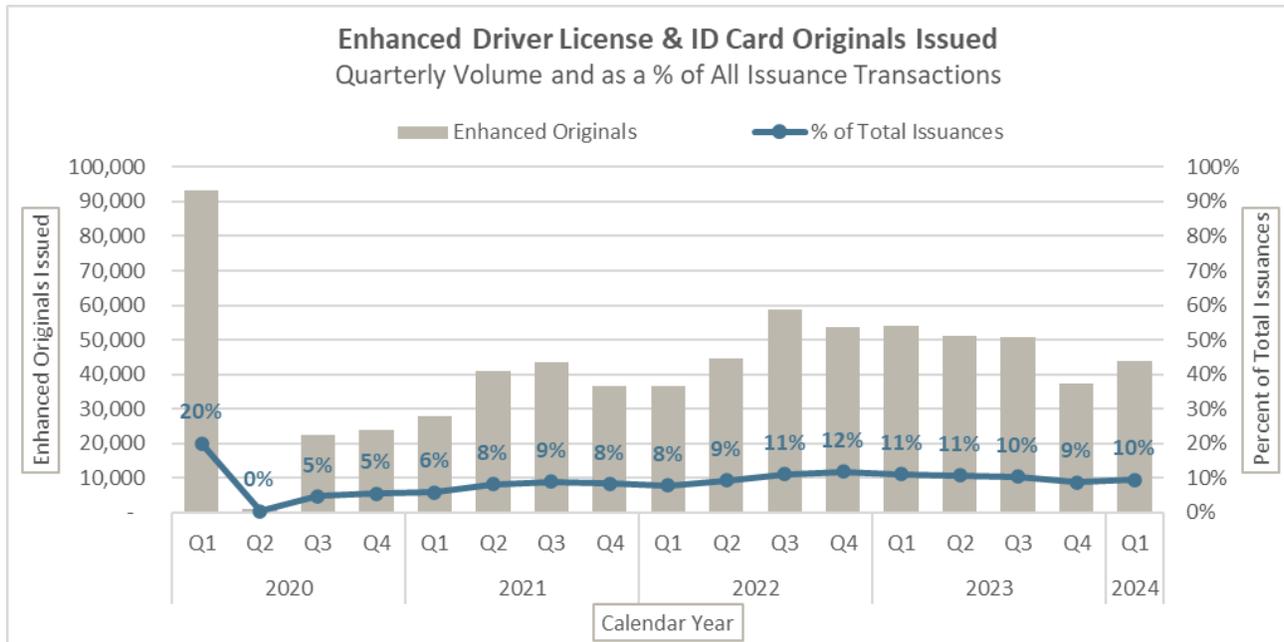
Currently, about 1.6 million Washington residents hold EDLs/EIDs which is 24% of all active Washington licenses and ID cards.

This quarter, 44,000 customers received their original EDL/EID. This volume represents 10% of all driver licenses and ID cards issued during the quarter, consistent with the previous six quarters. An original EDL/EID application impacts DLO workload by taking 5 minutes longer on average to issue than a standard driver license and identification card and can only be obtained in person at a DLO.

Thirty-eight percent of the original EDLs/EIDs issued this quarter occurred outside the customer’s renewal cycle. These customers likely made a special trip to a DLO specifically to upgrade to an enhanced license or ID card.

Figure 4 below shows the volume of original EDL/EID documents and the percent of the total volume of driver licenses and ID cards issued by quarter beginning January 2020.

Figure 4 Comparing Issuance of Enhanced and Standard Credentials



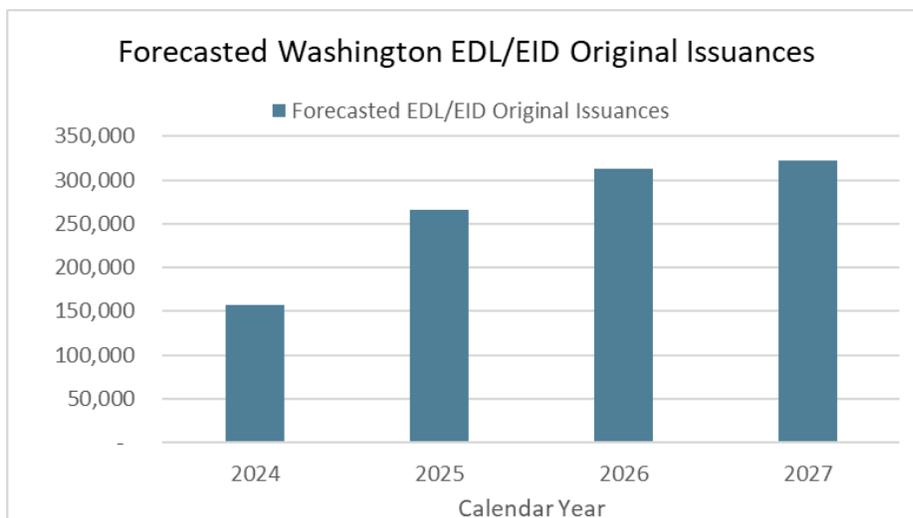
Data Note: All Issuance Transactions in above chart includes original, renewal, duplicate and replacement driver licenses and identification cards.

Enhanced Driver License and Enhanced ID Forecast

The volume of original EDLs/EIDs issued in calendar year 2024 is 2% above forecast. Demand for Washington EDLs/EIDs is anticipated to increase in years 2025 through 2029 when REAL ID is required for domestic air travel and entering federal facilities.

Figure 5 below shows the forecasted volume of original EDLs/EIDs for the calendar years 2024 through 2027. The below forecast is based on DOL’s February 2024 revenue forecast.

Figure 5 Forecast of EDL/EID Original Demand



Data Note: Based on DOL February 2024 revenue forecast.

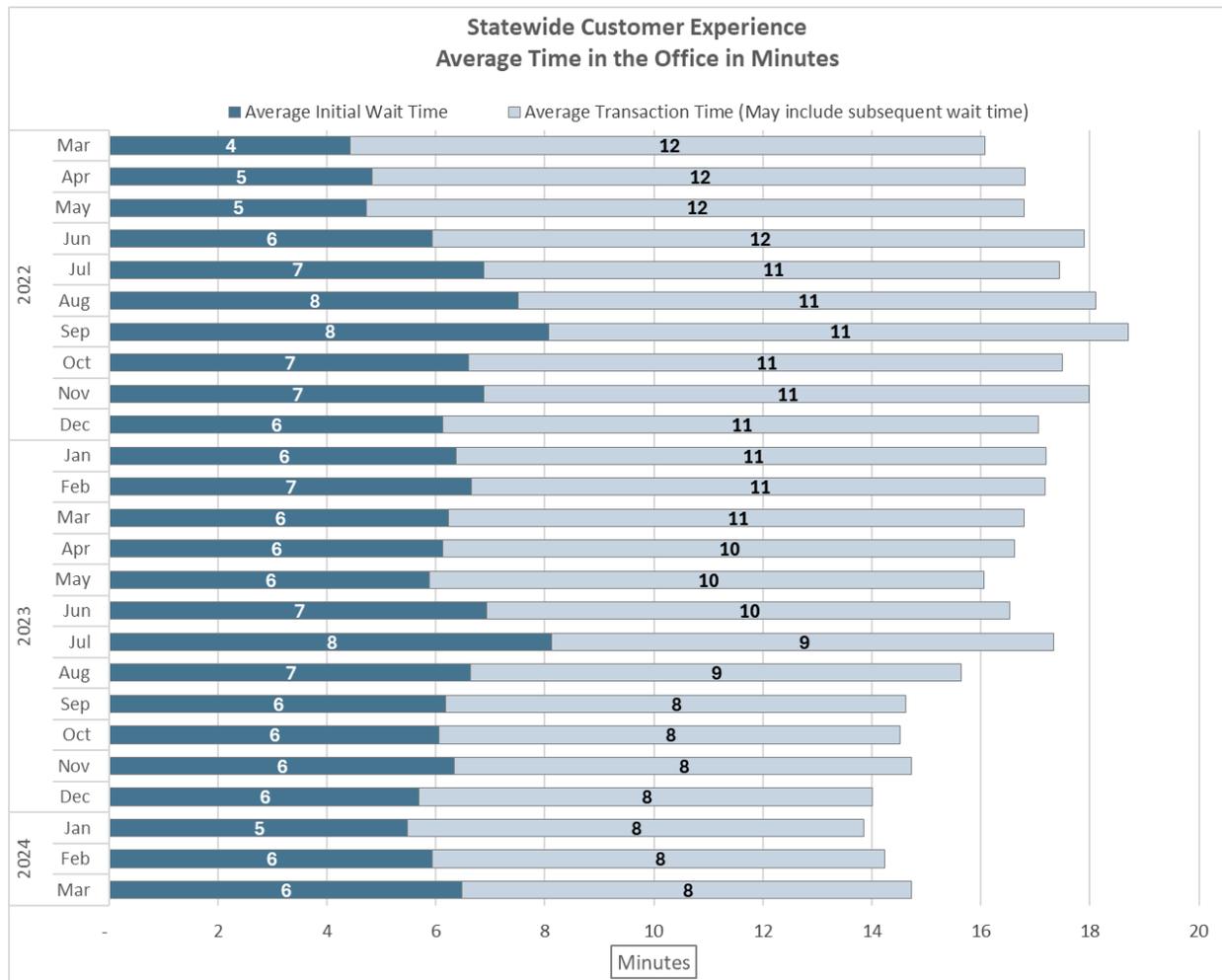
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND WAIT TIME

This quarter, customers visiting DOL offices experienced shorter wait times and spent less time in offices due to workflow efficiencies put in place over the previous year, including implementing a new lobby management system in June 2023.

- Average initial wait time for service was 10 seconds shorter, a 2% decrease. Customers spent an average of 6 minutes waiting in the lobby before being called to a service counter.
- Average customer experience time was 2 minutes shorter, a 14% decrease. Customers spent an average of 14 minutes in our offices measured by the time between check-in and completing the transaction.

Figure 6 below shows the two components of customer experience time, wait time and transaction time, by month from March 2022.

Figure 6 Statewide Average Wait Time and Transaction Time



CUSTOMER EDUCATION OUTREACH

As we approach one year until the federal REAL ID law for air travel goes into effect on May 7, 2025, the DOL is working on messaging to make our residents aware of their ID options for domestic airplane travel. We are reminding residents to be prepared for this upcoming change and urging those who are planning to get an enhanced driver license (EDL) or enhanced identification card (EID) to come in now to avoid a rush at driver licensing offices as the deadline gets closer.

DOL worked with the Seattle-Tacoma and Spokane International Airports, the Transportation Security Administration, and Alaska Airlines to hold a REAL ID awareness event on May 7, 2024. We had solid media turnout and there were good stories to remind our residents.

The Legislature provided DOL with \$2.1 million in proviso money for a final media campaign, and we will continue our work with broad-based media creators to develop campaign material and buy media advertising in mainstream and ethnic media markets. DOL will work with an ethnic media company to provide grants to community-based organizations that will help provide REAL ID awareness.

We are also continuing to create consistent messaging on DOL's social media channels, blog, website, driver and vehicle renewal notices, and in offices to inform residents of this upcoming change. Materials are available for communities and residents and include information cards and posters in nine languages, including English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Tagalog, Somali, Ukrainian, and Russian. We also have videos and the ID2025 website in five languages, including English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean.

DOL's Outreach team attends events in person throughout the state, directly connecting with residents and community partners. Events include neighborhood festivals, community-based health and resource fairs, and heritage month celebrations. The Outreach team also:

- Sends emails to agency partners, shares links to campaign ready-made messages and graphics, and encourages people to share within their communities.
- Includes REAL ID information in all presentations to community-based organizations, not-for-profits, local government, and school districts that support our marginalized communities.