

# Driver License Office Workload

QUARTERLY REPORT – OCTOBER THROUGH DECEMBER 2023

## CONTENTS

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Summary .....</b>                                       | <b>1</b> |
| REAL ID Enforcement.....                                   | 1        |
| DOL2Go Mobile Licensing Unit .....                         | 1        |
| Workload and Wait Time Summary .....                       | 2        |
| <b>Transaction and customer Volume .....</b>               | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Preparing for REAL ID Enforcement .....</b>             | <b>4</b> |
| <b>Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Staffing Levels .....</b>    | <b>5</b> |
| Increase Staffing Level for REAL ID Enforcement .....      | 5        |
| <b>Enhanced Driver License and Enhanced ID Demand.....</b> | <b>6</b> |
| Enhanced Driver License and Enhanced ID Forecast.....      | 7        |
| <b>Customer Experience and Wait Time .....</b>             | <b>8</b> |
| <b>Customer Education Outreach.....</b>                    | <b>9</b> |

## ATTACHMENTS

### **Attachment A     LSO Workload Data-Q4 CY2023**

Monthly workload and performance indicators by office level and statewide

### **Attachment B     LSO Locations**

Driver license 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

### 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 facility<sup>1</sup> without a REAL ID-compliant document.

Washington's Enhanced Driver License and Enhanced Identicard (EDL/EID) are REAL ID-compliant. Currently, 1.57 million Washington residents hold EDLs/EIDs which represents 23% of all active Washington licensees and ID cards. Demand for Washington EDLs/EIDs is forecasted to increase during fiscal years 2025 through 2027.

Persons seeking a first time EDL/EID must apply in person at a licensing services office (LSO). 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, rural communities, emergency response such as wildfires, and assisted living centers.

During DOL2Go's first two quarters, the unit issued 715 ID cards and driver licenses to Washington residents at 16 events, including in rural communities, assisting people experiencing homelessness, emergency response following a natural disaster, as well as refugee support.



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

## Workload and Wait Time Summary

Essential services were delivered this quarter through a combination of in-office, online, DOL2Go mobile office, phone and mail services. LSO key workload and performance indicators for this reporting period and comparable periods in 2022 are shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1** Licensing Services Office Key Workload

### Key Workload & Performance Indicators for Licensing Services Offices Compares Fourth Quarter 2023 to 2022

| Workload in Quarter 4 (October-December)                       | CY 2023        | CY 2022        |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Customers Served in LSO</b>                                 | <b>387,688</b> | <b>393,664</b> |
| October  | 139,264        | 140,426        |
| November   | 125,381        | 128,819        |
| December   | 123,043        | 124,419        |
| <b>Enhanced - Originals Issued</b>                             | <b>37,348</b>  | <b>53,694</b>  |
| October  | 13,564         | 18,738         |
| November   | 12,147         | 17,782         |
| December   | 11,637         | 17,174         |
| <b>Initial Wait Time Average (minutes) <sup>1</sup></b>        | <b>6</b>       | <b>7</b>       |
| October  | 6              | 7              |
| November   | 6              | 7              |
| December   | 6              | 6              |
| <b>Customer Experience Time Average (minutes) <sup>2</sup></b> | <b>15</b>      | <b>18</b>      |
| October  | 15             | 18             |
| November   | 15             | 18             |
| December   | 14             | 17             |
| <b>LSRs in Service - Daily Average <sup>3</sup></b>            | <b>244</b>     | <b>224</b>     |
| October  | 239            | 219            |
| November   | 243            | 222            |
| December   | 250            | 231            |

**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 682,000 transactions were conducted through a combination of in-person, online, mail and phone services. Licensing services offices (LSO) and DOL2Go served 405,000 customers and 59% of transactions this quarter. Customer preference for in-person service at a LSO remains below the 72% pre-pandemic level.

Figure 1 below shows transaction distribution by service channel each month beginning January 2021. 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

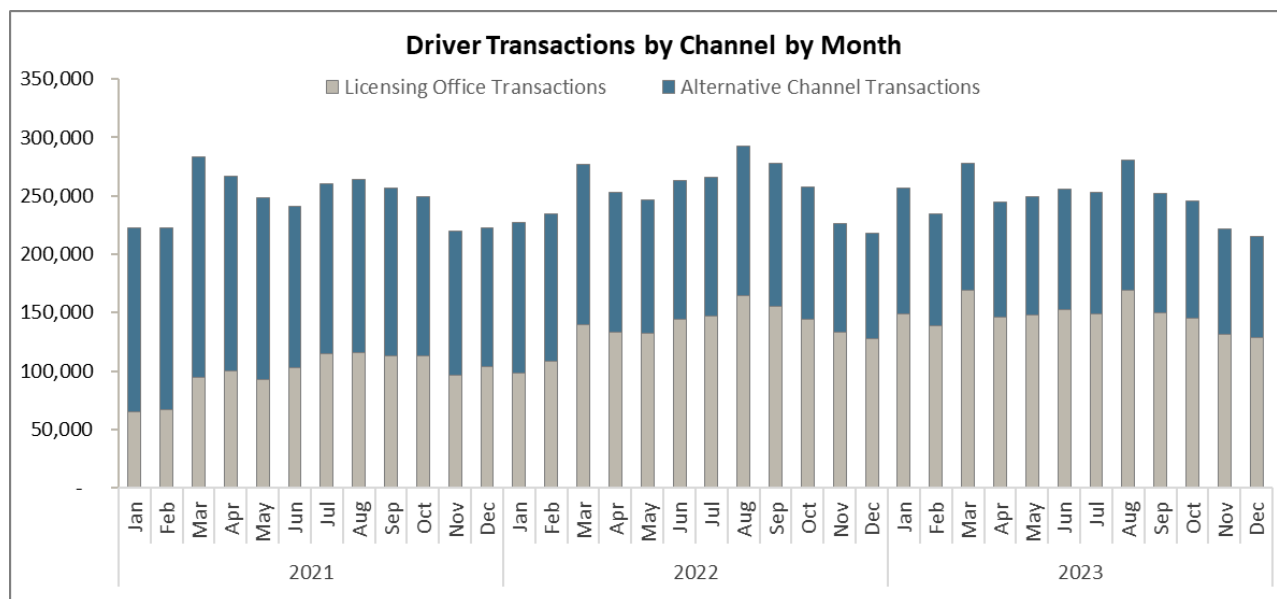
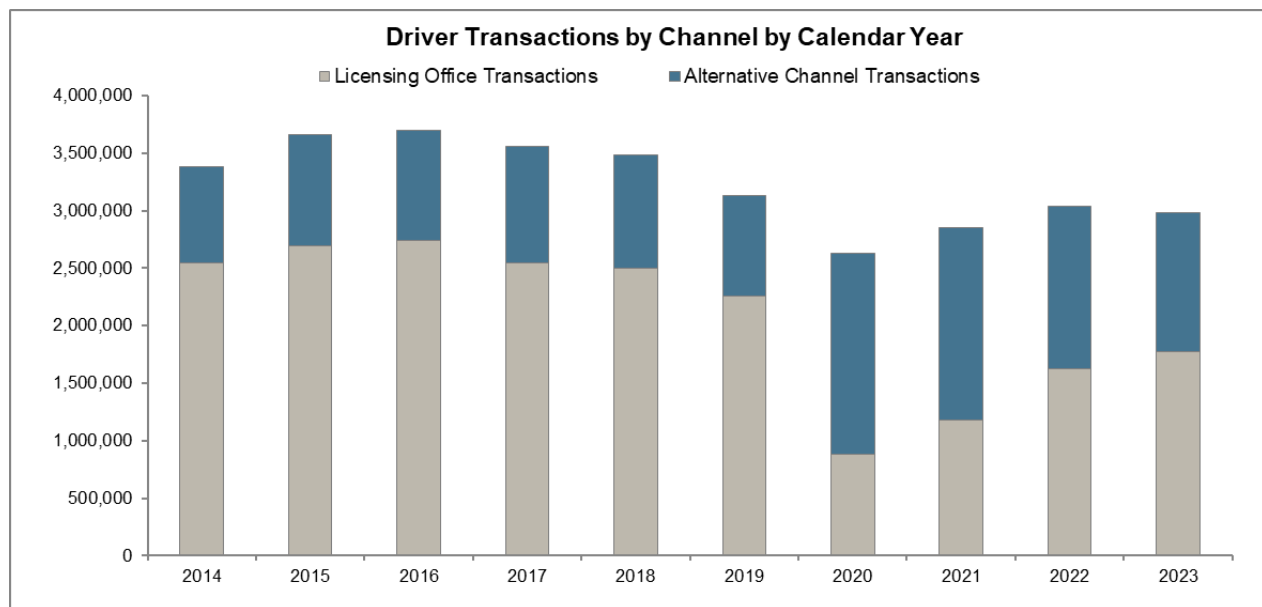


Figure 2 below shows the distribution of transactions by service channel each calendar year beginning 2014.

**Figure 2** Yearly Distribution of Transactions by Service Channel



There will be a wave of customers coming into LSOs for license renewals in 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 very high in-office renewal volumes from March 2026 through December 2027.

## PREPARING FOR REAL ID ENFORCEMENT

The enforcement of REAL ID occurs in a little over a 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 2027. Customers seeking a first time Washington EDL/EID must apply in person at a LSO. 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. Beginning in spring 2023, paper renewal notices also include a colored insert containing expanded REAL ID information in both English and Spanish.
- Implemented a new LSO 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 10 additional LSOs, 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. Thirty-six of the largest LSOs are now equipped with a camera at each service counter.
- Reinstated express lines for simple transactions in medium and large LSOs. Express lines were utilized before the pandemic and proved to increase customer service capacity.
- A redesigned DOL website ([dol.wa.gov](https://dol.wa.gov)) launched to the public on June 20, 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 LSO 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 LSOs because of insufficient documentation.

## FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) STAFFING LEVELS

### Increase Staffing Level for REAL ID Enforcement

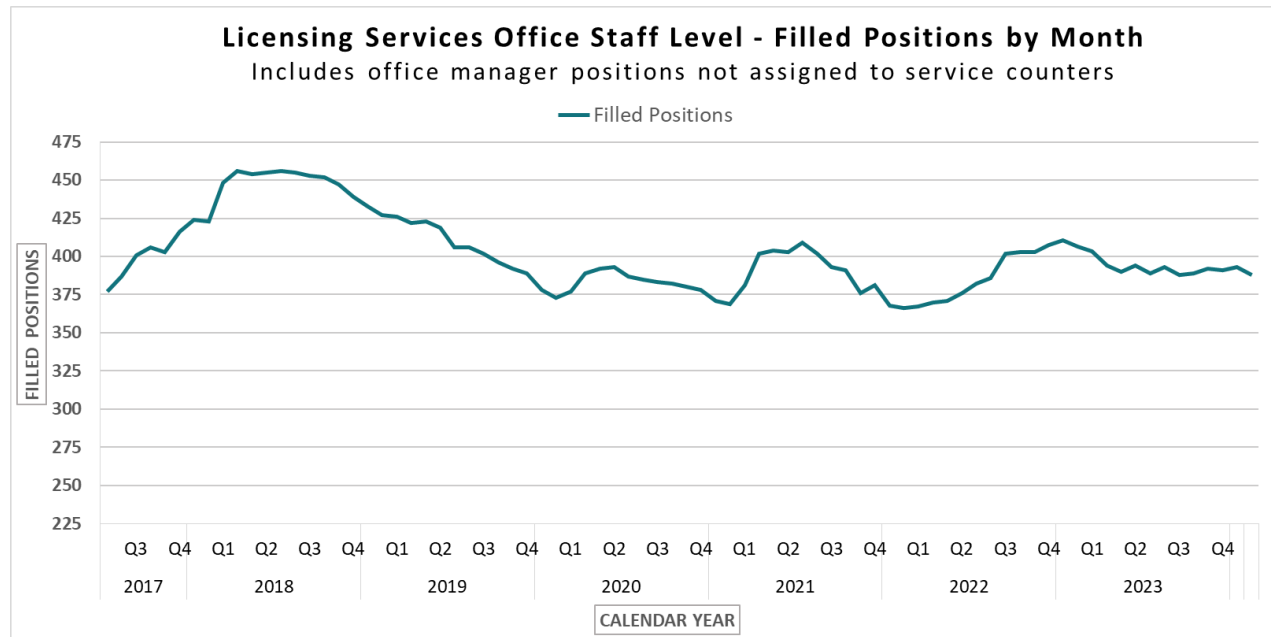
The budget as passed the Legislature reduced the agency's 2023-2025 biennial budget for LSO workload by \$7.1 million. DOL reduced LSO staffing during the second quarter of calendar year 2023 to align with the reduced funding level beginning fiscal year 2024.

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 LSOs. DOL submitted a request for \$750 thousand in the 2024 supplemental budget period to ramp up FTEs to manage anticipated LSO workload increases within acceptable service delivery times.

Ramping up staff levels is a 6-month process; from recruitment until staff can efficiently process all types of transactions. New hires are trained through a combination of in-person courses at a DOL training center and practical skills application in a LSO through a shadow/mentor program. Once new hires gain competence in simple transactions, they begin federally prescribed education to achieve the certification required to issue EDL/EID. On average, new hires are trained to process simple customer transactions in one month and complex transactions, such as original EDL/EID and commercial driver licenses, in five months.

Figure 3 below shows the overall LSO staffing levels by month from July 2017.

**Figure 3** Licensing Services Office Filled Positions



## ENHANCED DRIVER LICENSE AND ENHANCED ID DEMAND

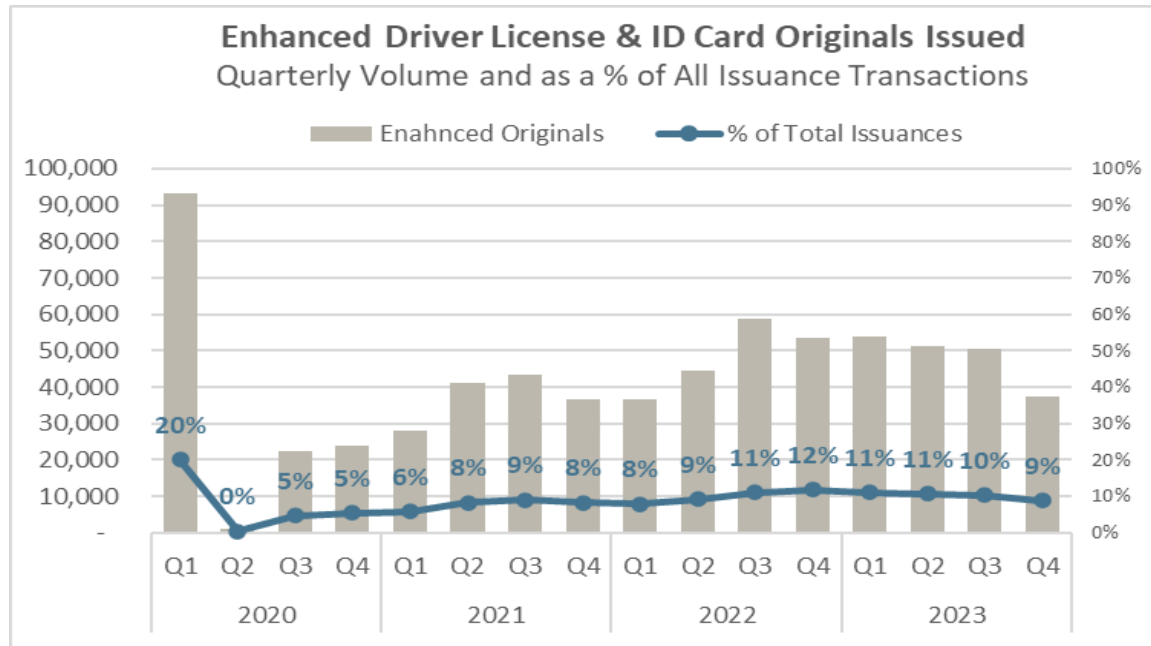
Currently, about 1.57 million Washington residents hold EDLs/EIDs which is 23% of all active Washington licenses and ID cards.

This quarter, 32,000 customers received their original EDL/EID. This volume represents 9% of all driver licenses and ID cards issued during the quarter, 1% below the average of previous five quarters. An original EDL/EID application impacts LSO 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 LSO.

Thirty-seven 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 LSO 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.

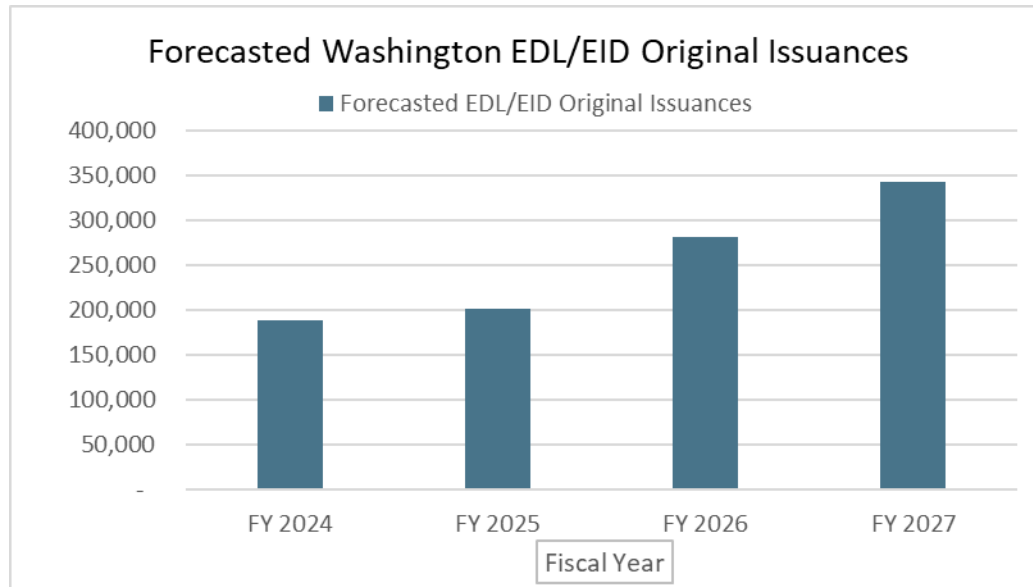
### Enhanced Driver License and Enhanced ID Forecast

The volume of original EDLs/EIDs issued in calendar year 2023 is 23% below forecast. DOL reduced the EDL/EID revenue forecast for the months of November 2023 through March 2025 based on lower-than-expected demand.

Demand for Washington EDLs/EIDs is anticipated to increase in years 2025 through 2027 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 fiscal years 2024 through 2027. The below forecast is based on DOL's November 2023 revenue forecast.



**Figure 5** Forecast of EDL/EID Original Demand



**Data Note:** Based on DOL November 2023 revenue forecast.

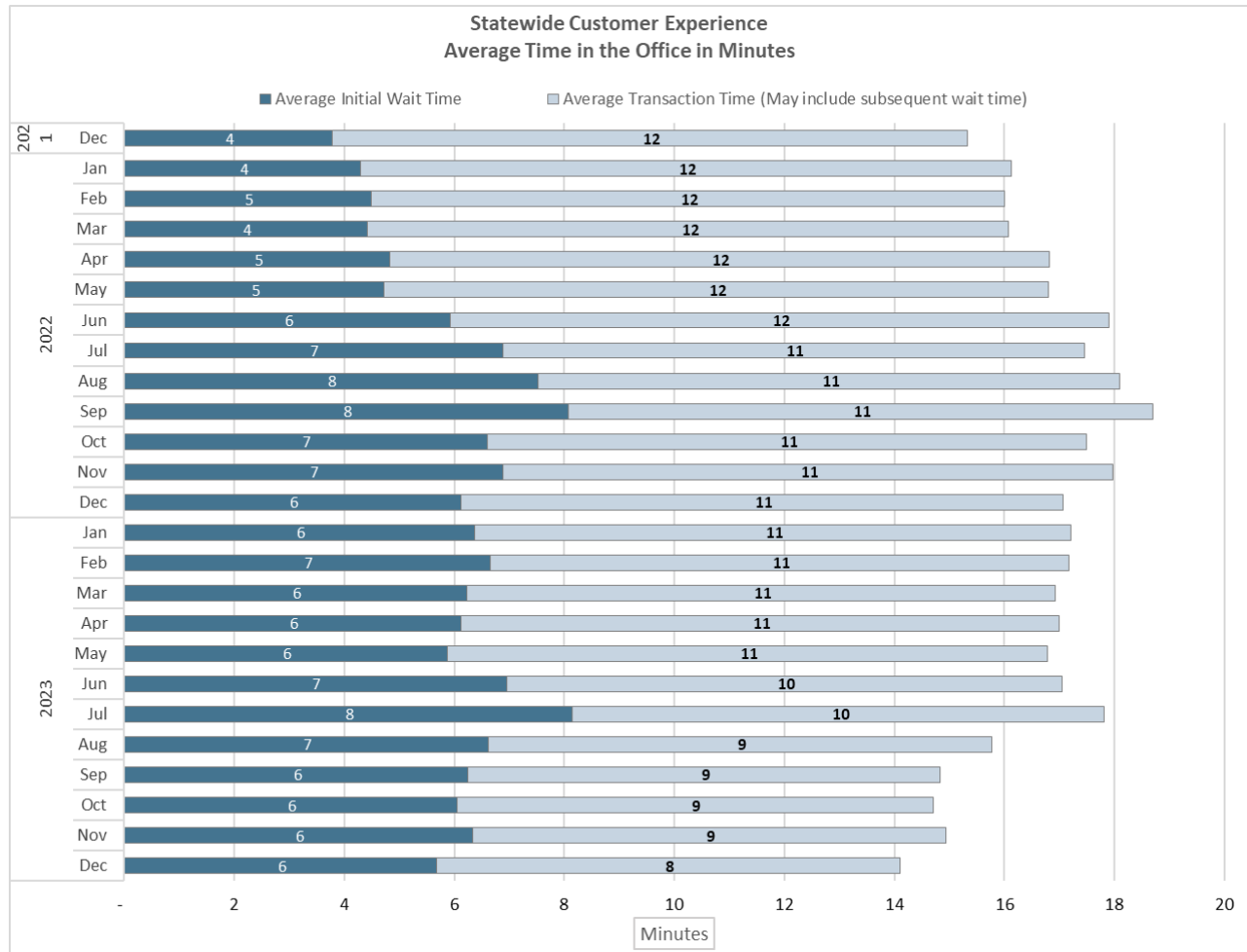
## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND WAIT TIME

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 half a minute shorter, a 7% decrease. Customers spent an average of 6 minutes waiting in the lobby before being called to a service counter.
- Average customer experience time was 3 minutes shorter, an 16% decrease. Customers spent an average of 15 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 December 2021.

**Figure 6** Statewide Average Wait Time and Transaction Time



## CUSTOMER EDUCATION OUTREACH

With a little over a year to go until the federal REAL ID law for air travel goes into effect on May 7, 2025, the Department of Licensing (DOL) continues to make sure residents across the state are aware of their ID options and prepared for this change. We are urging residents who are planning to get an enhanced driver license (EDL) or enhanced identification card (EID) to come in now to avoid a rush at licensing offices as the deadline gets closer.

Working with ad agencies PRR and TDW+Co, we concluded an education and awareness campaign that ran in late summer through the fall, focusing on Washington residents and multicultural audiences. We identified the percentage of people who have an EDL or EID based on specific age brackets and targeted the 55-plus and 18-25 age groups. We believe these are the people who may still not be as aware of REAL ID and may be more inclined to plan ahead for the deadline. We ran advertising targeting mainstream audiences across the state through a mix of media including TV, digital/online, and social media. The campaign received a total of 22,572,109 impressions and 94,937 clicks. Highlights of the campaign coverage include:

- The campaign leveraged its budget by 70% (\$184,376) with a total spend of \$264,509 and an advertising value of \$448,885.
- 1,946 television spots ran on 10 broadcast stations and over 47 cable networks across the state's TV markets including Seattle/Tacoma, Spokane, and Yakima/Tri-Cities. A total of 788 bonus (no charge) TV spots aired, leveraging the TV budget (\$95,000) by 67% (\$63,840) and resulting in \$158,700 in advertising value.
- A total of 3,508 radio spots ran on 32 stations across the state. There were 1,632 bonus no-charge radio spots aired, leveraging the radio budget (\$39,000) by 107% (\$42,026) and resulting in \$81,085 in advertising value.
- The digital and online ads received 11,121,352 impressions and generated 94,937 clicks, resulting in a click-through rate (CTR) of 4.78% -- performing well above the industry benchmark of 0.35%.

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 with the updated May 2025 deadline 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.

DOL has asked the state legislature for \$2 million on REAL ID public outreach in anticipation of the May 7, 2025 implementation of the federal REAL ID Act. We currently estimate that as many as three million Washington residents may not possess an EDL or EID by May 7, 2025. The funding comprises the following:

- \$1.1 million: Development of campaign, including media buys (TV, internet ads, radio, newspapers) and other content (infographics/information cards)
- \$400,000: Ethnic media buys. These will be made with the guidance of community-based organizations, which know best how their constituents receive, and want to receive, important information.

- \$500,000: Modeled after recent work done by the Department of Health and the Department of Social and Health Services, the funding would provide small grants directly to community-based organizations to conduct diverse vendor campaign outreach activities. The small grants will allow for targeted messaging to meet the needs, concerns and questions of the people for whom they advocate.

Previous campaigns saw marked upticks in EDL/EID issuances. In fall/winter 2020, the increase was 70% versus expected numbers; in spring/summer 2022, it was a 50% increase.