



**Homeland
Security**

Press Release

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY ANNOUNCES OVER \$79 MILLION IN STATE GRANT AWARDS FOR REAL ID

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced today Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 REAL ID Demonstration Grant awards totaling nearly \$80 million to assist states in improving the security of state-issued driver's licenses (DL) and identification documents (ID) as required by the Real ID Act of 2005. Grants will fund state-specific projects such as improving the physical security of licenses, upgrading facility security and document imaging and storage. Funding is also provided for the development and testing of a verification hub that will enable all states to query federal and non-federal document-issuing authorities to verify applicant source documents.

The REAL ID Program addresses a key recommendation of the 9/11 Commission to enhance the security, integrity and protection of licensing and identification systems across the country. To facilitate states' abilities to achieve REAL ID compliance, more than \$58 million has been allocated for state-specific implementation projects. All 48 states and territories that applied have been awarded a portion of this funding based on the number of DLs and IDs they issue and the overall effectiveness based on the criteria identified in the REAL ID Demonstration Grant Program Application Kit. Projects will focus on efforts to achieve material compliance, such as collecting applicants' photos at the start of the application process and incorporating additional physical security features into DLs and IDs. Other funded projects which advance REAL ID implementation include moving to central DL/ID production, data cleansing driver's license records, and source document imaging and storage.

In addition to the state-specific projects, DHS has pledged to fund in this grant cycle the implementation of a verification hub to be built and governed by the states, for the states. The hub will act as a central router to provide timely, accurate, and cost-effective verification to motor vehicle departments of an applicant's source documents. Using this single mechanism, states will be able to seamlessly verify the identity, lawful status, and social security number of an applicant through a common interface.

To that end, DHS has awarded \$17 million to Missouri to lead the states in developing the verification hub. Four other states – Florida, Indiana, Nevada and Wisconsin – will each receive

\$1.2 million to partner with Missouri for verification hub testing and implementation. Eventually, all states and territories will connect to the verification hub and have the capability to verify applicants' source documents.

These investments are essential to reducing and impairing the use of stolen, borrowed, altered or counterfeit source documents widely used to obtain state-issued documents by fraudulent means.

For information on specific funding levels through the Demonstration Grant program, or to learn more about REAL ID, please visit www.dhs.gov/realid.