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SB-837 Driver's licenses: veteran designation. (2021-2022)

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Date Published: 09/19/2022 02:00 PM

Senate Bill No. 837

CHAPTER 383

An act to amend Section 12811 of, and to repeal Section 14901.1 of, the Vehicle Code, relating to driver's licenses.

[Approved by Governor September 17, 2022. Filed with Secretary of State September 17, 2022.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 837, Umberg. Driver's licenses: veteran designation.

Existing law requires the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue a driver's license to an applicant when the department determines that the applicant is lawfully entitled to a license. Existing law allows an in-person applicant for a driver's license or identification card to request the word "VETERAN" be printed on the face of the driver's license or identification card, subject to certain requirements, including, among others, verification of veteran status, as specified, and payment of a \$5 fee, which the department is authorized to increase by regulation, in an amount not to exceed \$15, as specified. Existing law prohibits a fee from being charged for that request if made by a person who has been determined to have a current income level that meets the eligibility requirements for specified assistance programs or a person who can verify their status as a homeless person, in accordance with specified provisions.

This bill would repeal the requirement that an applicant pay the above-described fee.

This bill would incorporate additional changes to Section 12811 of the Vehicle Code proposed by SB 1193 to be operative only if this bill and SB 1193 are enacted and this bill is enacted last.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 12811 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

12811. (a) (1) (A) When the department determines that the applicant is lawfully entitled to a license, it shall issue to the person a driver's license as applied for. The license shall state the class of license for which the licensee has qualified and shall contain the distinguishing number assigned to the applicant, the date of expiration, the true full name, age, and mailing address or residence address of the licensee, a brief description and engraved picture or photograph of the licensee for the purpose of identification, and space for the signature of the licensee.

(B) Each license shall also contain a space for the endorsement of a record of each suspension or revocation of the license.

(C) The department shall use whatever process or processes, in the issuance of engraved or colored licenses, that prohibit, as near as possible, the ability to alter or reproduce the license, or prohibit the ability to superimpose a picture or

photograph on the license without ready detection.

(2) In addition to the requirements of paragraph (1), a license issued to a person under 18 years of age shall display the words "provisional until age 18."

(b) (1) All applications for a driver's license or identification card shall contain a space for an applicant to indicate whether they have served in the Armed Forces of the United States and to give their consent to be contacted regarding eligibility to receive state or federal veterans benefits. The application shall contain the following statement:

"By marking the veteran box on this application, I certify that I am a veteran of the United States Armed Forces and that I want to receive veterans benefits information from the California Department of Veterans Affairs. By marking the veteran box on this application, I also consent to DMV transmitting my name and mailing address to the California Department of Veterans Affairs for this purpose only, and I certify that I have been notified that this transmittal will occur."

(2) The department shall collect the information obtained pursuant to paragraph (1).

(3) As mutually agreed between the department and the Department of Veterans Affairs, the department shall electronically transmit to the Department of Veterans Affairs the following information on each applicant who has identified that they have served in the Armed Forces of the United States since the last data transfer and has consented to be contacted about veterans benefits:

(A) The applicant's true full name.

(B) The applicant's mailing address.

(4) Information obtained by the Department of Veterans Affairs for the purposes of this subdivision shall be used for the purpose of assisting individuals to access veterans benefits and shall not be disseminated except as needed for this purpose.

(5) An in-person application for a driver's license or identification card shall allow an applicant to request the word "VETERAN" be printed on the face of the driver's license or identification card. A verification form shall be developed by the Department of Veterans Affairs in consultation with the Department of Motor Vehicles and the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers to acknowledge verification of veteran status. A county veterans service office shall verify the veteran's status as a veteran, sign the verification form, and return it to the veteran. The Department of Motor Vehicles shall accept the signed verification form as proof of veteran status. The word "VETERAN" shall be printed on the face of a driver's license or identification card, in a location determined by the department, and issued to a person who makes this request and presents the verification form to the department.

(c) A contract shall not be awarded to a nongovernmental entity for the processing of driver's licenses, unless the contract conforms to all applicable state contracting laws and all applicable procedures set forth in the State Contracting Manual.

SEC. 1.5. Section 12811 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

12811. (a) (1) (A) When the department determines that the applicant is lawfully entitled to a license, it shall issue to the person a driver's license as applied for. The license shall state the class of license for which the licensee has qualified and shall contain the distinguishing number assigned to the applicant, the date of expiration, the true full name, age, and mailing address or residence address of the licensee, a brief description and engraved picture or photograph of the licensee for the purpose of identification, and space for the signature of the licensee.

(B) Each license shall also contain a space for the endorsement of a record of each suspension or revocation of the license.

(C) The department shall use whatever process or processes, in the issuance of engraved or colored licenses, that prohibit, as near as possible, the ability to alter or reproduce the license, or prohibit the ability to superimpose a picture or photograph on the license without ready detection.

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(c) A contract shall not be awarded to a nongovernmental entity for the processing of driver's licenses, unless the contract conforms to all applicable state contracting laws and all applicable procedures set forth in the State Contracting Manual.

SEC. 2. Section 14901.1 of the Vehicle Code is repealed.

SEC. 3. Section 1.5 of this bill incorporates amendments to Section 12811 of the Vehicle Code proposed by both this bill and Senate Bill 1193. That section of this bill shall only become operative if (1) both bills are enacted and become effective on or before January 1, 2023, (2) each bill amends Section 12811 of the Vehicle Code, and (3) this bill is enacted after Senate Bill 1193, in which case Section 1 of this bill shall not become operative.