

## Operational Plan

# Policymaker Briefing Series on Mobile Driver's Licenses in Pennsylvania

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*This policy project was developed by an Aspen Policy Academy fellow while participating in the Science and Technology Policy Fellowship. This case study offers examples of mobile driver's license implementation. The full project, including a policy brief explaining the fellow's core recommendations, is [available here](#). Please note that the author's opinions published here are their own. This publication does not reflect the views of the Aspen Policy Academy or the Aspen Institute.*

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This project proposes that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania launch a Digital Identity and Privacy Task Force, leveraging privacy experts, technologists, law enforcement, and civil rights advocates to ensure that policymakers gain a comprehensive understanding of how the implementation of mobile driver's licenses (mDLs) will impact a variety of stakeholders. To ensure that Pennsylvania legislators understand the privacy and security implications of mDLs, members of the proposed task force should participate in a series of structured educational briefings.

The program should consist of 5 in-depth sessions delivered over the course of one year, designed to introduce complex technical knowledge and comparative case studies in a scaffolded and accessible way. This approach would provide task force members with time to reflect between sessions, engage in discussion, and return with a deeper understanding of how to tackle the complex challenges surrounding digital identity solutions. Through a mix of expert briefings, interactive exercises, and scenario-based discussions, legislators would learn about the risks, trade-offs, and design decisions involved in digital identity systems. The series should conclude with task force members developing policy resources and action guides on mDL governance that would be shared with the Pennsylvania General Assembly.

# Pennsylvania Digital Identity and Privacy Task Force

The task force should include the following members:

- 4 to 6 members of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives (even bipartisan split)
- 6 ex officio members:
  - 2 officials from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (strategic and technical)
  - 2 law enforcement officials
  - 1 liberal advocacy expert (e.g., ACLU)
  - 1 conservative advocacy expert (e.g., Heritage Foundation)

## Briefing Series Curriculum

The training curriculum should proceed as follows:

### **Session 1: Introduction to Mobile Driver's Licenses and Digital Identity Ecosystems**

*Build a foundational understanding of what mDLs are, how they work, and what standards currently exist.*

- Key definitions, stakeholder interests, and areas of risk.
- Overview of mDL technology and deployment models.

### **Session 2: Privacy and Surveillance in a Digital ID Future**

*Examine how mDLs could enable new forms of data collection, user tracking, and surveillance.*

- “Phone-home” functionality and metadata concerns.
- Government misuse versus corporate overreach.
- Surveillance harm case studies (e.g., doxxing, stalking, Immigration and Customs Enforcement collaboration, search and seizure).

### **Session 3: Cybersecurity, Architecture, and Technical Governance**

*Build an understanding of technical vulnerabilities and attacks.*

- Centralized databases and breach risks.
- Device hacking, fake mDLs, and identity theft.
- Breach and technical failures case studies.
- Current national standards and their limitations.

## Session 4: Privacy by Design and Responsible Innovation

*Building privacy and security into the foundation of mDL systems through technical architecture and governance.*

- Principles of privacy by design: data minimization, user control, transparency, purpose limitation.
- Application of privacy-by-design principles to mDLs:
  - Optional disclosure (age verification without showing full license).
  - Offline functionality to reduce data sharing (location and surveillance).
  - User consent and audit trails.
- Governance tools (privacy impact assessments).

As part of session 4, we recommend the following methods to engage the task force:

- **Demo:** Present different mDL app designs with various privacy features.
- **Scenario planning:** Evaluate the privacy posture of hypothetical mDL implementation plans.
- **Small group breakout:** Discuss how privacy by design can be translated into policy (legislation, contracts, agency rules, etc.).

**Deliverable:** By the end of the session, the task force should complete a draft of privacy-by-design principles for Pennsylvania's mDL system.

## Session 5: From Education to Action

*Equip policymakers with tools to act on what they have learned.*

- Develop a shared set of principles for mDL governance.
- Brainstorm what guardrails are non-negotiable.

**Deliverable:** By the end of the session, the task force should produce policy resources and action guides on mDL governance (to be delivered to the Pennsylvania General Assembly).

**If you'd like to learn more, see the full project, including a policy brief explaining the fellow's core recommendations, at [aspenpolicyacademy.org/project/mobile-drivers-licenses-2025](https://aspenpolicyacademy.org/project/mobile-drivers-licenses-2025).**



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