



## DHS Releases REAL ID Grant Guidance

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The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) released today grant guidance and application kits for two grant programs totaling more than \$35 million to assist states in preparing for REAL ID implementation. REAL ID addresses a core 9/11 Commission finding to enhance the security, integrity and protection of licensing and identification systems nationwide, and was mandated by Congress.

"The 9/11 Commission stated unambiguously that for terrorists, travel documents are as important as weapons," said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. "Too often bogus birth certificates and other documents have been used to unlawfully obtain a driver's license, causing the American public to insist on greater identity protection. These funds will advance the ability of states to verify the legitimacy of documents that applicants present, and to confirm that the applicants are who they say they are."

The REAL ID Demonstration Grant Program will provide \$31.3 million for checking motor vehicle records in other states to ensure that drivers do not hold multiple licenses, and for verification against federal records like immigration status. This grant will help standardize methods by which states may seamlessly verify an applicant's information with another state and deploy data and document verification capabilities that can be used by all states, while protecting personal identification information.

The REAL ID Vital Events Verification State Project Grant will provide \$4 million to help verify birth certificates and other vital records. This funding complements a \$3 million grant for a REAL ID Pilot Project awarded to Kentucky in fiscal year 2006 that tested unique software to improve identity verification capabilities. The additional \$4 million will further support and expand the pilot program, allowing other states to acquire and benefit from this or similar software that verifies birth record information for individuals applying for a REAL ID driver's license or ID card.

States competing for the REAL ID Demonstration Grant are encouraged to submit proposals that demonstrate how other states would be able to use, modify, or transfer a personal identification verification system or established architecture that is designed and developed through federal funding.

DHS began allowing states to use up to 20 percent of the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP) for REAL ID initiatives in fiscal year 2007. More than \$509 million in SHSGP funding awards were provided last year.

For more information and the complete application kit, please visit [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

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