

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA THE
DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES AGENCY PERFORMANCE
OVERSIGHT HEARING ON FISCAL YEARS 2019 – 2020**



Testimony of
Gabriel Robinson, Director
Department of Motor Vehicles

Before the
Committee on Transportation and the Environment
Mary Cheh, Chairperson

Thursday, February 6, 2020
11:00 am – Room 412
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 2004

Good morning, Chairperson Cheh, Committee members, councilmembers, and staff of the Committee. I am Gabriel Robinson, Director of the District of Columbia Department of Motor Vehicles (DC DMV). I am pleased to testify before you today.

Prior to sharing the major FY19 and year-to-date FY20 DC DMV accomplishments, on behalf of Mayor Muriel Bowser, I would like to thank our customers, Chairperson Cheh, this Committee, and the rest of the Council for your support. The feedback you provide to this agency is valued and critically important in guiding our decision-making process for service improvements. In addition, we receive feedback from the public, which is also valuable and helps us improve our customer service and business offerings. I would also like to extend a special thank you to all my colleagues at DC DMV for their hard work, dedication, and commitment to serving our customers each day our doors are open.

DMV provides service to over 631,000 licensed drivers/identification card holders and over 307,000 registered vehicle owners at four service centers. We provide adjudication services and collect ticket payments for more than 2.8 million tickets issued annually, including conducting over 303,000 in-person and mail hearings. We also conduct over 172,000 annual vehicle inspections. DMV interacts with DC residents and non-residents, with an average of 3,000 daily customer contacts - more than almost any other District government agency.

DC DMV's core Administrations provide numerous services to the District of Columbia. Our Adjudication Services team provides ticket processing, ticket noticing, hearings, and hearing support services to residents and non-residents, in order to render legally sound decisions on

parking, photo enforcement, and minor moving violations. Driver license revocation and reinstatement hearings are also provided. The team also ensures proper processing of violation and penalty payments for these infractions. Vehicle Services provides certification and inspection services to residents, businesses, and government entities so they may legally park, drive, and sell their vehicles in the District of Columbia. Driver Services provides driver certification and identification services to residents, ensuring they have the proper credentials to reflect identity, residence, and driving qualifications, so they may legally and safely operate their vehicles.

In the recent 2019 D.C. Resident Survey Report, over half (52%) of residents reported contacting the DC DMV in the last 12 months. Of those who contacted DC DMV recently, almost two-thirds reported excellent (31%) or good (34%) service. As indicated in the report, satisfaction with DC DMV services is up 33 percentage points.

Throughout FY19 and year-to-date FY20, DC DMV has continued to focus on customer service and convenience. We made significant improvements to our App for customers who prefer to complete mobile transactions. DC DMV's App currently allows users to create a digital representation of their vehicle registration card, find a nearby DMV location, access a list of all DMV locations, including services offered and hours of operations, and get information on DMV holiday schedules and emergency closures. Additional features and transactions will be added to the App in FY20, including registration renewal, driver record certification, the option to update one's organ donor status, tag cancellation, and driver license renewal.

In FY19, DC DMV began offering customer credentials with a special designation indicator such as Autism, Visually Impaired, Hearing Impaired, and Intellectual Disability. DC residents can select the optional indicators on the Driver License/Identification Card Application. The Visually Impaired indicator is limited to the Identification Card; however, all other special designation indicators are available for a Driver License and Identification Card.

As an agency committed to saving lives every day, DC DMV has continued to support the Mayor's Vision Zero Initiative throughout FY19 and into FY20. We revised our Driving Manual to educate and re-educate drivers on key safety topics, including the Dutch Reach, Hawk Crossing Signals, and Streetcars. Additionally, every Standard and Grad Knowledge Test now has mandatory questions on streetcars, pedestrian safety, and bicyclists. In FY19, we also began offering refresher knowledge testing for select online transactions. Most recently, on January 13, 2020, we integrated an optional public pledge on our website to encourage customers to "Slow down and Save a Life." We also published important Vision Zero safety tips in our newsletter, which reaches approximately 375,000 subscribers each month. DC DMV also completed 158 child car seat inspections and installations, a 47 percent increase (as compared to FY18), at our annual Child Car Safety Seat Check and Install event held at the Inspection Station on September 21, 2019. The increase could be attributed to strategically promoting the event on our social media channels and to additional event support from our partners at District Department of Transportation (DDOT), Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), Fire and EMS Department (FEMS), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Children's National Hospital, and Safe Kids DC.

During FY19 and into FY20, DC DMV has continued to communicate with the public about critical information via social media, live web chats, press releases, community listservs, emails (monthly e-newsletters and notices), public service announcements, community meetings, press events, and other public forums. The agency has attended press events and ANC and community meetings where we spoke to residents about current initiatives and REAL ID, helping them to better understand what documents are needed to obtain a REAL ID driver license or identification card. REAL ID is a Federal Security Standard established by the US Government to improve the reliability and accuracy of driver licenses and identification cards. Starting October 1, 2020, every air traveler will need a REAL ID compliant license, or another TSA acceptable form of identification, for domestic air travel.

I represented the agency at a national press conference hosted by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) on October 1, 2019, to educate the public about REAL ID and the one-year compliance deadline for domestic flights. I also participated in a regional press conference hosted by TSA on November 15, 2019, focused on educating the public about REAL ID and key compliance deadlines.

Educating residents about the importance of obtaining a REAL ID credential has been a key initiative of DC DMV throughout FY19 and into FY20. Currently, 82% of DC residents are REAL ID compliant. Starting in October 2019, to assist with the compliance process, DC DMV began offering District residents whose non-REAL ID credential expires on or after October 1, 2020 the opportunity to renew their credential early. We continue to notify residents of early renewal opportunities via bi-weekly e-mail and paper mail targeting those residents whose

credential expires on or after October 1, 2020. DC DMV is committed to making it as easy as possible for DC residents to obtain a REAL ID credential, and we'll continue to schedule early renewal appointments over the coming months. We encourage all residents who receive an early renewal notification from DC DMV to make an appointment as soon as possible to obtain their REAL ID.

In FY19, DC DMV began building a new data warehouse to help us extract data more efficiently. A data warehouse is a central repository of information that can be analyzed to make better informed decisions. DMV's new data warehouse will allow all of our existing data sources to speak with one voice. This will allow DMV to better utilize the content of our data rich systems.

On November 15, 2019, DC DMV opened the District's first self-service on-board diagnostic (OBD) emissions kiosk at the Takoma Recreation Center in Ward 4. I would like to thank Councilmember Cheh for being a champion on this project as she was instrumental in helping DC DMV secure funding to pilot this state-of-the-art technology. The OBD kiosk is an ATM-style machine that provides 24-hour access, 7 days a week for District residents to perform their own emissions test. The kiosk is available for vehicle model years 2005 and newer. The kiosk is available for personal/private class vehicles only and cannot be used on government, business, commercial, or for-hire vehicles. Since the kiosk opened, over 700 emission tests have been completed using the new technology.

In support of breast cancer awareness, prevention, and treatment, DC DMV introduced a new Breast Cancer Awareness specialty license plate on June 18, 2019. The \$25 application fee and \$20 yearly display fee for the specialty tag benefits the Community Health Care Financing Fund to support breast cancer prevention and treatment. DMV has strategically promoted the breast cancer awareness specialty tags through our website, social media channels, and via the media. To date, DC DMV has issued 200 Breast Cancer Awareness specialty tags raising over \$10K for breast cancer prevention and treatment. We also introduced a Donate Life organization tag in June 2019 in partnership with the Washington Regional Transplant Community to increase awareness for organ and tissue donation in Washington, DC. To date, DC DMV has issued 12 Donate Life organizational tags.

I would also like to recognize Team DMV for their outstanding support of the 65th DC One Fund Campaign, which raised over \$1.3 million, the highest amount in 20 years. Thanks to Team DMV's efforts, our agency surpassed our campaign goal and DMV raised over \$34,000 to support participating non-profit organizations serving the residents of Washington, D.C. DC DMV was proud to be one of the top contributing agencies and to have one of the highest employee participation rates throughout the 65th DC One Fund Campaign.

In FY19, DC DMV supported various government partnerships that align with the Mayor's community initiatives such as Downtown Day Services Center, which provides essential services and community resources for individuals experiencing homelessness in the District. DC DMV has a presence at the center every Thursday where we provide ID card services to residents. We collaborate on this initiative with DC Department of Human Services (DHS), DC Business

Improvement District (DBID), Pathways to Housing DC, as well as other agency partners and community-based organizations. We also supported Resources to Empower and Develop You (READY) Center in partnership with DC Department of Corrections (DOC), which launched the initiative in February 2019. DC DMV is available to the Center each day to provide driver license/ID card services, ticket information, and general agency-related information.

Prior to concluding my hearing, I would like to provide some additional clarification and helpful tips for the public specific to tickets and interacting with DC DMV. There is often confusion among customers related to the functions of the various agencies involved with parking and ticketing. The District Department of Transportation regulates parking by managing policy, signage, and meters as well as issuing tickets; the Department of Public Works enforces parking by issuing tickets and booting and towing vehicles. DC DMV adjudicates tickets by allowing you to contest a ticket you believe was issued in error. If you receive a ticket you believe to have been issued in error, you must officially adjudicate the ticket, within the timeframe allowed, using the instructions on the back of the ticket or on our website to protect your legal right to adjudicate. You can submit your request to contest tickets online at dmv.dc.gov. Additionally, if you receive a ticket that doubles (which means a penalty has been added), and you wish to contest just the penalty amount, you should not pay the original fine amount. Payment of any portion of the ticket is an admission of liability and prevents you from adjudicating the ticket.

While we have continued to make improvements during the past year, we look forward to continuing the momentum and doing more in FY20. Public safety and customer service will continue to be a priority, and I look forward to working with my team to identify new

opportunities to improve operational processes and make it easier for our customers to complete their transactions with DC DMV. Again, we appreciate the support we have received from the Council and look forward to continuing our efforts to improve the quality of service to the residents of the District of Columbia. In closing, we would like to thank Mayor Bowser for her continued leadership and commitment to good government and accountability. I will now address any questions you may have. Thank you!