

What is Biometric Identification?

The Department of Licensing is dedicated to protecting the privacy of all Washington State residents, including those who choose to participate in our new Enhanced Driver License and Identification Card Program (EDL/ID). By law, we must include reasonable security measures to protect the privacy of all applicants. Therefore, we will implement one-to-many facial biometric identification technology to verify the identity of each applicant. All EDL/ID applicants are required to sign a declaration acknowledging that we disclosed the use and purpose of biometric identification technology.

What is biometric identification?

Biometrics is the use of digital technology to identify individuals based on their unique physical features.

Facial biometric technology focuses on facial features that aren't easy to alter, such as eye sockets, cheekbones, and sides of the mouth. It measures facial characteristics such as the distance between pupils, and the size and shape of facial features.

One-to-many facial biometric matching is the comparison of each applicant's photo to existing photos in our database.

Why use facial biometric identification?

We use it because it's non-invasive and helps to prevent identity theft and ID duplication.

How does it work?

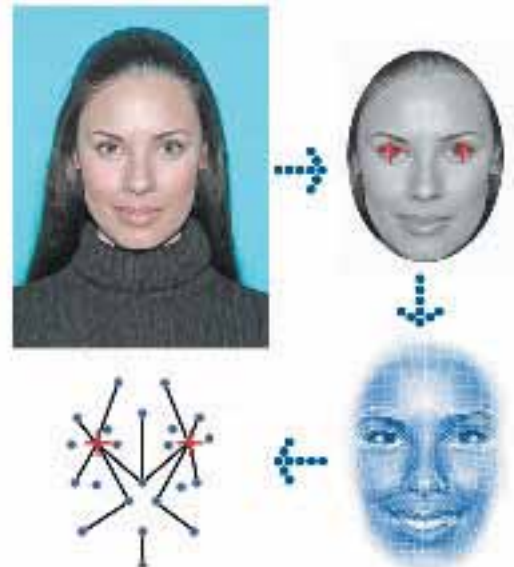
In addition to the identity documents you provide at the time of application, we take a digital photo of you to:

- verify your identity.
- place on the front of your card.

Facial biometric identification software reduces your photo image to a digital code — or template.

The software analyzes the template for certain facial features and compares them to other facial templates in the database (one-to-many).

Your biometric information is protected through our use of best practices, as defined by the travel card security industry, which includes encryption of all transmitted data.



*The Department of Licensing has a policy of providing equal access to its services.
If you need special accommodation, please call (360) 902-3900 or TTY (360) 664-0116*

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