

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 26-0194
(First Reader)**

Introduced by: Councilmember Ramos

Cosponsored by: President Cohen and Councilmembers Parker, Dorsey, Conway, Gray, Bullock,
Porter, Blanchard, Jones, and Glover

At the request of: The Administration (Baltimore City Information Technology)

Introduced and read first time: May 11, 2026

Assigned to: Public Health and Environment Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Department of Finance, Baltimore City
Information Technology, Police Department, Sheriff's Office, Mayor's Office of Immigrant
Affairs

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ORDINANCE concerning

2 **Municipal Identification Cards – Applications and Personal Information**

3 FOR the purpose of updating the application and approval process for obtaining a municipal
4 identity card; making conforming changes; updating obsolete language; and generally relating
5 to applications for municipal identity cards and an applicant's personal information.

6 BY repealing and re-ordaining, with amendments,
7 Article 1 - Mayor, City Council, and Municipal Agencies
8 Sections 38-1 to 38-5, 38-7, 38-10, and 38-11
9 Baltimore City Code
10 (Edition 2000)

11 BY repealing and re-ordaining, without amendments,
12 Article 1 - Mayor, City Council, and Municipal Agencies
13 Section 38-13
14 Baltimore City Code
15 (Edition 2000)

16 BY repealing
17 Article 1 - Mayor, City Council, and Municipal Agencies
18 Sections 38-6 and 38-8
19 Baltimore City Code
20 (Edition 2000)

21 **SECTION 1. BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
22 Laws of Baltimore City read as follows:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate matter added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

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Baltimore City Code

Article 1. Mayor, City Council, and Municipal Agencies

Subtitle 38. Municipal Identification

§ 38-1. Definitions.

(a) *“Baltimore City ID Card”*; *“Municipal identity card”*.

“Baltimore City ID Card” or “municipal identity card” means an identification card issued by the City of Baltimore under this subtitle.

[(b) *MOIT*].

[“MOIT” means the Mayor’s Office of Information Technology, or any successor entity in the Mayor’s Office, or another City agency, responsible for the City’s information technology needs.]

(B) *BCIT*.

“BCIT” MEANS THE BALTIMORE CITY OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY OR ITS SUCCESSOR.

§ 38-2. Findings; Legislative intent.

(a) *Findings of fact.*

(1) In adopting this subtitle, the Mayor and City Council make the findings contained in this subsection.

(2) Many residents of Baltimore City are unable to obtain a government-issued identification essential to full participation in Baltimore’s diverse society. This barrier leaves thousands of individuals – including immigrants, [homeless people,] INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, transgender people, [senior citizens,] OLDER ADULTS, young people, and formerly incarcerated people – without access to critical services, benefits, and cultural, educational, and civic opportunities.

(3) Baltimore City offers an array of cultural, educational, and civic opportunities meant to be accessible to all members of our community.

(4) Transgender and gender non-conforming individuals may have particular challenges in obtaining identification cards that reflect their gender identity, due to stigma and burdensome administrative policies for changing gender on other identification documents. This increases the likelihood they will experience discrimination in seeking employment or housing or otherwise participating in cultural or civic life.

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1 (b) *Legislative intent.*

2 It is the intent of the Mayor and City Council in adopting this subtitle to:

- 3 (1) build Baltimore’s standing as a welcoming and inclusive center for all residents,
4 without regard to a person’s race, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation,
5 gender identity, disability, or immigration, housing, or financial status;
- 6 (2) provide a municipal identification card that will affirm the gender identity and
7 resident status of all Baltimore City residents by allowing applicants to obtain
8 identification that reflects their gender identity, regardless of assigned birth sex or
9 gender designation on previously-issued identity documents;
- 10 (3) expand access and incorporate more members of Baltimore’s diverse community
11 into the rich fabric of civic life; and
- 12 (4) preserve the safety and privacy of all Baltimore City residents by ensuring that
13 personal data gathered during the municipal identification application process is
14 destroyed or maintained confidentially.

15 (c) *No expansion of identification requirements.*

- 16 (1) By authorizing the creation of a municipal identification card program, the Mayor and
17 City Council do not intend to expand identification requirements for access to basic
18 services or exercise of constitutional rights.
- 19 (2) The program created by this subtitle is not to be used to require individuals to produce
20 government-issued identification to access services and benefits where
21 government-issued identification was not previously required, such as when
22 registering to vote, casting a ballot, or accessing certain government buildings.

23 **§ 38-3. Program administration.**

24 (a) *In general.*

25 [MOIT] BCIT shall administer the municipal identity card program with the assistance
26 and cooperation of all other City agencies as needed.

27 (b) *Rules and regulations.*

28 Subject to Title 4 {“Administrative Procedure Act – Regulations”} of the City General
29 Provisions Article, [MOIT] BCIT [may] adopt rules and regulations to carry out this
30 [subtitle.] SUBTITLE, INCLUDING:

- 31 (1) THE FORM OF THE APPLICATION FOR A BALTIMORE CITY ID CARD;
- 32 (2) THE PROCESS BY WHICH AN INDIVIDUAL MAY APPLY FOR A BALTIMORE CITY ID
33 CARD; AND

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1 (3) THE CRITERIA BCIT WILL USE TO DETERMINE WHETHER A DOCUMENT IS
2 ACCEPTABLE PROOF OF AN INDIVIDUAL’S IDENTITY OR RESIDENCY.

3 **§ 38-4. Issuance of identity cards.**

4 [(a) *Available to all City residents.*]

5 [MOIT must] BCIT SHALL make a Baltimore City ID Card available to any resident of
6 Baltimore City who can meet the requirements of [§ 38-8 {“Eligibility for identity card”}
7 of] THE RULES AND REGULATIONS ADOPTED PURSUANT TO this subtitle for establishing
8 [his or her] THEIR identity and residency, regardless of [his or her] THEIR race, color,
9 creed, age, national origin, alienage or citizenship status, gender, sexual orientation,
10 disability, marital status, partnership status, source of lawful income, housing status,
11 status as a victim of domestic violence, status as a victim of sex offenses or stalking, or
12 conviction or arrest record.

13 [(b) *Application fee.*]

14 [(1) The application fee for a Baltimore City ID Card is as set by the Board of
15 Estimates.]

16 [(2) MOIT must adopt rules permitting residents who cannot afford to pay an application
17 fee to receive a full or partial waiver of the fee.]

18 **§ 38-5. Card content and design.**

19 (a) *Content.*

20 (1) A Baltimore City ID Card issued under this subtitle [must, at a minimum,] SHALL
21 display the cardholder’s photograph, name, date of birth, a municipal identity card
22 number unique to each card, and an expiration date.

23 (2) A Baltimore City ID Card issued under this subtitle [may not display the cardholder’s
24 gender.] SHALL DISPLAY THE CARDHOLDER’S GENDER AS IT IS IDENTIFIED BY THE
25 CARDHOLDER.

26 (b) *Secure design.*

27 Each Baltimore City ID Card issued under this subtitle [must] SHALL be designed and
28 produced with fraud and counterfeit deterring features.

29 **§ 38-6. [Availability of applications.] {RESERVED.}**

30 [(a) *Available at City agencies.*]

31 [Applications for Baltimore City ID Cards must be made available for pick-up and
32 submission at every City agency or office where there is substantial contact with the
33 public.]

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1 [(b) *Available on-line.*]

2 [MOIT must make applications available for Baltimore City ID Cards on-line.]

3 **§ 38-7. Language assistance services.**

4 [[MOIT] BCIT shall, consistent with all federal, [state,] STATE, and local laws, provide
5 language assistance to address the needs of limited English proficient individuals in the
6 administration of the municipal identity card program by implementing measures such as:

7 (1) staff training,

8 (2) community outreach, and

9 (3) the use of language assistance tools.

10 **§ 38-8. [Eligibility for identity card.] *{RESERVED.}***

11 [(a) *Proof of identity.*]

12 [To establish identity, an applicant must produce 1 or more of the following documents,
13 each of which must be current or have expired not more than 5 years prior to the date it is
14 presented:]

15 [(1) a U.S. or foreign passport;]

16 [(2) a U.S. state driver's license;]

17 [(3) a U.S. state identification card;]

18 [(4) a U.S. permanent resident card;]

19 [(5) a consular identification card;]

20 [(6) a photo identification card, with name, address, date of birth, and expiration date,
21 issued by another country to its citizens or nationals as an alternative to a
22 passport for re-entry to the issuing country;]

23 [(7) a certified copy of a U.S. or foreign birth certificate;]

24 [(8) a Social Security card;]

25 [(9) a national identification card with photo, name, address, date of birth, and
26 expiration date;]

27 [(10) a foreign driver's license;]

28 [(11) a U.S. or foreign military identification card;]

29 [(12) a current visa issued by a government agency;]

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1 [(13) a U.S. individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN) authorization letter;]

2 [(14) an electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card; or]

3 [(15) an identity document recognized by local homeless shelters allowing individuals
4 experiencing homelessness to access shelters or other services.]

5 [(b) *Proof of City residency.*]

6 [To establish City residency, an applicant must produce one or more of the following
7 items, each of which must show the applicant's name and residential address located
8 within the City and must, except as otherwise provided in this subsection, be dated no
9 more than 60 days prior to the date it is presented:]

10 [(1) a utility bill;]

11 [(2) a current residential property lease;]

12 [(3) a local property tax statement dated within 1 year of the date it is presented;]

13 [(4) a local real property mortgage payment receipt;]

14 [(5) a bank account statement;]

15 [(6) proof that the applicant has a minor child currently enrolled in a school located
16 within the City;]

17 [(7) an employment pay stub;]

18 [(8) a jury summons or court order issued by a federal or state court;]

19 [(9) a federal or state income tax or refund statement dated within one year of the date
20 it is submitted;]

21 [(10) an insurance bill (homeowner's, renter's, health, life, or automobile insurance);]

22 [(11) written verification issued by a homeless shelter that receives City funding
23 confirming at least 15 days residency; or]

24 [(12) written verification issued by a hospital, health clinic, or social services agency
25 located within Baltimore City confirming at least 15 days residency.]

26 [(c) *Homeless residency.*]

27 [An individual experiencing homelessness may establish City residency by producing any
28 document recognized by local homeless shelters allowing the individual to access shelters
29 or other services.]

30 **§ 38-9. {Reserved}**

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§ 38-10. Confidentiality of application information.

(a) *Documents not to be retained.*

Baltimore City may not retain originals or copies of documents provided by an applicant to prove [his or her] THEIR identity or [residency under § 38-8 {"Eligibility for identity card"} of this subtitle.] RESIDENCY FOR THE PURPOSE OF OBTAINING A MUNICIPAL ID CARD.

(b) *Only de-identified information to be retained.*

(1) [The City] BCIT may not retain or create lists of the names or addresses of municipal ID card applicants or holders.

(2) Any data or information about municipal ID card applicants or holders retained by [the City must] BCIT SHALL be de-identified and incapable of being linked to a specific individual by name.

(c) *Fraud prevention.*

[MOIT must] BCIT SHALL develop a program to detect and prevent fraudulent use of municipal identity cards and may retain descriptive or demographic data tied to a particular ID card by card number as part of this fraud prevention program.

§ 38-11. Access to services.

(a) *City agencies required to accept City ID Cards.*

All municipal agencies and offices and all municipal employees, including law enforcement officers, [must] SHALL accept a valid Baltimore City ID Card as proof of identity and residency.

(b) *City to encourage City ID Card acceptance and use.*

(1) The City shall seek to expand the benefits associated with the municipal identity card by promoting the acceptance of the municipal identity card by banks and other public and private institutions.

(2) The City shall seek to encouraging all eligible persons to apply for the card and may offer new benefits or privileges exclusively to those who possess a municipal identity card as an incentive to apply for a municipal identity card.

(c) *No new ID requirements.*

(1) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, Baltimore City agencies and officers may not require the possession of a municipal identity card where, as of July 1, 2017, identification was not already required to obtain [city] CITY services.

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1 (2) Agencies may require the possession of a municipal identity card to obtain benefits or
2 privileges established after July 1, 2017 and offered exclusively to those who possess
3 a municipal identity card as an incentive to apply for a municipal identity card.

4 **§ 38-12. {Reserved}**

5 **§ 38-13. Counterfeit and fraudulent Baltimore City ID Cards.**

6 (a) *Prohibited conduct.*

7 No person or entity may:

8 (1) knowingly present false information in the course of applying for a Baltimore City
9 ID Card;

10 (2) alter, copy, or replicate a Baltimore City ID Card without the authority of the City
11 of Baltimore; or

12 (3) use the Baltimore City ID Card issued to another person, with the intent to cause a
13 third person or entity to believe the holder of the card is the person to whom the
14 card was issued.

15 (b) *Civil penalty.*

16 Any person who violates any provision of this section is subject to a civil penalty of \$100
17 that may be enforced by issuance of a civil citation under Subtitle 41 {"Civil Citations"}
18 of this article.

19 **SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That this Ordinance takes effect on the 30th day
20 after the date it is enacted.