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Gov. Beshear: Kentucky's First Digital ID Available Through Free and Secure Phone App Accepted for Air Travel

Technology provides Kentuckians privacy control, convenience to confirm identity at participating commercial airports, establishments

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Jan. 6, 2026) — In keeping with Team Kentucky's commitment to prevent identity theft and deliver modern licensing services, Gov. Andy Beshear today announced that Kentuckians can download Kentucky Mobile ID – a secure digital version of a standard or REAL ID driver's license or ID accepted for air travel at more than 250 airports. The app is used at Transportation Security Administration (TSA) checkpoints to verify a user's identity and helps protect privacy by sharing only the information needed. The app does not replace a physical ID or driver's license, which should still be carried at all times.

"Mobile ID offers Kentuckians more options for air travel, while further protecting them from identity theft or having their private information shared," said Gov. Andy Beshear. "We want our families to be safe and feel safe while they are traveling, and this is just another step Team Kentucky is taking to increase safety for our people."

A Kentucky Mobile ID is a voluntary, state-approved version of a person's Kentucky driver's license, permit or ID card ideal for air travel, age-restricted purchases or transactions requiring verification at participating establishments. The digital version is stored on the user's smartphone as a valid form of ID locked behind a mobile phone's unique PIN, Touch ID or Face ID, so that, if the device is lost or stolen, the ID is locked – unlike a physical ID in a lost or stolen wallet that could be used by someone else. The authenticity of the Mobile ID is ensured through verification with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC), based on records created when a user applies for a driver's license or state ID.

Kentuckians with a state license, permit or ID card can request a digital version through the app. Kentuckians who register for a mobile ID using a standard driver's license but are approved for a REAL ID at a Driver Licensing Regional Office will have their upgraded status reflected on the app within days before their physical card arrives in the mail. Federal REAL ID enforcement began May 7, 2025, requiring [an accepted form](#) of REAL ID for U.S. commercial air travel and military base entry.

Eighteen other states and Puerto Rico offer IDEMIA's Mobile ID app. Those states are Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Montana, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Utah, Virginia and West Virginia.

"Everything's in your phone; now your ID can be too," said KYTC Secretary Jim Gray. "A digital ID serves as an addition to a physical ID, allowing Kentuckians convenience when proving their identity. One of the biggest benefits is letting cardholders limit showing only necessary personal information during a transaction or service, like withholding your address when proving your age to buy restricted items."

Not all Kentucky businesses or state agencies may accept mobile IDs, so Kentuckians should always continue to carry a hard copy of their driver's license or state identification. State law requires law enforcement to request physical operators' licenses when conducting a traffic stop or responding to a crash. Therefore, Kentuckians who choose to download a Mobile ID must be prepared to present a hard copy upon request.

Kentucky's Mobile ID is accepted at TSA security checkpoints at most U.S. airports, including the Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky International Airport in Covington, the Blue Grass Airport in Lexington, Barkley Regional Airport in Paducah, and Louisville's Muhammad Ali International Airport.

A merchant can also verify Mobile ID by using the free "Mobile ID Verify App," available in the App Store or Google Play. The verifier and the credential holder's apps communicate via Bluetooth with end-to-end encryption. The verifier must select which information they are requesting to access. The user has the option to accept or reject the requested information, and an additional alert will pop-up if the verifier requests to temporarily store the information. Not all merchants may accept Mobile ID, and individuals should be prepared to present a hard copy of their identification if required for purchase.

How to Get Your Kentucky Mobile ID

Kentuckians can get their Mobile ID in a few simple steps:

- Download the Kentucky Mobile ID Verify app from the App Store or through Google Play.
- Register the phone number of the Mobile ID device. An individual's Mobile ID can only be on one device at a time to help protect their identity.
- Take a picture of the front and back of your physical ID (driver license, permit, or non-driver ID), using their phone's camera.

- Take a live selfie. The app checks your photo and ID against information on file with your Transportation Cabinet driving record to ensure you are who you say you are.
- Once your information is verified, your Mobile ID is active and ready to use wherever it is accepted.
- To learn more about Mobile ID or how to verify a Mobile ID, visit www.drive.ky.gov/mobile-id.

Implementing Kentucky Mobile ID is the first step before launching other digital driver licensing wallet options (e.g., Apple, Google, Samsung) in the future. Before releasing other digital wallet apps, Kentucky must first complete its modernization of its current driver licensing system in the summer of 2026. More information will be available at a later date.

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Editors: Click here to view a video of how to register.

transportation.ky.gov