**Minnesota Department of Public Safety**

**Legislative Proposal to Collect Racial and Ethnic Data**

**What**

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety [Driver and Vehicle Services (DPS-DVS)](https://onlineservices.dps.mn.gov/EServices/_/) division is asking the State legislature for the authority to collect race and ethnicity data on the driver’s license and identification card application.

The information would be self-identified and optional to provide. This information would not be printed on the driver’s license and *would not be available to law enforcement*. DPS-DVS would classify this as private data under [Minnesota Government Data Practices Minn. Stat. § 13](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/13).

**Why**

There are no statewide data currently available relating to race, ethnicity and traffic citations. Only a small number of local law enforcement jurisdictions collect race data during traffic stops.

Examples of what this data could inform:

* At the county level, the number and category of traffic citations issued to individual racial/ethnic populations.
* Identify a demographic group that is over-represented in traffic enforcement.

The Department of Public Safety [Office and Traffic Safety (DPS-OTS)](https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ots/Pages/default.aspx) division has the ability to tie driver’s license racial and ethnic data to traffic citation data.

The State of Minnesota would like to be able to study this topic and share the findings with the public.

**When**

This is currently a legislative proposal; it must first be approved by the legislature and then signed by the Governor before it becomes law. If that occurs, DPS believes the collection of this information would begin on January 1, 2023.

Because driver’s license renewals are required every four years, it’s possible that DPS would have a near complete collection of race and ethnicity data (for those who provide the information) after four years.

**How**

Race and ethnicity data would be requested at the time an individual completes a driver’s license or ID card application with DPS-DVS. The options to self-identify will be same as those used by the United States Census Bureau.

**Key Takeaways**

* Race data will not appear on the card.
* Providing race and ethnic data will not be required.
* Law enforcement will not see this information when looking up a vehicle or individual.
* Data will provide an opportunity to develop evidence-based proposals to address public safety inequities and disparities in all communities.
* Effective traffic law enforcement that is transparent and equitable will improve public safety and quality of life in all communities.