

California Preparing For Undocumented Driver Licenses

By Katie Orr

Fresno's DMV field office (file photo)

Credit CA Department of Motor Vehicles

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Beginning January 2, undocumented Californians can apply for driver licenses in the state. One-point-four million people are expected to apply for “AB 60” licenses over the next few years. From Sacramento, Katie Orr reports on how preparations are going.



There is a mix of excitement and distrust in immigrant communities as the state prepares to start issuing licenses. Pedro Rios is with American Friends Service Committee in San Diego, which supports immigrant-led organizations. He says undocumented immigrants are nervous about how they’ll be treated by law enforcement. But he says they’re also looking forward to having the licenses.

Rios: “The AB 60 license would be something that would provide them nice protection to be able to go to work, to go to school, to take their kids to the hospital or clinic if they need to.”

Jessica Gonzalez is with the California Department of Motor Vehicles. She says staff combed through public comments to make sure the community was satisfied with the process and requirements for getting a license.

Gonzales: “Cause the whole point of AB 60 is so that our roads are safer, that people know the rules of the road, that they’re licensed, that, if they own a vehicle, that they are insured. So we really had to go through every comment and find out, are people really going to be able to obtain a driver license through AB 60.”

Gonzalez says anyone who can’t obtain the necessary documents can go through an identity verification interview with the DMV so they can apply.

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