

6. Security

Municipal ID cards should be designed, and programs implemented, in such a way as to prevent fraud and misused. There are three main components to card security:

Card design

One of the simplest ways to prevent fraud is by making the card difficult to counterfeit. Cities have incorporated a range of design features to accomplish this, including:

- Card is made of certain stock thickness and material
- Card stock inventory is laser engraved with a serial number
- Fine-line pattern background
- Embedded watermark
- Foil stamp of city seal
- Ultraviolet Ink
- Holograms
- Tamper-proof magnetic stripe
- Tamper-proof signature pane

Document authentication

The document authentication process is another important component of card security. Staff should be trained in document review and provided with the necessary equipment and information to evaluate document authenticity.³¹ In New Haven staff received training from foreign consulates on authenticating foreign documents, and they are provided with a reference guide depicting and describing the range of documents that they may encounter.³²

Penalties for misuse

Cities may also deter fraud by establishing penalties for misuse in the enacting legislation. It is not necessary or advisable for cities to establish criminal penalties, and municipal ID card fraud will likely already be covered by existing fraud statutes in the state criminal code. If a city chooses to attach penalties to card misuse, those penalties should civil penalties, punishable by small fine. Hartford's legislation permits, but does not require, the city to punish misuse with a fine of \$100. The model legislation contained in Appendix A of this report includes language based on Hartford's ordinance. Community members may also wish to advocate for a program with no designated penalties, as in



the enacting legislation for IDNYC. This option is also acceptable, although including a civil penalty may help to deter prosecution under the criminal law fraud provisions.

Notably, there have been almost no instances of suspected fraud in any of the jurisdictions that currently run municipal ID card programs. When IDNYC released its first quarterly report to the City Council in March 2015, there were only two instances of possible fraud detected among more than 100,000 processed applications.³³

7. Gender

For transgender people, the difficulty of obtaining ID that reflects a person's preferred name and gender identity means that many transgender people do not feel safe or comfortable using an ID card. Presenting a mismatched ID when applying for a job or for housing, when interacting with police or simply trying to enter an office building can mean harassment, humiliation, or violence. Many transgender individuals are forced to rely on fake IDs or completely avoid activities that require showing an ID that "outs" them as transgender. Some refuse to carry any ID at all. This problem results in less employment and fewer opportunities for transgender people, driving transgender people into underground economies where ID is not required, and perpetuates the risk of violence or arrest.

The transgender community in San Francisco participated in the advocacy for municipal ID program there, and thanks to their work the San Francisco ID card also does not display the cardholder's gender.

One of the innovations of IDNYC was the option for cardholders to choose the gender with which they identify, regardless of the gender indicated on their supporting application documents. This aspect of the program led to wide adoption rates in the transgender community. IDNYC expanded this feature to allow applicants to choose the gender with which they identify, or to choose not to have gender displayed on the card at all. The transgender community in San Francisco participated in the advocacy for municipal ID program there, and thanks to their work the San Francisco ID card also does not display the cardholder's gender.

Recommendations for transgender inclusion

- Municipal ID card programs should establish clear and easy means by which a holder of a municipal card or new applicant will be able to change the name on their municipal identification card.
- For card-holders who later change their name or applicants whose application documentation might not reflect a legal name change, providing proof of a legal name change to the administering agency should be adequate documentation to change the name on an existing municipal identity card or to use a name on a new municipal ID card.
- All applicants should be allowed to self-attest to the gender marker included on the face of their ID card.
- All applicants should be allowed to choose to have no gender displayed on their ID card.
- All staff administering the ID card program should receive mandatory training on working with LGBTQ communities to ensure that LGBTQ communities can safely access services and identification cards.

- Fee waivers should be available for applicants who are homeless or receive any form of government assistance.

8. Law Enforcement Participation

In many cities, especially large urban centers, one of the primary potential benefits of a municipal ID card program will be improved relationship between the community and the local police. New Haven Assistant Chief of Police Luiz Casanova remarked that, “The New Haven Resident Card has been very helpful from a law enforcement perspective. Since the card was introduced, crime reporting has increased in Fair Haven, yet there were double-digit drops in every category of crime. Overall, the card has improved interactions between police and undocumented residents, and has played an important role in building relationships and respect.”³⁴

Individuals who do not have ID are often afraid to report crime, or to solicit the help of local police in any situation. Not having a valid ID to present when stopped by law enforcement can mean being arrested and jailed for violations that would otherwise be handled with a court summons. It is important that cities invest the necessary time and resource to fully integrated the municipal ID card with law enforcement policies and practices. Municipal ID legislation should explicitly mention local police among the agencies that are required to accept ID. The city should conduct trainings with police on the new ID, and practices around the ID should be incorporated into police manuals and regular training procedures going forward.

