



# Plate Talk

Official Publication of the Minnesota Deputy Registrar's Association

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## From the President's desk...

Greetings MDRA members-

My message this issue is an important public service announcement to all deputies and their staff regarding record access.

As Deputy Registrars that signed a User Access Agreement we should all be aware of the following Statute and Policy:

Minn. Stat. § 171.12, Subd. 1a (b), states: "the Commissioner will immediately and permanently revoke the authorization of any individual who willfully enters, updates, accesses, shares, or disseminates data in violation of state or federal law."

and

Security and Confidentiality of Data & Records, Policy Number: 125-1000, states: "Staff will not check their own records or the records of friends, family, or other employees."

This statute and policy were written because of widespread abuse by many stakeholders, not necessarily the Deputy Registrar or their employees. Recently, DVS conducted a required audit and many deputy registrars received letters that they, or members of their staff have looked up their own record, citing a violation of the Statute and Policy above. They were requested to provide an explanation for each violation, and the business need for doing so.

Once the MDRA was made aware of these letters, we immediately reached out to DVS. It was discovered that many of the record lookups occurred because they needed to confirm the system was working before attempting to process a transaction. In many cases, they were instructed to do this by PIC staff. Clearly, this identified a gap in training and testing. DVS is understanding in the explanations provided, yet they are required to follow the law, and the final outcome from this audit is yet to be determined.

We have also requested a meeting with the DNR for clarification on a similar policy and to request test records from them for training purposes.

I urge you to use extreme caution when accessing records. Make sure you have a legitimate business purpose for doing so. I also urge you to discontinue accessing your own record for any reason if that was your past practice.

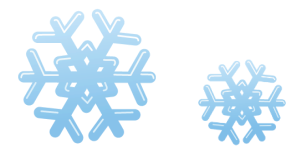
We will continue to have discussions with DVS and DNR until an acceptable solution is met, and will keep you abreast of our progress. We will also be proposing legislation to address this.

Neng Lor

President | Minnesota Deputy Registrars Association



President - Neng Lor  
Neng.lor@hennepin.us



# Legislative Committee

Jim Hirst- Lobbyist  
John Lenarz- Chair

The 2019 Legislative session has now begun in Saint Paul with its newly elected members for this “long session” that will adjourn May 20. Last fall’s election ballot featured all state constitutional officers, all state house members (but not state senators except one seat subject to a special election), and the state’s entire federal congressional delegation.



Our new governor, Tim Walz (DFL), has just announced his cabinet choice for DPS commissioner with John Harrington replacing Mona Dohman. The new commissioner has an extensive background in law enforcement, serving as chief of police for Saint Paul, and later as chief of police for Metro Transit since 2012. In between his stints for Saint Paul and Metro Transit, he also served a briefly as a state senator representing Saint Paul from 2011-2012.

Specific to the legislature, 39 new house members were elected in November—a near 30% change in the membership, which also translated into a net gain of 18 seats for the DFL and delivered them majority control in that body. Representative Melissa Hortman (DFL-Brooklyn Park) has been selected as the new Speaker of the House, and previous Speaker Kurt Daudt (R-Crown) will become the new House Minority Leader. Representative Frank Hornstein (DFL-Minneapolis) will return as the new House Transportation Committee chair, which is the same role he served when the DFL last held the majority four years ago.

While the DFL has control of the House, the Senate will remain in Republican hands albeit by a two-vote majority until another open seat is decided in an upcoming special election to replace Senator Tony Lourey (DFL-Kerrick), who has been tapped to become Commissioner of Human Services in Governor Walz’s cabinet. The Senate Transportation Committee will continue to be chaired by Senator Scott Newman (R-Hutchinson).

Despite the nuance of split political control between the house and senate at the legislature, MDRA has a long history of working in a bipartisan manner with our lawmakers which will be critical in this new environment. Our legislative agenda is centered primarily on appropriate filing fee increases for both motor vehicle and driver license transactions **AND** a compensation package for all offices as we enter a second year of MNLARS. We have now completed the final time and motion studies for filing fee increases (thank you participating offices!) and we are compiling the data from the recent fiscal impact survey to best determine the appropriate levels to seek. While the final summary reports are currently in process that will reflect the data collected, some early extractions indicate the following preliminary averages regarding filing fees:



Time and motion study for short app’s compared to pre-MNLARS: up 37%  
Time and motion study for long app’s compared to pre-MNLARS: up 34%  
Time and motion study for DL compared to pre-FAST: up 34%



Separately, the recent 12-month fiscal impact study largely confirmed our original 5-month survey, although with shifting totals in certain categories. The first 5-month survey when extended for the initial 12-month period suggested a total impact of just over \$10 million, which is what the legislature based last session’s \$9 million compensation bill on. The recent second survey that was based on the actual first 12-month period totaled just over \$8.5 million. Regrettably, while we had 65% participation with the first survey, that same survey only garnered 42% participation for the full year review that was just completed. In both surveys, the data collected was considered a true representative sample that was proportionately multiplied in each case to achieve the estimated 100% impact for the entire deputy registrar office network for the first year of MNLARS.

It is the intent of the MDRA legislative committee to pursue a compensation bill this session that will now need to address two years of operations under MNLARS until increased filing fees (usually effective July 1) can also be enacted to return deputy registrar offices to their traditional model of sustainability. It will be crucial to achieve both of these measures to ensure our viability moving forward. We anticipate introducing legislation later this month, and will be asking for your participation with targeted phone calls to your lawmakers once that is set in motion.



Thank you in advance for your attention to our legislative session requests when called upon.

# Day on the Hill !!



**2019 MDRA Day on the Hill**  
**Thursday February 14, 2019**  
**10AM to 3PM at the State Capitol campus**  
**(Check-in will begin up to one hour prior at 145 University Avenue--LMC building)**

Starting anytime after 9AM (until 11AM), attendees may obtain MDRA informational packets and related support at our reserved meeting room located on the first floor at the MN League of Cities (LMC) building located at 145 University Avenue West, which is conveniently located one block from the Capitol, the State Office Building (house member offices), and Minnesota Senate Building (senate member offices).

Due to the recent closure of the Saint Paul Sears store (our normal base of operations in the past), we are grateful to be afforded free use of the League of MN Cities building for our purposes this year. Regrettably, we cannot provide lunch fare this year but coffee and donuts will be offered in the morning at the LMC site. Lunch options for attendees include the cafeterias in either the Capital (basement level) or MNDOT building two blocks away. Unfortunately, free parking is also denied us now at the Sears lot, but attendees may find convenient public parking (\$8 daily) at the surface lot across University Avenue from the LMC building. Street meters are also an option in the surrounding area, and cost \$1.25 per hour (quarters only) but with a three hour maximum.

Similar to past years, the MDRA Day on the Hill provides opportunities for valuable one-on-one face time with your elected state lawmakers and supplies key legislative leaders addressing our group, all interspersed that day with key legislative committee hearings and legislative floor sessions. Your participation greatly underscores and personalizes the critical nature of our legislative agenda with lawmakers, many of whom are new this session! A future communication requesting your affirmative RSVP to assist with our planning purposes will be forthcoming.

Please make plans to join us and your colleagues this Valentine's Day in Saint Paul!



# 2019 Legislative Agenda

## MDRA Legislative Agenda for 2019

- \* **Direct compensation for all deputy offices based on last year's vetoed bills, which then had a combined total of \$14 million in reimbursement funding for the first two years of MNLARS impact. That amount shall be considered the "floor" as we press and negotiate for an even higher amount. The final determined amount would be attached to any "emergency funding" that the administration is anticipated to seek for current MNLARS operations, which is nearly exhausted. Similar with last year's legislation, it would have an immediate effective date upon signature and a distribution formula based on an individual office MV transaction counts compared to all other deputy offices. However, the source of this money would be from the state's general fund, and not from DVS operating accounts.**
  
- \* **Filing fee increases for all motor vehicle and driver license transactions, reflected by MDRA conducted time and motion studies from participating offices. Based on the average increased time to complete MV and DL transactions, we will seek the following increases:**
  - \* \$2.50 for renewals (42% fee increase)
  - \* \$3.50 for titles (34% fee increase)
  - \* \$10 expedited fee added when processing and printing a duplicate title on-site
  - \* \$4.00 for driver license (50% fee increase)

These fee increases would be designed to be effective July 1, 2019 just prior to the start of the third year of MNLARS. The total new revenue just for the deputy registrar network would represent approximately an additional \$15 million for MV and another \$5 million for DL annually.

*The proposed MV fee increases are contingent on separately obtaining direct compensation for all offices (above). Tab and title filing fees would have to be increased further if we do not receive satisfaction on MNLARS compensation.*
  
- \* **Clarifying the User Access Agreement for all deputy registrars and their staff who must abide with new law and DVS policy. Exceptions or a right to appeal must be allowed rather than a lifetime revocation of access when such is done inadvertently without malicious intent or in situations of system testing purposes.**
  
- \* **Providing for the equal consideration and handling of NSF checks received by deputy registrars as that afforded internally by DVS.**



## Ride Along

By Craig Flynn, DVS Title and Registration Unit Manager

Over the summer, I had the opportunity to go on a ride-along with an Anoka County deputy sheriff. It was an educational experience in many ways, but most significant was seeing how the information that DVS manages is used by law enforcement.

It is easy to think of the work performed by deputy registrars and DVS staff as just data entry or transaction processing.

We need to remember that there are actual people and issues connected to our work. If our records are not accurate and current it creates some very real problems for the people using our data all day, every day.

There was one house that the deputy needed to make extra passes by because there was a potential danger to one of the residents. She was able to inquire on the license plates of vehicles parked near the residence to make sure that it was owned by someone who lived in the house or was known to the deputy. The DVS information was critical to helping the deputy ensure that only people who did not pose a danger were in the area.

In another situation the deputy received information from her dispatcher that the mother of a teenage girl had called saying one of her daughter's friends had texted she was considering suicide. The deputy called the mother back and found out that they didn't know the other teen girl's address, but knew the name of the teenager's mother. The deputy was able to perform a search from her vehicle and find the address using the information in the DVS system. Once the address was obtained we and another deputy went to the house. This took place around 11 p.m., so to say the parents were surprised to see two deputies at the door is an understatement. I waited in the car while the deputies had this difficult discussion with the parents and when they came back it was gratifying to hear that because they had been able to locate and talk to the parents a tragic event was potentially averted.

I found out that there are some impressive search tools that BCA has for accessing the DVS data. I was amazed at the sheer number of plate inquiries that one officer performs. The deputy was typing in the license plate numbers of most oncoming vehicles and those that were in front of us. She received a spoken response to each inquiry, giving the registration status, vehicle year, make, model, style, and color. There is also a response if there is any information about the vehicle owner the officer should know, such as a suspended driver's license or arrest warrant.

During MNLARS development, and after deployment, DVS worked with BCA to develop effective interfaces. When the BCA folks spoke about the quantity of inquiries and the need for fast response I didn't really appreciate the scale involved. The deputy I rode with performed at least 50 inquiries in the six or so hours I was with her. And that was in a fairly rural part of Anoka County! The total number of inquiries run by all of law enforcement in Minnesota must be staggering.

I hope that by hearing about this experience you feel good about the work you do and how it benefits Minnesotans in more ways than we realize.



# This and That.....



## Dues statements have been mailed.

If you haven't received yours, or if you have any questions pertaining to your statement, please contact the MDRA Treasurer [John Lenarz](#).



## Communicate! Communicate! Communicate!

The MDRA wants to make sure that you are receiving information in a timely manner and in the most effective way. We want to enhance our website and we are looking to you for ideas. Please share with us how you like to receive communications, what kind of information you want to know about, and how often? Contact your Communications Director, [Joe Heider](#) with your suggestions.

## Sears in St. Paul closes its doors at the end of 2018

A big thank you to Jeff Orth, Deputy I40 and his staff for hosting the monthly MDRA board meetings the past 20+ years. His office was located on the second floor of Sears and with its large conference room, location next to the capitol and proximity to DVS, it was a great place to meet and rally. While Deputy I40 will be relocating to the Sunrise Bank Building located at 200 W. University Avenue sometime in January, it is unclear whether there will be space for us to hold our monthly board meetings there. This uncertainty presents an opportunity for metro deputy offices to host a monthly board meeting. While we typically hold 2-3 outstate meetings annually, we rarely travel to locations within the metro area. Please consider hosting a meeting in the upcoming months. It's a great way to get involved. Please contact either President [Neng Lor](#) or Communications Director [Joe Heider](#) if you have questions about, or are interested in hosting.



## Time and Motion Study



## Time/Motion Study and Financial Impact Survey complete

A big thank you to all the offices that participated in the Time and Motion Studies for motor vehicle and driver's license. And another big thank you, to all the offices that participated in the Financial Impact Survey. What we learned from the two studies will be used and shared with lawmakers, justifying compensation for the MNLARS impact and fee increases for both motor vehicle and driver's license transactions.



## WCCO Viewers Choice For Best DMV

A big kudos to the Monticello office for being voted best DMV by the viewers of WCCO television. While this survey was limited to WCCO viewers it's quite an honor to be recognized this way.

To get the full story, [click here](#). Congratulations to all the friendly, hard working staff in Monticello!



# MDRA MISSION STATEMENT

The Minnesota Deputy Registrars Association (MDRA) is a statewide membership organization promoting common interests of deputy registrars in providing professional licensing service to the public and liaison to the state.

SEP

10,000 lakes

19

## Advisory Committee Members

Dave Konshok - Lifetime Honorary Member

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Paula Anderson, , Joe Heider, Amanda Coppin

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