



Official Publication of the Minnesota Deputy Registrar's Association

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From the President's desk...

Greetings to all Minnesota Deputy Registrar and their dedicated staff members!

As the Covid 19 pandemic is gradually ending and Deputy offices can provide a more normal level of service, we are grateful to move to a traditional service delivery process.

The near 16 months of wearing masks, additional cleaning, and communicating with citizens through plexiglass have been extremely challenging. Congratulations and thank you to all Deputy Offices and their staff for their diligence, patience, and perseverance during this most difficult time.

In addition to navigating Covid 19, the Minnesota Deputy Registrars successfully adapted to the new MNDRIVE system. Congratulations again to our Deputy Offices for adapting successfully to MNDRIVE.

The 2021 Minnesota Legislative Session ended without a positive outcome for Deputy Registrar Fee Increases. Both MDRA and DRBOA (Deputy Registrar's Business Owners Association) and their lobbyists James Hirst and Todd Hill respectively worked diligently to obtain an increase.

These efforts extended to a joint MDRA/DRBOA effort in working with Chris Malone of Winona State University to conduct a Deputy Registrar time and motion study for both Motor Vehicle and Driver's License transactions. Special thanks to the Deputy Offices who aided in that effort.

Results of the Time and Motion study were shared with Rick King. Mr. King was a key individual brought in by the State of Minnesota several years ago as a consultant to determine whether MNLARS should ultimately be retained or replaced. The decision ultimately was to replace MNLARS by MNDRIVE. Mr. King is held in high regard by members of both Minnesota political parties. Sharing the results of the time study with Mr. King and obtaining his support was a strategy that was believed to lead ultimately to successful passage of the fee increase legislation.



President- Jeff Orth
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Presidents Message (cont'd)

Unfortunately, the bill was structured by Senate Republicans such that a Deputy Fee increase would be funded only by a reduction in the Department of Public

Safety budget. The original proposals for both MNLARS and MNDRIIVE by DPS to lawmakers were in part based on anticipated cost reductions/savings for Minnesota Taxpayers. The acknowledged shifting of work and data entry by the system design from DPS to the Deputies was expected to lead to savings for DPS. Senate Republicans strongly believed these anticipated savings should be distributed to the Deputies as a reimbursement.

In the end, the House Democrats could not support taking the funds from the already strained DPS budget and there was no fee increase relief in 2021.

Looking ahead, the MDRA Board will have its Annual Conference in person at St. Cloud Friday September 24, 2021, with the hospitality night Thursday September 23.

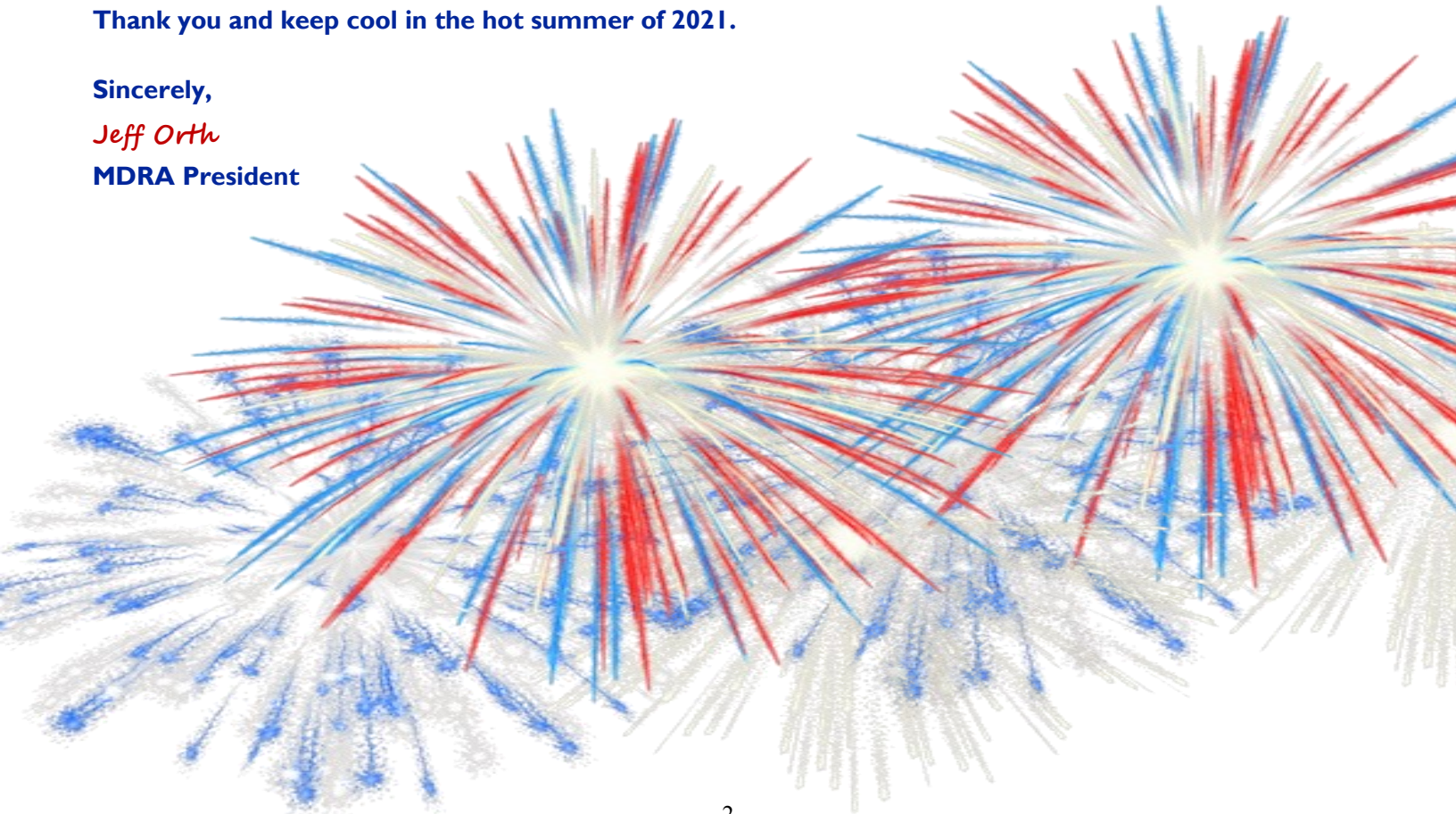
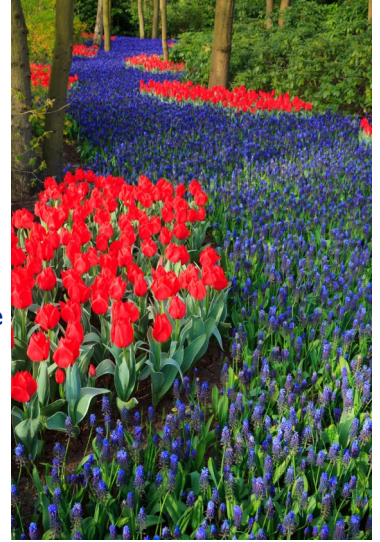
Additionally, the MDRA Board and Advisory Committee continue to work collaboratively with staff at DPS and colleagues at DRBOA on improvements to MNDRIIVE. We look forward to working with DRBOA and our respective lobbyists and Minnesota Lawmakers to continue our relentless efforts to obtain fee increases necessary to sustain the Deputy Registrar system.

Thank you and keep cool in the hot summer of 2021.

Sincerely,

Jeff Orth

MDRA President



Legislative Committee Report

By Jim Hirst- Lobbyist



The state legislature has now adjourned both their regular and subsequent special session for the year, having completed their primary task (passing a new two-year state budget) with only hours remaining to avert a state government shutdown had they remained at an impasse. This brinkmanship was largely due to the political split of our legislature, whereby one chamber (House) is controlled by democrats and the other (Senate) is controlled by republicans. Overall, the newly enacted state budget remains largely status-quo compared to the previous budget.

Despite our persistent efforts to gain further filing fee increases for deputies this year, such was ultimately denied to us. Continued Covid restrictions at the capitol stymied our traditional interactions with lawmakers, but legislators were very aware of our plight due to our numerous phone calls and emails to them in the alternative. Thank you, members, for your responsiveness over the course of the session to supplement MDRA efforts!

Over the course of the past session(s), MDRA introduced filing fee increase legislation and negotiated modifications with lawmakers to enhance its advancement. This included reduced increases and consideration for quarterly rebates paid by the State directly to deputies for transactions completed. We also sought the assistance of Mr. Rick King (chair of the governor's MNLARS review task force that recommended the transition to MNDRIVE) to provide an outside voice of support.

Mr. King agreed additional compensation was warranted (which also reflected the recommendation of a legislative auditor's report earlier this year) and communicated such to the transportation committee chairs. He also suggested that a temporary fee increase be enacted now and contingent upon a permanent rate going forward next year after an in-depth study is concluded that he would be willing to undertake. This would be a more extensive time and motion review, similar with our past studies but combined with also identifying any potential efficiencies within MNDRIVE as well.

Only that part of his recommendation gained favor with lawmakers, who approved his study while deferring on even any temporary increases in the meantime for our deputies. MDRA has now had a preliminary meeting with Mr. King regarding the timeframe and general expectations his team will have with deputies in conducting his study which must be submitted to the legislature by January next year. The study comes with the expectation that the legislature will act upon his report's recommendations next session. More information on this study and deputy participation with it will be forthcoming from MDRA.

Besides this study that was passed within the omnibus transportation finance bill, lawmakers also gave final approval for the creation of self-service kiosks that is exclusive (and optional) for only deputy registrars who choose to pursue this for their customers. This legislation was noncontroversial and calls for these kiosks to be provided at no cost to deputies by a state approved vendor, who will retain a separate convenience fee added to the transaction for their costs and maintenance. Participating deputies will retain their full filing fee but will be responsible for IT and power connections for the kiosk. Pre-approval with DVS is required for any kiosk placement, similar with existing guidelines governing an office relocation and/or remodeling. It is envisioned that the vendor will remit all state associated fees and taxes directly to DVS (as well as appropriately remit credit/debit card processing fees to that provider), rather than requiring the deputy to do these tasks.

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Legislative Committee Report (cont'd)

If your office is interested in pursuing a kiosk, it is recommended that you begin identifying a location that best accommodates it. While a site within or in close proximity to your office is preferable, alternate sites within your service area can be considered provided it does not negatively impact any adjacent office(s). In these cases, it may still be accepted but only with agreement by the other impacted office(s). Flexibility to share kiosk filing fee revenue with other affected office(s) is allowed by the vendor when those impacted office(s) all agree on the “split” with one office designated as the responsible party and named on the kiosk for contact purposes. More information on this matter is forthcoming as we learn who is awarded the contract and work through the finer details with DVS.

The omnibus transportation budget bill also increased state fees for license plates by varying amounts which will be updated on MNDRIVE. A new specialty plate was also agreed to with an agriculture theme as well as a new honorary consular license plate. The temporary online renewal for noncompliant DLs was not extended, so this option no longer exists for customers seeking to renew without a vision test or photo. The online driver’s test does remain, but no longer will allow a family member or friend to serve as a proctor overseeing the test.

A full MDRA legislative report will be sent out to members later this month that details these and other pertinent law changes concerning the operations of deputy registrars. The legislature will reconvene in special session again in September to oversee the disbursement of federal Covid related funds. We are actively renewing consideration for any special deputy compensation with lawmakers that could be derived from that opportunity currently.

In the meantime, we strongly encourage all offices to renew their communications with your legislators and remind them that financial assistance remains critical before the end of this year!

Thank you, deputies for your ongoing involvement and perseverance as we emerge from a pandemic on the heels of MNLARS while simultaneously transitioning to MNDRIVE. Your innovations to remain operational have been admirable, from staffing challenges, remodeling, equipment investments, and service delivery modifications to name just a few. Your strength and faithful commitment to the customers who depend on you has been greatly tested and you have all performed exceedingly far beyond the call of duty! I hope to see you all in Saint Cloud this September as we begin returning to some normalcy with our in-person MDRA annual conference.



DVS Update

by Becky Mechtel

Legislation 2021

DPS-DVS is finalizing the legislative bulletin for the 2021 special session and should have it out to deputy registrars and driver's license agents in the near future. The training team will cover some of the new laws in the July 20 and 21 training session.

These are some of the highlights of the special session:

- ◆ Eliminating the 7-year plate replacement for American Legion and VFW license plates.
- ◆ Increased license plate fees, effective Aug. 1.
- ◆ Increased duplicate sticker fee, effective Aug. 1.
- ◆ Electronic reporting of vehicle mileage.
- ◆ Increased motorcycle endorsement fee, effective Aug. 1.
- ◆ Identification card for homeless youth.
- ◆ Photo variance for homebound individuals.
- ◆ Changes to impounded plate processes.
- ◆ Elimination of DWI knowledge test.
- ◆ \$20 fee if customer fails to show for a driver's license test appointment.

The 2021 legislative bulletin will provide a complete overview of legislation passed in the 2021 regular and special sessions. DPS-DVS is reviewing and updating quick reference guides, online procedures and the DPS-DVS website. Watch for more information about the new laws in the weekly and special updates.

MNDRIVE Phase 2 – Motor Carriers

MNDRIVE phase 2 is on track for implementation on Oct. 4. This phase moves motor carriers from the Explore system to MNDRIVE e-Services for Business.

Motor carriers will use MNDRIVE e-Services for Business to:

- ◆ Submit documents, such as proof of heavy use tax payment.
- ◆ Apply for and manage IRP and IFTA accounts.
- ◆ Process IFTA annual renewal.
- ◆ File IFTA quarterly tax returns.
- ◆ Obtain IFTA decals.
- ◆ Change vehicle weight.
- ◆ Add and delete vehicles from accounts.
- ◆ Apply for replacement plates, stickers, and cab cards.
- ◆ Download and print cab cards Regular communications with motor carriers begin soon.
- ◆ Training for prorated deputy registrars, DVS staff and motor carriers will begin in mid-August.

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DVS Update cont'd

DPS-DVS Print Room

The DPS-DVS print room continues to experience issues with the high-speed printer and inserter used for the production and mail preparation of motor vehicle titles and DVS letters.

DPS-DVS is looking into printing options to reduce the print and mail turnaround time. It has improved slightly since June. Deputy registrars can find current print dates and other turnaround information on Info Hub under the Resources tab. The information is updated weekly. You will also find links to turnaround information and the DPS-DVS dashboard in every edition of the DPS-DVS Weekly Update in the Data and Reference section.

- ◆ [Dashboard](#)
- ◆ [DVS Processing/Turnaround Times](#)

We will continue to update you on the status of print room production as information becomes available. Thank you for your patience as we work through this challenge.

Mark your Calendars!

MDRA ANNUAL MEETING AND HOSPITALITY NIGHT SEPTEMBER 23 & 24, 2021

Members mark your calendar and reserve time to attend the 2021 annual meeting of the Minnesota Deputy Registrar's Association. We are so excited to be able to resume our in person conference. As you know, this is an excellent opportunity to network with your fellow deputies.

This year's speaker will be as engaging and insightful as those we have had in the past. With the unprecedented year of 2020 and the additional stress and challenges we all face, our guest speaker will provide you with the tools you need to walk away feeling reenergized.

St. Cloud is our host city, selected by a majority of respondents from our annual survey as the most convenient location. The meeting will be held at the Rivers Edge Convention Center. Registration begins at 8:30 and the meeting will start at 9 AM. The MDRA will host a Hospitality Night on Thursday evening, September 23 from 7:00pm-9:00pm at the Kelly Inn in the Husky Room, adjacent to the Convention Center. The Husky Room is located on the second floor using elevator C just down the hall from the registration desk. This is a great opportunity to socialize and network with fellow deputies. There are a variety of beverages and hors d'oeuvres to quench your thirst and appetite.

Please watch for the formal meeting invitation which will be mailed in August. The registration fee for this year's event is \$40 per member office attendee and \$100 per individual from a non-member office. We hope to see you in St. Cloud!



2021 Board Elections

Greetings Members!

As the editor of Plate Talk, I would like to put in my two cents on becoming involved with the MDRA.

This organization has done some incredible things for the Deputy Registrars and I was an active member and board member for over 25 years. When I retired from Anoka County in 2018, I just couldn't bear the thought of losing touch with the deputy registrars and the MDRA so I approached the board and asked them if they would consider bringing me on as the Editor of Plate Talk and as a planning consultant for the annual meeting. If there was a way I could run for an open position on the board, I would do it in a heart beat! I have learned so much and met so many outstanding people through this association, I feel beyond blessed.

The MDRA Board is comprised entirely of volunteers and they work very hard for their members. There are various working groups that interact with DVS, DNR and the Legislature. It is because of the MDRA members like you, that as deputy registrars are able to do such things as accept credit cards, have input into the new MNDRIIVE system, pilot many DVS and DNR programs, receive the fee increases that we so deserve, and have a presence in the Legislature. As a board member, you will find that getting some of this information first hand and interacting directly with your business partners is very beneficial.

The MDRA Board will have 3 vacancies in September. This includes 2 public offices and 1 private office. Mary Filzen– Region 1 holding a public board position and Mike Hintz Region 3 holding a private board position will both be finishing their first term and have the option of running for a second term. John Lenarz Region 7 who holds a public board position will term out after having served two consecutive terms and will be ineligible to run again this year.

The officer positions for President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Communications Director will be voted on by the Board of Directors during the October board meeting. Committee chairs and members for the various committees will also be determined at that time.

I really hope you will consider putting your name on the ballot for one of these vacancies. You will get back so much more than you give by serving on the board!

If you have any questions, or are interested in running for an open board position, please reach out to the MDRA Governance Committee Chair or Vice-Chair and they will be happy to help!

Ken Mohr- 952-927-2656
kmohr@aaaminneapolis.com

or

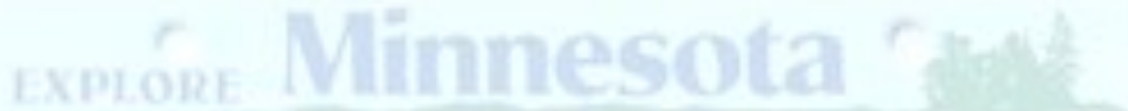
John Lenarz– 763-324-2101
john.lenarz@co.anoka.mn.us

Thank you for your consideration.

Paula Anderson
 Plate Talk Editor



MDRA MISSION STATEMENT



The Minnesota Deputy Registrar's 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.

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Advisory Committee Members

- Dave Konshok - Lifetime Honorary Member
- Bruce Jindra
- Susan Wagner
- Denise Vogl
- Suzanne Jensen
- Meagan Weber

Lobbyist

Jim Hirst

Plate Talk Editors

Paula Anderson, Joe Heider

We're on Facebook



Check us out!

To get started, contact :

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