

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2017

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HOUSE BILL 84  
Committee Substitute Favorable 3/21/17  
Committee Substitute #2 Favorable 4/5/17  
Senate Rules and Operations of the Senate Committee Substitute Adopted 6/14/17

Short Title: DL/Deaf or Hard of Hearing Designation.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 13, 2017

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO DIRECT THE DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES TO DEVELOP A DESIGNATION FOR DRIVERS LICENSES THAT MAY BE GRANTED UPON REQUEST TO A PERSON WHO IS DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 20-7 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(q2) Deaf or Hard of Hearing Designation. – The Division shall develop, in consultation with the Department of Public Safety, the State Highway Patrol, the Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and pursuant to this subsection, a drivers license designation that may, upon request, be granted to a person who is deaf or hard of hearing. The Division shall comply with the following requirements applicable to the designation:

- (1) At the request of a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, the Division shall place a unique symbol on the front of the person's license. The unique symbol placed on the license shall not include any further descriptor. The Division shall record the designation in the electronic record associated with the person's drivers license.
- (2) At the request of a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, the Division shall enter the drivers license symbol and a descriptor into the electronic record of any motor vehicle registered in the same name of the deaf or hard of hearing person.
- (3) Medical certification or examination is not required to make a request pursuant to this subsection.
- (4) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as authorizing the issuance of a drivers license to a person ineligible under G.S. 20-9.
- (5) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as prohibiting the issuance of a drivers license to a person otherwise eligible under the law.
- (6) Any individual who chooses to register or not to register shall not be deemed to have waived any protections under the law.
- (7) Information collected under this subsection shall only be available to law enforcement and only for the purpose of ensuring mutually safe interactions between law enforcement and persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. It shall not be accessed or used for any other purpose.



1           (8)   The right to make the decision for inclusion or removal of the designation  
2           from the database is entirely voluntary and shall only be made by the person  
3           who holds the drivers license associated with the designation.

4           (9)   The Division, in conjunction with the Department of Health and Human  
5           Services, shall develop a process for removal of the designation authorized  
6           by this subsection that is available online, by mail, or in person."

7   **SECTION 2.** G.S. 17C-6(a) is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

8   "(17) Establish minimum educational and training standards for employment and  
9   continuing education for criminal justice officers concerning:

10          a.     Recognizing and appropriately interacting with persons who are deaf  
11             or hard of hearing.

12          b.     Drivers license and vehicle registration identifiers of persons who are  
13             deaf or hard of hearing, as authorized by G.S. 20-7(q2), including  
14             that those identifiers are optional."

15   **SECTION 3.** G.S. 17E-4(a) is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

16   "(13) Establish minimum educational and training standards for employment and  
17   continuing education for officers concerning:

18          a.     Recognizing and appropriately interacting with persons who are deaf  
19             or hard of hearing.

20          b.     Drivers license and vehicle registration identifiers of persons who are  
21             deaf or hard of hearing, as authorized by G.S. 20-7(q2), including  
22             that those identifiers are optional."

23   **SECTION 4.** This act becomes effective January 1, 2018.