



August 30, 2024

Steve Gordon, Director
California Department of Motor Vehicles
2415 1st Ave., Mail Station F101
Sacramento, CA 95818-2606

Dear Director Gordon:

I am writing to voice my great concern over news that the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is permanently closing its Laguna Hills office, located at 23535 Moulton Parkway, on Friday, October 11. I ask you to prioritize the constituents of South Orange County, reconsider the Laguna Hills closure and renegotiate the Laguna Hills lease or identify other locations to accommodate South Orange County residents.

Nearby Laguna Woods Village is a 55+ community of more than 18,600 residents with an average age of 76. As you know, drivers' license renewals for persons 70+ and Real ID issuance (both for Real ID drivers' licenses and Real ID identification cards) still require in-person appointments. Both are critical for seniors and, after October 11, these transactions will require trips to Santa Ana, San Clemente or Costa Mesa.

Closing the Laguna Hills DMV will cause significant challenges for older South Orange County residents who would be required to travel much farther to access in-person DMV services.

- Closing the Laguna Hills DMV will leave only one field office in all of South Orange County, requiring all 855,000 South Orange County residents to shift to the field office in San Clemente, which is much smaller and 18 miles away with very limited parking.
- The Laguna Hills DMV is located immediately adjacent to the City of Laguna Woods, where 81% of the population is age 65 and older.
- High percentages of older adults also live in Laguna Beach (22%), Newport Beach (21%), Dana Point (21%), Mission Viejo (18%) and San Juan Capistrano (17%).
- Orange County is home to 457,031 older adults (14.3% of the county's population) age 65 years and older. That number is projected to increase to 17.3% by 2045.
- At age 70, all drivers must visit the DMV for a mandatory vision test. The pilot program to make this service available virtually through recent legislation AB 1606 is exciting, but it is not yet available.
- Real IDs can be obtained only via in-person DMV visits and are not available online.
- There are no guarantees that DMV offices in Santa Ana, Costa Mesa and San Clemente will add capacity and appointments to serve the increased demand for DMV services.

The DMV is an **essential service**, and one that seniors and other populations must access in person. Again, I request the DMV to maintain the Laguna Hills office until a new location nearby is available.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,