

FAQ: Goshen Resident ID card



What is the Goshen Resident ID card (GRID card)?

The Goshen Resident Identification card verifies the identity and address of the person to whom it is issued.

The Goshen Resident ID card is not a valid form of identification for voting. It is not a driver's license.

Who is the Goshen Resident ID card for?

The Goshen Resident ID card is designed to help everyone who resides within the city limits of Goshen, Ind. While intended for everyone, the card will be of particular help to people who have difficulty getting a driver's license or other form of photo identification document. This includes immigrants as well as elderly, formerly incarcerated and homeless people.

When and where is it available?

The Center for Healing & Hope (CHH) will begin offering the Goshen Resident ID card this fall. The date of the launch and the location(s) where people may apply will be announced in September.

What does the Goshen Resident ID card do?

The Goshen Resident ID card will serve several purposes:

- It will provide verified identification for the person carrying the card in that person's interaction with Goshen city officials, such as personnel from law enforcement and the fire department. It is up to other businesses and services to determine if they will honor the card.
- It may provide one way of confirming identity for purchasing prescriptions and handling money transactions.
- The steering committee is working to build additional value into the cards; local businesses are invited to offer benefits, such as discounts on products and services, for people who show a Goshen Resident ID card.

The Goshen Resident ID card is not a valid form of identification for voting. It is not a driver's license. It will be helpful for identification only in the city of Goshen.

How can someone get a Goshen Resident ID card?

To get a card, a person will need to provide several documents that confirm his or her identity and address. Proof of identity can be provided with a passport, birth certificate, Consular Identification card, income tax returns, or other documents. Proof of a Goshen address can be provided with bills from basic services such as gas and electricity or a letter with name and address from a school, religious organization, or bank. Staff will review the documents for authenticity before issuing a card. No identifying information about applicants will be maintained after the card is issued. (More details about required documents is available on the website CHHclinics.org)

What does it cost to get a Goshen Resident ID card?

The anticipated cost of the Goshen Resident ID card is \$25. Discounts may be available for some age groups.

Can someone who does not live in Goshen get a Goshen Resident ID card?

At this time, the Goshen Resident ID card can be issued only to people who live within the city limits of Goshen. Even if someone works in Goshen but lives outside the city limits, it is not possible currently to issue that person a card. As the identification card program becomes established, it may be possible to extend the invitation to others, but now, at the start of this program, it is limited to only Goshen residents.

Who is organizing this effort?

The effort is led by Elkhart County HOPE (Helping Our People Everywhere), which is a part of the Center for Healing & Hope. A committee of community leaders, including representatives of businesses, not-for-profit agencies, civic organizations and churches, is organizing the project.

Elkhart County HOPE is a network of people in the Goshen area who are eager to assist and support those in our community who feel vulnerable because of current policies and laws relating to immigration.

Why is the Center for Healing & Hope launching this program?

The Center for Healing & Hope and EC HOPE network are initiating this project as a way to create a greater sense of community within Goshen. With the current uncertainty over immigration policies, some Goshen residents—particularly immigrants—are fearful of leaving their homes and are reluctant to participate in community activities. Other residents who wish to support their immigrant neighbors can get cards as a specific and concrete way to show their solidarity with those who feel vulnerable.

Bryan Mierau, executive director of the Center for Healing & Hope, noted that “some residents are so fearful that they are not meeting their basic needs, such as getting prescriptions or visiting a doctor. Some are reluctant to take their children to school activities. If we can relieve some of this anxiety for our immigrant neighbors with this Goshen resident identification card, we will have made Goshen a much more friendly and hospitable home for everyone.”

The mission of the Center for Healing & Hope is to provide opportunities and services for the poor and immigrant populations of Goshen and surrounding localities in a Christ-like manner so that they will become healthy physically, mentally and spiritually. We are aware that the vulnerability and stress at this time are having adverse effects on the health of our immigrant neighbors. The Center for Healing & Hope, through the work of Elkhart County HOPE views the Goshen Resident ID card as a way of bringing greater health and wholeness to our communities.

Will the card be issued to undocumented immigrants?

Yes, the Goshen Resident ID card is for everyone who lives in Goshen and thus it will be issued to residents who are undocumented immigrants if they provide the required proof of identity and address.

Why is the Center for Healing & Hope helping undocumented immigrants?

Several benefits will come to the Goshen community as a whole by helping undocumented immigrants in this way:

- City services and law enforcement officers welcome the introduction of a verifiable ID card so they can be more confident of the identification of people they encounter. It is much better for them to see a trusted, verified identification card than to face the possibility that someone is using a stolen identity.
- Giving undocumented immigrants more confidence to shop, to seek medical care, to attend school and to use city services will help our community as a whole. There will be more

willingness for people to join in the commerce and activities of our community. Relieving some of their anxieties and fears May help immigrants take fewer risks, which in turn will make everyone less vulnerable.

Won't the Goshen Resident ID card encourage crime in our community?

No, the opposite is true. Communities that already offer identification cards report that when someone with a valid ID document is a victim of a crime, he or she is more likely to report that crime because they know their own identity will not be questioned. Thus, the Goshen Resident ID card can be a significant tool in assuring that crimes are reported and addressed.

The card can help those who are most vulnerable feel a greater measure of safety and security, so they may take fewer risks and have less incentive to engage in illegal activities. The card will provide a greater sense of belonging in the community and people with a card which identifies them as part of the Goshen community may engage more fully in the businesses, churches and activities in our city.

Do other cities have similar identification cards?

The Goshen Resident ID card is modeled after the South Bend Community Resident Card (SB ID). La Casa de Amistad in South Bend began offering the SB ID cards early in 2017. By the end of July they had issued almost 1,000 cards, a significantly greater number than anticipated. Other cities with municipal ID cards are New York City, NY; Detroit, MI; Chicago, IL; Milwaukee, WI; and Oakland, CA.

How can I help this effort?

Volunteers will be needed, especially on open application days. Anyone wishing to assist may contact Dominique Chew, immigrant resource coordinator at the Center for Healing & Hope: 574-534-4744 ext. 201, or HOPE@CHHclinics.org.

The Center for Healing & Hope also solicits contributions to help with the launch of this program. The \$25 fee will cover the cost of individual cards, but advance investments are needed for equipment, systems and training. To make a contribution, visit www.CHHclinics.org/donate and designate your gift for "Elkhart County HOPE."

What is happening to prepare for the launch of the Goshen Resident ID card?

Currently the steering committee is laying the groundwork for offering the Goshen Resident ID card. With assistance and counsel from those who run the South Bend ID card program, teams of task force volunteers are working to establish reliable policies and procedures for issuing the cards, seeking volunteers and training those who will issue cards, seeking support from businesses for discounts and benefits, and securing the endorsement and support of city leaders.

Who will honor this card?

City of Goshen

Goshen Health

Goshen Public Library

Goshen College

Goshen Community Schools are considering how to adjust procedures to honor the GRID card