Burgum extends driver's license renewal deadlines, announces precision online learning tool for K-12; Stahl helps launch "Mask Up ND" campaign

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BISMARCK, N.D. – Gov. Doug Burgum today extended the renewal deadline for driver's licenses that have expired during the COVID-19 emergency, while also announcing a new precision online learning tool for K-12 schools and families and launching a "Mask Up ND" campaign to encourage North Dakotans to wear face coverings to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

License renewal dates extended

The renewal deadline for driver's licenses that expired March 1, 2020, or later has been extended, and the new deadlines will follow a phased schedule.

An executive order signed by Burgum today takes the place of Executive Order 2020-36, which extended expiration dates for vehicle registration and driver's licenses to Aug. 31. The North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) is working to address a backlog of 22,911 driver license renewals and 48,000 motor vehicle registrations as a result of the COVID-19 emergency.

"Despite the tireless efforts of our NDDOT team members, it became clear that we wouldn't get through the entire backlog of expiring driver's licenses by the Aug. 31 deadline," Burgum said. "This executive order uses a phased approach to eliminate the backlog of driver's license renewals as efficiently and safely as possible to address the needs and concerns of our citizens."

The new executive order directs North Dakota law enforcement agencies and private sector businesses to recognize any North Dakota driver's license that expired after March 1, 2020, or a license that will expire by Dec. 31, 2020, as valid, based upon the renewal schedule below.

- Licenses which expired in March, April or May 2020 must be renewed no later than Sept. 30, 2020.
- Licenses which expired in June 2020 must be renewed no later than Oct. 31, 2020.
- Licenses which expired, or will expire, in July, August, September or October 2020 must be renewed no later than Nov. 30, 2020.
- Licenses which expire in November and December 2020 must be renewed no later than Dec. 31, 2020.

The deadline for renewing vehicle registrations remains Aug. 31.

The NDDOT will continue to serve the citizens by appointment only. To schedule an appointment, visit the department's website at dot.nd.gov or call 1-855-633-6835.

Online learning tool available

State Superintendent Kirsten Baesler joined Burgum at today's press briefing to announce that the Governor's Office and Department of Public Instruction are partnering to make available a next-generation precision online learning tool for reading, language arts and mathematics during the 2020-2021 school year.

Exact Path, an award-winning program of Edmentum, will provide precise and actionable academic pathways for students based on their current progress and create a road map to guide them to grade-level proficiency and North Dakota Choice Readiness.

This voluntary tool will be offered to all North Dakota K-12 residents, whether they attend public school, private school, are home educated or attend Native American schools or schools operated by the federal Bureau of Indian Education.

"We believe that this will assist our educators in providing distance learning lessons that can be used when families request that distance learning option for their children," Baesler said, adding families are in the best position to know if their children should return to school buildings. "It is more important than ever before for schools and families to be working together. The school-to-home connection has been strengthened during this pandemic, and it needs to continue to be robust. North Dakota Exact Path can help."

The contract with Edmentum includes professional learning opportunities for educators to receive intuitive training and support, and all costs will be covered by funding through the federal Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. More information about Exact Path is available on DPI's website here.

Mask Up ND campaign launched

Dr. Andrew Stahl, North Dakota's interim state health officer, joined Burgum to help announce the "Mask Up ND" public awareness campaign.

North Dakotans are encouraged to use the hashtag #MaskUpND as they share photos and selfies of individuals being safe and using masks, and to add a Facebook frame to their profile photo. The North Dakota Department of Health has created a webpage at www.health.nd.gov/maskupnd where members of the public can download images to share on social media platforms. The webpage also provides links to useful information, resources and articles about the importance of wearing masks in public during the pandemic.

"In North Dakota, we're known as a state that takes care of each other. Masks are another way for us to show we care for others and our community. My mask protects you and your mask protects me," Burgum said.

"Masks are a critical tool in the fight against COVID-19. It's one of the most powerful tools that we have to help slow and stop the spread of the virus," Stahl said.

Stahl encouraged North Dakotans to make sure they wear their mask correctly:

- Wash your hands before putting on your mask.
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face.
- Make sure you can breathe easily.

In addition, individuals should continue to stay home when sick, keep 6 feet of distance, wash hands frequently and sanitize frequently touched surfaces, Stahl noted.

For more information on North Dakota's COVID-19 response, visit www.health.nd.gov/coronavirus or www.ndresponse.gov.

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