



COMMUNITY SERVICES

City of New Haven
165 Church Street
New Haven, CT 06510



John DeStefano, Jr.
Mayor

Dr. Chisara Asomugha
Administrator

NEW HAVEN'S ELM CITY RESIDENT CARDS – FACT SHEET

In the summer of 2007 the City of New Haven will be offering a multi-purpose municipal identification card to all New Haven residents, regardless of age or immigration status. The lack of acceptable forms of identification currently prevents many city residents from participating in local commerce or other forms of civic engagement (e.g. obtaining a library card or opening a bank account). A municipal I.D. card will enable them to do so. The populations that will likely benefit the most from this identification are young children, elderly citizens, students and immigrants (both documented and undocumented).

No state or federal law bars a municipality, such as New Haven, from issuing its own identification cards to any resident who might wish to have one, regardless of the person's immigration status. Some CT cities issue what they call a city identification card to their employees, while other cities nationwide issue other kinds of identification cards (e.g. for residential parking permits or the use of municipal parks).

There are several sound policy reasons for doing this, including the following:

1. Public Safety

Providing residents who otherwise have no proof of ID with a municipal identification card will help overcome reluctance to report crimes they may suffer or witness and also provide identification to law enforcement and other officers if required. In addition, an identification card will make it easier for people to open bank accounts to store their money in a secure place rather than having it on their person. For parents with young children, identification cards for children will aid in locating them in case they are lost while traveling (the identification card will offer parents the option of including emergency contact information). Similarly, the card will also benefit elderly residents who may no longer have a driver's license or other form of identification but need proof in order to access services.

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Phone (203) 946-7907 Fax (203) 946-7908 Tty/tdd/tt (203) 946-8582

2. Improving Access to Facilities and Services

Many citizens want to become active participants in the community but are often unable to avail themselves of simple services, such as the use of a library or gaining access to parks, public beaches or other public facilities because they lack a valid form of identification. With a municipal identification card, all of New Haven's residents will be able to participate more fully and become an integral part of the life of the community.

In addition to serving as an identification card, the Elm City Resident Card will have multiple uses, including 1) serving as a library card; 2) providing access to municipal services and sites including the public beach (free), the golf course (resident discount) the city dump; 3) offering a *Parcymart* debit card component, which allows the user to load up to \$150 to the card to be used to pay for parking meters and for goods and services at approximately 50 participating stores.

Dr. Chisara Asmougha
Community Services Administrator
City of New Haven
165 Church Street
New Haven, CT 06510
(203)946-7909
casmough@newhavenct.net