

FAITHACTION ID PROGRAM



An ID is just a piece of plastic until a human being gives it a name, a face, and a story, and a community gives it value and integrity.

What is the purpose of the FaithAction ID card program?

To build greater understanding, trust and cooperation between local law enforcement and other local sectors and our diverse community. Our goal is to create safer, more inclusive and united communities for all.

What does a FaithAction ID do?

The FaithAction ID card provides card holders with a reliable form of identification that can be used as a tool by law enforcement, city departments, health centers, schools, businesses, and cultural arts organizations to better identify, serve, and protect us.

Why is the FaithAction ID program needed?

Many community residents, including many citizens, do not have the necessary requirements to receive a state issued ID card or driver's license. They are often required to prove their identity for numerous reasons each day, and without a reliable ID may not be able to identify themselves with law enforcement, receive urgent services with schools, health centers, city departments, and social service agencies, or participate in the cultural and business life of their community.

Who has a FaithAction ID card?

The FaithAction ID card is available to any resident who may have limited access to government issued ID card, as well as those who support safer, more inclusive and united communities. Participants who have especially benefited from the program include new

immigrants and refugees, homeless and elderly individuals, people recently returning from jail, as well as faith and city leaders, teachers, health and social service workers, and many others. Over 15,000 residents have a FaithAction (or network partner) ID card throughout North and South Carolina, Virginia, and Ohio.

What are the limitations of the FaithAction ID card?

The FaithAction ID card is not a state issued form of identification (and clearly notes this fact on the back of the card), or a driver's license. It cannot be used to vote, and does not entitle card holders to any social welfare benefits. It does not stop persecution if someone is engaged in an illegal activity, and does not have any impact on an individual's immigration status.

What are the requirements to receive an ID card?

All participants must attend an ID drive, in which they are required to go through an orientation on the benefits and limitations of the card, and sign a simple MOU to this effect. They then go through a thorough vetting process in which they must provide proof of identity (embassy ID, national ID card, passport, or driver's license) and proof of address (utility bill, medical record, bank statement, or lease agreement). The required list of approved documents must be agreed upon by local law enforcement partners, and all those at the document check station must be trained and reliable. An immigration attorney or paralegal is present at each document check table as questions of authenticity arise. As one of the hallmarks of the program, participants also engage in dialogue with law enforcement and other community partners present throughout the waiting process on a variety of topics, including: how to report a crime, traffic and domestic violence laws, and navigating city, health, and social service systems.



What community partners currently support the program?

Dozens of law enforcement departments, city and social service agencies, health centers, and schools support the program and participate in ID drives, along with numerous businesses and cultural arts organizations that offer card holders unique discounts. While the program began in Greensboro 5 year ago, it has since expanded to numerous communities across the Midwest and Southeast, including Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Durham, Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Hillsborough, Asheboro, High Point, Burlington, Graham, Elon, Mebane, Gibsonville, and Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, as well as Aiken, South Carolina, and Cincinnati, Ohio.

What is the FaithAction ID network?

A collection of nonprofit organizations, faith communities, and community groups in numerous cities that have agreed to utilize the exact same FaithAction ID drive and dialogue model, and vetting process. Partners participate in monthly calls to share updates and best practices. Current partners responsible for coordinating FaithAction ID network programs include:

- ◇ FaithAction International House in Greensboro, NC
- ◇ Hispanic League in Winston-Salem, NC
- ◇ El Centro Hispano in Durham, NC
- ◇ Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in Burlington, NC
- ◇ The Latin American Coalition of Charlotte, NC
- ◇ St. Mary's Catholic Church in Aiken, SC
- ◇ Catholic Charities of SW Ohio
- ◇ Metro Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati

How does the ID program build trust with local law enforcement, and other local sectors?

Several law enforcement officers are present for each ID drive, and engage in remarkably positive dialogue with ID participants. Officers listen to the needs and concerns of the community, while also educating the community on laws, and ways to report and help resolve crimes. It is not uncommon for crimes to be privately reported to trusted officers at ID drives.

What is the impact for our communities?

After just one year of the program, law enforcement in Greensboro publicly shared that a dozen serious crimes had been reported and resolved by participants in the FaithAction ID program, and other law enforcement partners have experienced similar success in creating safer communities. Additionally, FaithAction recently interviewed 200 FaithAction ID card holders, and over 95% said that they had found the ID very useful with community partners, and that they felt safer, and more likely to report and resolve crimes after having had positive interaction with local law enforcement at ID drives. City and social service agencies, health centers, and schools have additionally reported how helpful the ID has been to establish identity for crucial services and records, and businesses/cultural arts organizations have also greatly appreciated attracting and integrating new diverse customers and participants.



Support from law enforcement, domestic violence agencies, and health center partners:

The Burlington Police Department has been involved with the Faith Action ID Card program for several years. Every month we are able to attend an ID drive and engage new residents. We discuss many aspects of public safety and build great relationships with folks who previously were suspicious or fearful of the police. These relationships lead to enhanced safety for immigrants and citizens alike.

- Jeffrey Smythe, Burlington Police Chief

The ID drives are especially important in building trust among law enforcement agencies and victims, including victims of intimate partner violence. Not having identification creates a barrier to reporting and seeking assistance. All victims have a right to be free of violence and should be able to rely on the institutions that address intimate partner violence for protection of themselves and their children. A FaithAction ID allows law enforcement, health centers, and businesses to better identify, serve, and protect all survivors.

-Dana Mangum, Executive Director of the NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence

The FAITH ID program has helped the Greensboro Police Department reach out, get to know, and develop trust in a section of our community that has been traditionally underserved and over victimized. The bridges built in trust through this partnership have led to a safer community overall, not just for the ID recipients.

- Mike Richey, Greensboro Police Department Deputy Chief

The FaithAction ID program has become an essential partner, helping Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center move into mutually healing relationship with our patients, families and neighbors, including those without documents. This hospital was founded by the NC Baptist Convention in 1922 to provide care to anyone in the state who God so loved; the ID program helps us fulfill that vision by making it safe for our patients to come to receive care by ensuring we know who they are through accurate identification. The integrity and intelligence of the program has also brought us into a new level of collaboration with police and other public servants.

- Reverend Gary Gunderson, Vice President of FaithHealth, a Division of Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center

Partnering with FaithAction:

FaithAction offers presentations on the history, purpose, logistics, and impact of a community ID card program, as well as intensive trainings and materials for new communities interested in replicating the FaithAction ID program model and joining the network.

For rates and more information, or to bring FaithAction to your community for a presentation, contact: FaithAction Executive Director, **Rev. David Fraccaro** at dfraccaro@faihouse.org or (336) 379-0037, ext 2.

For more on the work of FaithAction International House, and to see the FaithAction ID program in action through a brief documentary video, visit - faithaction.org.