

# DEBTORS BLOCKED FROM OBTAINING STATE ID

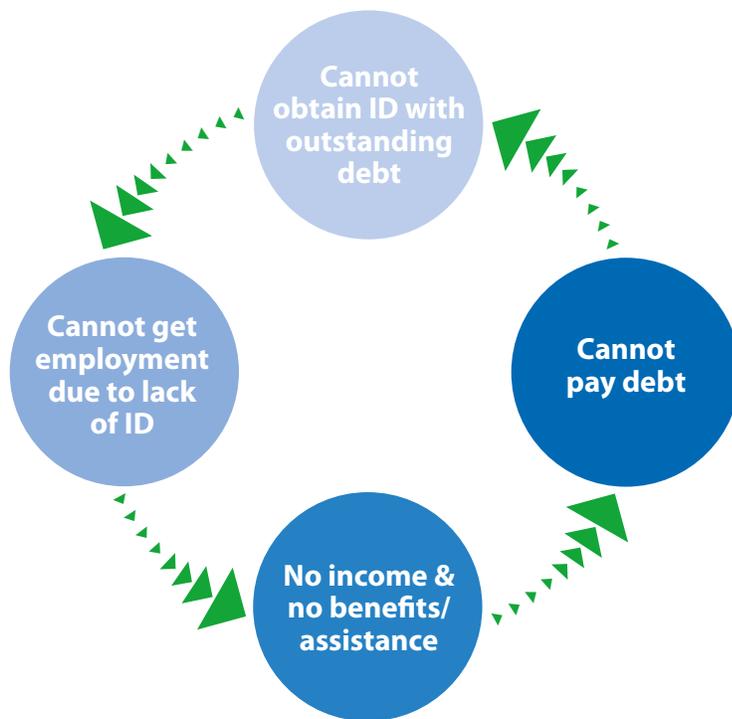
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## PARTIAL PAYMENTS NOT ACCEPTED BY NY STATE GOVERNMENT

For many re-entering populations, the first step in rebuilding their financial lives is obtaining a New York State identification card (ID). **Without it, a re-entry individual faces significant delays in moving forward with their lives.** Yet, many of those leaving prison have outstanding government debts from unpaid parking tickets to library fines. When the debts are small, they may be able to pay and obtain their ID.

**A photo ID is required for** small things such as **getting past security in most buildings to applying for jobs.** Much more serious is that many basic benefits (Medicaid, workforce development services, housing) and employment applications require some type of government-issued ID. Below is a small list of activities requiring a government-issued ID:

- Entrance into office buildings
- Rent an apartment
- Open a bank account
- Apply for benefits
- Employment
- Background checks
- Operate a motor vehicle
- Get documents notarized



**A bigger challenge exists when debt exceeds their ability to pay fully upfront.** When this occurs, they are precluded from obtaining an ID until it is completely paid which is no small tasks as they begin to look for jobs or other benefits to help pay down expenses. It would be preferable **to provide an option to pay down these debts in a manageable manner** such as through periodic repayment or installment plan. Once on it, re-entry individuals should then be allowed to continue to apply for a state ID.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Offer an alternate payment system for repaying down government debts that consider the individual's income or ability to pay; and
- Once a minimum of two payments are made, individuals can apply for state ID



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