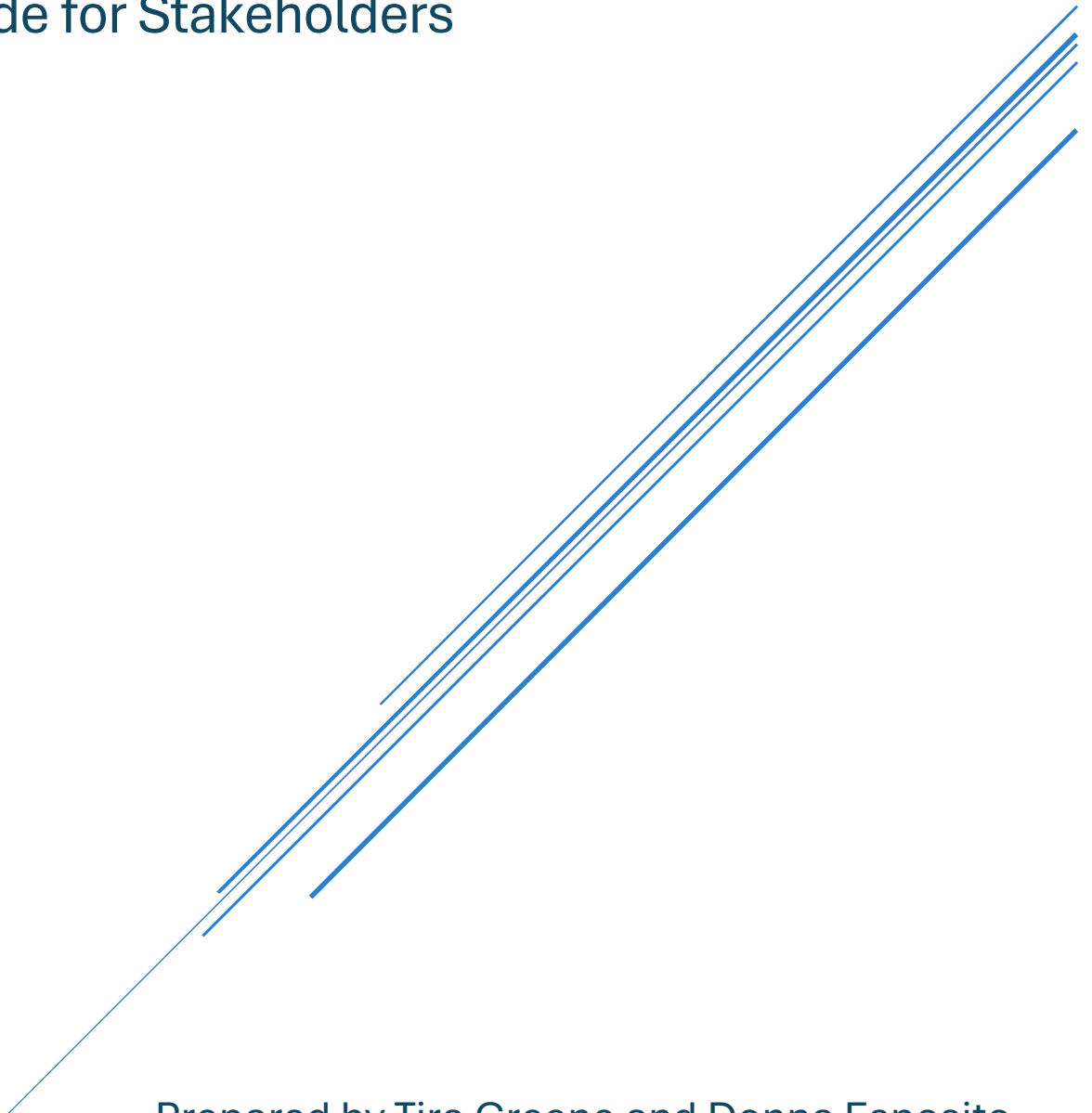




# MINISTRY OF E-GOVERNANCE

## NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION BILL, 2026: A Guide for Stakeholders



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# 1. The Vision: A Secure and Inclusive Digital Heartbeat

As Belize continues its journey toward comprehensive digital transformation, the **National Identification Bill, 2026** emerges not merely as a technical mandate, but as the foundational framework for a more efficient and equitable society. At its core, this legislation seeks to establish a **National Digital Identification System (NDIS)** that allows every individual to prove who they are with confidence and security. This is designed to be the "digital heartbeat" of public and private sector interactions—streamlining everything from opening a bank account to accessing government social programs, all while ensuring that no person is left behind due to a lack of documentation or technological barriers.

## 1.1 Defining the Boundaries: What This System Is and Is Not

It is critical for stakeholders to understand that this system is strictly **administrative in nature**. It does not determine or replace one's legal status, citizenship, or residency; those fundamental determinations remain the sole and authoritative province of the **Civil Registry and Vital Statistics Act**. The NDIS does not seek to create a surveillance state or a system of population control. Instead, it functions as a trusted mirror: it confirms an identity that has already been established by law, providing a secure digital credential to facilitate life in a modern, connected Belize.

**What the National ID System Is Not**

-  **Not Proof of Citizenship or Nationality**
-  **Not a Surveillance or Intelligence Tool**
-  **Designed to Enable Secure Identification & Service Access**
-  **Operates Within Data Protection & Privacy Safeguards**
-  **Built to Promote Trust, Inclusion and Accountability**
-  **Not a Replacement for Civil Registration**
-  **Not a Standalone Technology Project**

## 1.2 The "Gold Standard" Principles of Design

The Bill is anchored by six guiding principles that prioritize the dignity and rights of the individual over the convenience of the system:

- **Non-Exclusion:** This is the system's "North Star." No person shall be denied an essential public service simply because they are not enrolled, their authentication fails, or the system is temporarily offline.
- **Proportionality:** Identity checks must match the risk. A high-value land transaction requires a "High" level of assurance, whereas a simple library registration should not demand intrusive biometric matching.
- **Privacy-by-Design:** Security is not an afterthought; it is baked into the architecture. Data collection is minimized, and information is logically separated to prevent the creation of "super-profiles."
- **Human Oversight:** While the system is digital, the final word is human. No individual can suffer an adverse legal or administrative decision based solely on an automated response or biometric mismatch.
- **Shared Accountability:** Oversight is deliberately decentralized. No single entity holds absolute power, ensuring a system of checks and balances across the National Identification Authority, the Auditor General, and the Data Protection Commissioner.
- **Once Only principle:** The Authority shall, in collaboration with the Civil Registry, establish interoperability frameworks to obtain and reuse data directly from authoritative public registers, ensuring citizens do not have to resubmit information already held by the State.

## 1.3 The Mechanics: How Identity Works Across the Lifecycle

The system introduces a **Unique Identification Number (UIN)** that remains with an individual from birth through the entirety of their lifecycle. Through secure interoperability with the Civil Registry, a UIN is reserved at the moment of birth registration, though it only becomes "active" when the individual or their guardian chooses to enroll. Enrolment itself is designed to be a high-accessibility, zero-cost process, offering mobile units for rural areas and "assisted enrolment" for those who may lack standard documents or require physical help.

## 1.4 Biometrics as a Protected Technical Tool

The use of biometrics is strictly limited and highly regulated. The system utilizes only **facial images and fingerprints** as technical tools to ensure uniqueness and prevent identity theft. The Bill explicitly **prohibits** the collection of DNA, genetic data, or "behavioral" biometrics like gait or voice patterns. Furthermore, these

biometrics can never be used for surveillance, commercial profiling, or to train artificial intelligence models.

## 1.5 The Public Sector as “Relying Parties”

For government agencies and public officers, your role is that of a “**Relying Party**”—you utilize the system’s verification services to serve the public more effectively. However, this role comes with the solemn duty to protect the citizen’s “Right to Service.” Agencies are legally mandated to maintain **fallback procedures**. If a digital authentication fails, the officer must be prepared to use alternative lawful identification methods to ensure service continuity. Agencies are also strictly forbidden from storing system responses for secondary purposes or tracking individuals across different services.

## 1.6 Empowering the Individual: Rights and Redress

Perhaps the most significant shift under this Bill is the empowerment of the citizen. Every person in the system has an enforceable **Right to Information**, allowing them to see exactly which agency accessed their identity record and why. Individuals have the right to correct inaccurate data, object to disproportionate processing, and demand a human review of any automated decision. To support this, the Bill provides robust **whistleblower protections** and establishes clear pathways for administrative review and judicial appeal.

## 1.7 A Framework Built on Trust

Ultimately, the **National Identification Bill, 2026** is about building trust between the state and its people. By combining high-tech security with a “Human-First” legal philosophy, Belize is creating a system where identity is a key that unlocks opportunity, rather than a barrier that creates exclusion. Through shared oversight and a commitment to privacy, the NDIS will serve as a resilient foundation for Belize’s digital future.

# 2. Framework for the National Digital Identification System of Belize

## 2.1 Background and Purpose

The National Identification Bill, 2026 establishes the legal and institutional framework for Belize’s NDIS, translating the national vision for secure, inclusive, and efficient service delivery into an operational reality.

The purpose of the NDIS is not to create a new form of identity, but to enable trusted, reliable verification of identity across government and private sector services. In doing so, the Bill supports improved access to services, reduces administrative barriers, and strengthens the integrity of transactions.

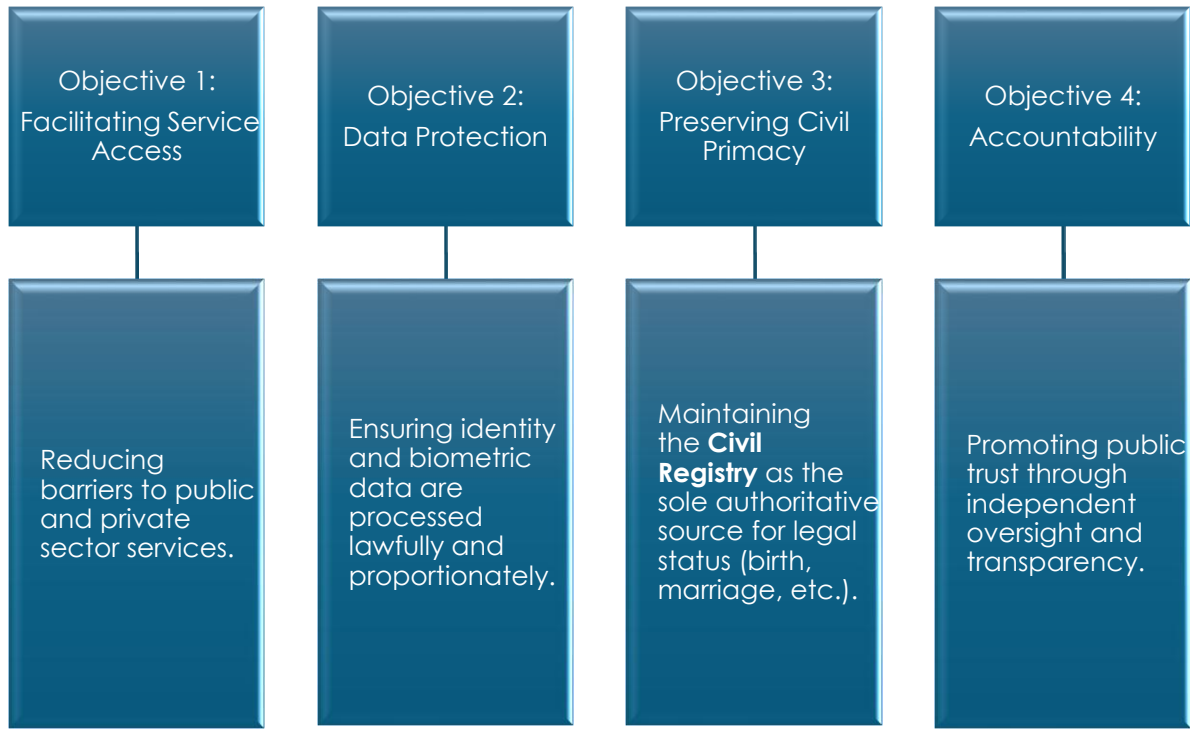
This section sets out how that vision is implemented in practice. It defines the scope and functions of the system, establishes the roles and responsibilities of the institutions that govern and operate it, and embeds the safeguards required to ensure that identity is managed in a lawful, proportionate, and rights-respecting manner.

Importantly, the Bill positions the NDIS as part of a broader service delivery ecosystem—one that works alongside existing systems such as the Civil Registry, rather than replacing them. It also establishes clear limits on the use of identity data, ensuring that the system remains focused on enabling access and trust, while preventing misuse.

In this way, the NDIS is designed to function as a foundational public infrastructure: enabling individuals to interact with services more easily, while maintaining strong protections for privacy, accountability, and inclusion.

## 2.2 Primary Objects

The Bill is guided by four core objectives:



## 2.3 Guiding Principles

The interpretation and implementation of the Bill are anchored in five "Gold Standard" principles:

## Guiding Principles

Principle	Description
<b>Lawfulness &amp; Necessity</b>	Data is collected and used only for legitimate, authorized purposes.
<b>Proportionality</b>	Identification methods must be appropriate to the level of risk involved.
<b>Non-Exclusion</b>	No person shall be denied services due to lack of enrollment or technical failure.
<b>Human Dignity</b>	Identity must not be reduced to purely automated processes; human review is a right.
<b>Oversight</b>	All system actors are subject to independent and continuous monitoring.

## 2.4 Governance and Institutional Arrangements

### 2.4.1 The National Identification Authority

The Bill establishes the **National Identification Authority** as an independent body corporate with perpetual succession.

- **Independence:** The Authority is not subject to the direction or control of any person regarding individual registration decisions or enforcement actions.
- **Financial Autonomy:** It prepares its own budget and may retain administrative fees for system maintenance.

### 2.4.2 Governance Structure

- **The Board:** The Authority is governed by a Board nominated by an Independent Selection Committee (including representatives from the Judicial and Public Service Commissions) and appointed by the Minister subject to a two-thirds majority confirmation by the National Assembly.

- **Ethics & Advisory Committees:** Includes representatives from civil society and disability organizations to advise on inclusion and ethics.
- **Inter-Agency Coordination:** A formal mechanism to ensure the system aligns with the Civil Registry, Immigration, Social Security, and Elections.

## 2.5 The National Digital Identification System (NDIS)

### 2.5.1 Core Components

The NDIS consists of four key components:

1. **National Identity Register:** An administrative register containing necessary identity data.
2. **Unique Identification Number (UIN):** A persistent, single identifier for every individual.
3. **Verification & Authentication Services:** Tools for "relying parties" to confirm identity claims.
4. **Secure Infrastructure:** Audit mechanisms and technical safeguards.

### 2.5.2 The UIN and the Lifecycle Approach

The Bill introduces a "birth-to-death" identity record:

- **Assignment at Birth:** A UIN is assigned upon birth registration through interoperability with the Civil Registry.
- **Activation:** The record only becomes "active" when the individual applies for enrollment.
- **Lifecycle Management:** Procedures exist for updating data, recording deaths, and deactivating records to prevent identity persistence after death.

### 2.5.3 Data Retention and the "Right to be Forgotten"

The Bill and its accompanying regulations address the question of "what happens when I die or leave" through strict **Retention and Deletion Schedules**.

- **Continuous Accuracy:** The Authority is mandated to perform continuous maintenance and reconciliation to ensure the National Identity Register accurately reflects the living population.
- **The Termination of Records:** Upon the recording of a death or a lawful permanent departure, the Bill provides for the deactivation of the associated identity record. This ensures that identity data is not maintained "forever" without a valid administrative purpose.

- **Authentication Log Limits:** Unlike biographic data, which must be maintained for the duration of a person's life to provide service continuity, **authentication transaction logs** have a strict expiration date. These records—which track where and when you used your ID—cannot be retained for longer than **two years** unless required for a specific security investigation or legal proceeding.
- **Purpose-Bound Storage:** Identity data is retained only for as long as it is necessary for the authorized purposes of enrolment and verification. Once that necessity expires, the Authority is legally obligated to follow prescribed deletion protocols.

## 2.6 Data Categories and Biometric Safeguards

### 2.6.1 Permitted and Prohibited Data

The Authority follows a "minimalist" approach to data collection:

- **Permitted:** Biographic data (name, DOB, sex) and approved biometric modalities.
- **Prohibited:** Political opinions, religious beliefs, health/genetic info, and behavioral biometrics (gait, voice patterns, or emotion recognition).

### 2.6.2 Strict Limits on Biometrics

The Bill explicitly forbids using biometrics for:

- **Mass Surveillance:** Tracking or monitoring individuals is prohibited.
- **AI Training:** Data cannot be used to train machine learning models.
- **Covert Capture:** Non-consensual biometric capture is illegal.

## 2.7 Verification, Authentication, and Relying Parties

### 2.7.1 How it Works

The Authority provides services to **Relying Parties** (authorized public or private entities):

- **Verification:** Confirms if presented data matches a system record.
- **Authentication:** Confirms the person is the actual holder of the record.

### 2.7.2 Safeguards for Individuals

- **Consent:** Relying parties must generally obtain informed consent before authenticating an individual.

- **Prohibition of Data Pooling:** Relying parties are forbidden from aggregating or pooling responses to profile or track individuals.
- **Mandatory Fallback:** Public authorities **must** maintain alternative ways to provide services if the digital system fails or an individual is not enrolled.


### 2.7.3 Myths and Facts

## Debunking Myths

Myth	Fact
“The system will be used for government surveillance and tracking.”	The Bill strictly prohibits the use of the system for mass surveillance, tracking, or social monitoring of individuals.
“If the system goes down, I won’t be able to get medical help or go to school.”	The Bill mandates that all public authorities maintain fallback procedures to ensure service continuity regardless of system availability or enrolment status.
“The government will use my ID to rank my behavior or social standing.”	Social scoring, ranking, or behavioral assessments are expressly prohibited under the “No Function Creep” rule.
“This new ID will decide if I am a citizen or not.”	The system is administrative only; it cannot determine citizenship, residency, or legal status, which remain the sole province of the Civil Registry.
“Private companies will be able to see my fingerprints.”	Relying parties are forbidden from obtaining or reconstructing underlying biometric data; they only receive a secure confirmation response.


### How These Safeguards Are Enforced

The assurances outlined above are grounded in specific legal provisions within the Bill, ensuring that protections are enforceable and not discretionary.




**No Surveillance  
(Section 15)**

The Bill explicitly prohibits mass surveillance, tracking, or monitoring of individuals, ensuring it cannot be repurposed for intelligence or social control functions.




**Service Continuity  
(Section 30)**

Public authorities are required to maintain fallback mechanisms, guaranteeing that no individual is denied access to essential services due to lack of enrolment, system outages, or technical failure.



**Data Protection  
(Section 38A)**

A “Privacy-by-Design” framework is mandated, requiring that systems are built to minimize data exposure, prevent unauthorized linkage, and safeguard personal information at every stage.



**Regional Security  
(Section X4, Part VIII)**

The Bill strictly prohibits the cross-border transfer of biometric data, ensuring that sensitive identity information remains protected within national jurisdiction.

## 2.8 Rights of Individuals

The Bill places significant power in the hands of the citizen:

- **Right to Information:** Knowing who is processing their data and why.
- **Right to Access Logs:** Individuals can see a list of every organization that has requested their identity verification.
- **Right to Correction:** Inaccurate or outdated data must be rectified without undue delay.
- **Right to Human Review:** A right to contest any adverse decision made by an automated process (e.g., a biometric mismatch).

## 2.9 Oversight and Accountability

Unlike systems with a single point of failure, Belize adopts a **concurrent oversight** model:

1. **National Identification Authority:** Monitors operational compliance.
2. **Auditor General:** Conducts performance and financial audits.
3. **Data Protection Commissioner:** Ensures compliance with the Data Protection Act regarding personal and biometric data.
4. **Parliamentary Oversight:** The Minister must table annual reports before the National Assembly.

## 2.10 Offences and Enforcement

The Bill focuses on punishing systemic abuse rather than penalizing individuals for technical issues:

- **Abuse of Authority:** Officers who improperly influence the system or facilitate unlawful processing face criminal charges.
- **Unauthorized Access:** Conviction on indictment can lead to fines and up to five years in prison.
- **Whistleblower Protection:** Individuals who report system misuse in good faith are protected from liability or retaliation.
- **No Criminalization of Citizens:** Individuals are **not** liable for failing to enroll or for system failures.

## 2.11 Belize in the Global Context: Regional and Cross-Border Interoperability

The National Identification Bill, 2026, positions Belize as a forward-looking participant in the regional digital economy. Part VIII of the Bill establishes a framework for **limited and rights-preserving interoperability**, allowing for the secure use of Belizean identity credentials beyond our borders.

- **Facilitating Regional Mobility:** The framework is designed to support CARICOM mobility and regional digital trade by enabling the mutual recognition of identity credentials. This allows Belizeans to prove their identity for travel or cross-border services without the friction of redundant verification processes.
- **The "Biometric Lockdown":** A critical sovereign safeguard in the Bill is the **absolute prohibition** on the transfer, disclosure, or export of raw biometric data or biometric templates to foreign governments or international organizations. While attributes (like name or validity status) may be validated, the underlying physical characteristics of Belizeans never leave national control.
- **Substantial Equivalence:** Belize will only enter into interoperability arrangements with states that provide data protection safeguards substantially equivalent to our own. This includes a requirement for independent oversight, enforceable data rights, and strict limits on secondary data use in the partner country.

**Sovereign and Voluntary:** No regional arrangement can take effect without the approval of the National Assembly. Furthermore, participation remains voluntary; no citizen can be compelled to use cross-border identity features as a condition of their legal rights or access to essential services.

## 3. A Roadmap for the Reader: From Principles to Practice

The preceding sections outline the **spirit of the law**—the "why" behind the National Identification Bill and the values of dignity, privacy, and inclusion that guide it. However, a trusted identity system requires more than just high-level philosophy; it requires robust technical "plumbing" to function securely.

The following section serves as your roadmap to these granular mechanics. It transitions from the vision to the **"how"**, detailing the specific procedural and technical safeguards embedded within the accompanying regulations. From the

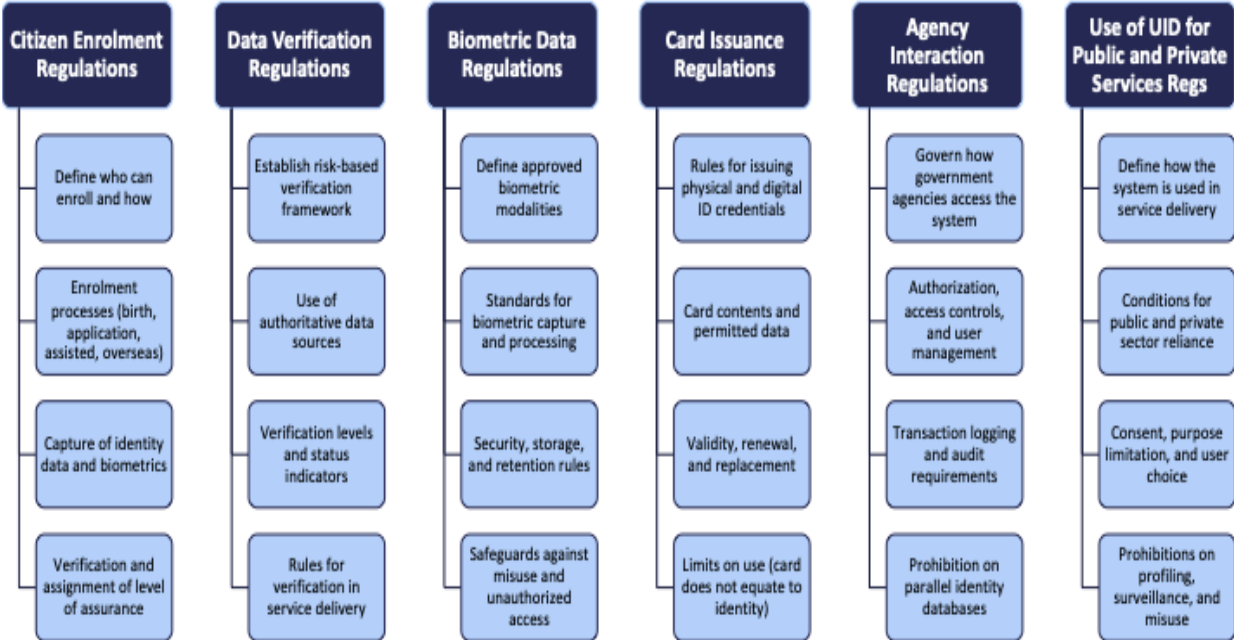
logistics of zero-cost enrolment to the strict cryptographic standards governing biometric management, these sections demonstrate how the Bill's principles are operationalized to protect the people of Belize.

### 3.1 Introduction: The Regulatory Ecosystem

While the **National Identification Bill, 2026** provides the primary legal mandate, the following regulations form the operational "engine room" of the system. These regulations ensure that the high-level principles of privacy, non-exclusion, and security are translated into enforceable daily practices.

#### Supporting Regulations – Overview

*The UID framework is operationalized through six key Regulations*



## 3.2 Citizen Enrolment Framework

The **Citizen Enrolment Regulations, 2026** are designed to eliminate barriers to entry and ensure a "human-centric" approach to identity. While the system verifies identity, it shall not confer citizenship or determine civil status.

### 3.2.1 Eligibility and Accessibility

- **Universal Eligibility:** Any person lawfully present in Belize is eligible to apply for enrolment, regardless of prior documentation. Explicitly prohibits refusal of enrolment based on naming conventions, absence of a surname, cultural naming structures, or lawful religious objections to specific biometrics
- **Zero-Cost Enrolment:** To ensure economic inclusion, the initial enrolment and the first issuance of a basic identity credential are free of charge.
- **Mobile and Remote Enrolment:** For citizens in underserved or rural areas, the Authority is mandated to deploy mobile enrolment units and community-based services.
- **Accessibility:** Add that enrolment cannot be denied due to poverty, literacy, or disability, and that the Authority must provide assisted enrolment for those lacking standard documents.

### 3.2.2 Documentary Requirements and Alternatives

- **Tiered Evidence:** While the Civil Registry is the primary source, the regulations permit alternative "vouching" mechanisms for individuals who lack standard documentation.
- **Inclusion for Vulnerable Groups:** Specialized procedures are established for children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, including "assisted enrolment" where a trusted representative can facilitate the process.

## 3.3 Biometric Data Collection and Management Standards

The **Biometric Regulations, 2026** set the highest regional standards for the "technical processing" of physical characteristics.

### 3.3.1 Approved Modalities and Hardware

- **Primary Modalities:** The system is limited to facial images and fingerprints.

- **Hardware Certification:** Only devices that meet specific ISO standards for image quality and "liveness detection" are permitted, preventing the use of high-definition photos or replicas to spoof the system.

### 3.3.2 Data Minimization and Encryption

- **Template vs. Image:** Where technically feasible, the system stores "biometric templates" (mathematical representations) rather than raw images, significantly reducing the risk to the individual if a breach occurs.
- **Encryption Standards:** Biometric data must be encrypted both "at rest" and "in transit" using modern cryptographic standards.

### 3.3.3 Deduplication Protocols

- **Uniqueness Check:** Biometrics are used solely to ensure a "one person, one record" integrity.
- **No Secondary Use:** The regulations strictly prohibit using these biometrics for any other purpose, such as forensic matching or commercial analytics.

## 3.4 Credentialing and Card Issuance

The **Card Issuance Regulations, 2026** govern the tangible and digital tokens that allow citizens to "prove" who they are.

### 3.4.1 Types of Credentials

Credential Type	Description	Primary Use Case
<b>Physical NID Card</b>	High-security card with tactile features and an embedded QR code.	Daily in-person transactions.
<b>Mobile Credential</b>	A secure digital version of the NID stored on a smartphone.	Online services and digital signing.
<b>One-Time Token</b>	A temporary digital symbol for high-privacy transactions.	Sensitive data access.

### 3.4.2 Security Features

- **Visual and Digital:** The physical card includes holographic overlays and micro-printing to prevent forgery.
- **Offline Validation:** The QR code allows relying parties (like a bank) to verify the card's authenticity even without an active internet connection, ensuring service continuity.

### 3.4.3 Lifecycle Management

- **Reporting Loss:** A centralized "24/7 Hotline" and digital portal are established for citizens to report lost or stolen credentials.
- **Suspension:** Upon report, the digital "certificate" associated with the card is instantly revoked, rendering it useless to unauthorized finders.

## 3.5 Data Verification and Authentication Protocols

The **Data Verification Regulations, 2026** define the rules of engagement for "relying parties."

### 3.5.1 Levels of Assurance (LoA)

The framework introduces three distinct levels of assurance to ensure proportionality:

Level	Requirement	Example
Low	Visual check or basic digital ping.	Library book rental.
Medium	Two-factor authentication (e.g., NID + SMS code).	Opening a standard bank account.
High	Biometric match or multi-factor "step-up."	Transferring property or accessing medical records.

### 3.5.2 Privacy-Preserving Verification

- **"Yes/No" Responses:** Whenever possible, the system provides a simple "Yes" or "No" to a query (e.g., "Is this person over 18?") rather than disclosing the actual date of birth.
- **Audit Logging:** Every request is logged. Citizens have the legal right to see who accessed their record and for what purpose.

## 3.6 Agency Interaction and Interoperability

The **Agency Interaction Regulations, 2026** govern how public authorities coordinate to share data securely.

### 3.6.1 Mandatory MOUs

- **Formal Agreements:** No public agency can connect to the NDIS without a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) approved by the Authority.
- **Purpose Limitation:** The MOU must specify exactly which data points the agency needs and for which specific legal mandate.

### 3.6.2 Technical Standards

- **API-First Approach:** Interoperability is achieved through secure Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), ensuring that no agency has a "backdoor" into the entire National Identity Register.
- **Metadata Management:** Only minimal metadata is shared to prevent the creation of "super-profiles" on citizens.

## 3.7 Service Integration and Non-Exclusion Standards

The **Use of NID System for Services Regulations, 2026** protect the citizen at the counter.

### 3.7.1 The Fallback Mandate

- **Service Continuity:** Public authorities are **prohibited** from denying essential services (health, education, emergency) due to system outages or authentication failures.
- **Alternative Identification:** Agencies must accept traditional documents (like a passport or social security card) as a fallback until the digital system issue is resolved.

### 3.7.2 Anti-Discrimination

- **Non-Discriminatory Design:** The system must accommodate naming conventions that differ from standard formats (e.g., absence of a surname) to ensure cultural and religious inclusivity.
- **Impact Assessments:** Agencies introducing NID-based services must first conduct a "Non-Exclusion Impact Assessment" to identify groups that might be left behind.

## 3.8 Compliance, Audit, and Incident Management

The framework includes a robust "self-healing" mechanism for security and accountability.

### 3.8.1 Incident Response

- **60-Day Notification:** If a high-risk data breach occurs, the Authority is legally mandated to notify affected individuals within 60 days, providing clear steps for self-protection.
- **Remedial Powers:** The Authority can "unplug" any relying party that fails to meet security standards or misuses citizen data.

### 3.8.2 Continuous Improvement

- **Periodic Reviews:** The biometric modalities and security protocols must be reviewed every three years to ensure they remain "fit for purpose" against emerging technological threats.

## 3.9 Regulatory Roles and Responsibilities

Stakeholder	Key Regulatory Responsibility
<b>Citizen</b>	To report loss of credentials and update material changes (e.g., address).
<b>The Authority</b>	To maintain the NDIS, issue UINs, and conduct security audits.
<b>Relying Parties</b>	To obtain consent, maintain logs, and provide fallback options.
<b>Oversight Bodies</b>	To conduct independent inspections and resolve citizen complaints.

## 4. Conclusion

The **National Identification Bill, 2026** establishes more than a technical system—it defines a **trusted national framework for identity in a digital age**. By grounding the NDIS in the principles of **privacy, inclusion, and accountability**, Belize is creating a model where identity enables access while safeguarding individual rights.

This framework is distinguished by its **clear legal boundaries**: identity remains administrative, separate from legal status, and cannot be used for surveillance, social profiling, or unauthorized data use. Through strict **data protection measures**, including Privacy-by-Design, purpose limitation, and defined retention and deletion schedules, the system ensures that personal information is used responsibly and not retained beyond necessity.

Importantly, the Bill positions Belize within the **regional and global digital economy**, enabling secure interoperability while maintaining **full sovereign control over sensitive data**, particularly through the prohibition on cross-border transfer of biometric information. This balance between openness and protection strengthens both national security and regional cooperation.

At the operational level, the NDIS is designed to be **resilient and human-centered**. Mandatory fallback procedures, non-exclusion safeguards, and enforceable individual rights ensure that no person is denied services due to technical failure

or lack of enrolment. Oversight is deliberately distributed across multiple independent institutions, reinforcing transparency and public trust.

Ultimately, this Bill represents a **new social contract for digital governance in Belize**—one where technology serves people, not the other way around. By combining robust legal safeguards with practical implementation mechanisms, Belize is laying the foundation for a **secure, inclusive, and trustworthy digital future**.

## 5. Technical Glossary

### A. Core Identity Concepts

**Unique Identification Number (UIN):** A permanent, randomly generated number assigned to an individual that does not contain or reveal any personal information.

**National Identity Register (Population Register):** An administrative database that stores essential identity information required to support enrolment, verification, and service delivery.

**Identity Lifecycle:** The process through which an individual's identity record is created, updated, maintained, and eventually deactivated (e.g., upon death or permanent departure).

### B. Verification and System Use

**Verification:** The process of confirming that the information provided by an individual matches a record in the system.

**Authentication:** The process of confirming that a person is the rightful holder of an identity (e.g., through biometric or multi-factor checks).

**Relying Party:** An authorized public authority or private entity that uses the system to verify or authenticate an individual's identity for a specific service.

**Attribute-Based Verification:** A privacy-preserving method that confirms specific information (e.g., "over 18") without revealing full personal details.

**Fallback Procedures:** Alternative methods of identification used when the digital system is unavailable or an individual is not enrolled, ensuring continuity of service.

### C. Data Protection and Privacy

**Biometric Data:** Physical characteristics (such as fingerprints or facial images) used to uniquely identify an individual.

**Biometric Template:** A secure mathematical representation of biometric data used for matching, rather than storing raw images.

**Tokenization:** A security process that replaces sensitive identity data with a non-sensitive substitute (a “token”) that has no meaning outside a specific transaction.

**Privacy-by-Design:** An approach where data protection and privacy safeguards are built into the system architecture from the outset.

**Purpose Limitation:** A principle that personal data may only be used for the specific, authorized purpose for which it was collected.

**Authentication Log:** A record of when and where identity verification occurs, retained for a limited period for security, audit, and accountability purposes.

#### D. Safeguards and Legal Principles

**Non-Exclusion:** A principle ensuring that no person is denied essential services due to lack of enrolment, system failure, or technical barriers.

**Proportionality:** A principle requiring that the level of identity verification matches the level of risk involved in a transaction.

**Human Oversight:** The requirement that individuals have the right to a human review of decisions, particularly where automated systems are used.

**Function Creep:** The expansion of a system beyond its original purpose; explicitly prohibited under the Bill.

**Oversight (Concurrent Oversight):** A governance model where multiple independent bodies monitor the system to ensure accountability and prevent misuse.

#### E. Interoperability and Regional Context

**Interoperability:** The ability of systems (including across countries) to securely recognize and verify identity credentials without sharing underlying sensitive data.

**Substantial Equivalence:** A requirement that any country participating in interoperability arrangements must have data protection standards comparable to Belize’s.

**Biometric Lockdown:** A safeguard ensuring that raw biometric data or templates are never transferred outside national control.

#### F. Data Lifecycle and Retention

**Retention and Deletion Schedules:** Legally defined rules governing how long identity data is stored and when it must be deleted.

**Deactivation of Records:** The process of disabling an identity record upon death or lawful permanent departure to prevent misuse.

**Purpose-Bound Storage:** The requirement that identity data is retained only as long as necessary for authorized purposes and deleted thereafter.

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## Annex 1 - Strategic Consultation Questions

### *For the Public Sector (Ministries and Statutory Bodies)*

1. How can the NDIS improve the delivery of "high-touch" services in your department, and where are the most critical "fallback" scenarios we must plan for?
2. What specific training will your frontline officers need to transition from manual document checks to secure digital authentication?

### *For the Private Sector (Banks, Insurance, and Digital Business)*

1. How would the ability to perform secure, real-time identity verification through the NDIS impact your "Know Your Customer" (KYC) processes and operational costs?
2. What level of technical support do you anticipate needing to integrate your existing systems with the Authority's secure APIs?

### *For Civil Society and Rights Advocates*

1. Are the proposed measures for assisted enrolment (for the elderly, disabled, or those in remote areas) sufficient to ensure truly universal access?
2. Does the two-year limit on authentication logs provide enough transparency for oversight without creating an unnecessary "data trail"?

### *For Legal and Security Experts*

1. Does the "Concurrent Oversight" model effectively balance the powers of the Authority, the Auditor General, and the Data Protection Commissioner?
2. Are the penalties for "Abuse of Authority" by officials sufficiently deterrent to prevent unauthorized system access?