CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A facial recognition system, comprising:

a camera;

a processor configured to:

receive image data from the camera, the image data including a first image of a face of an individual;

determine a first value for a lighting parameter associated with the first image;

determine whether a collection of previously obtained images of the face of the individual in a biometric database includes a second image having a second value for the lighting parameter that meets a first predetermined condition relative to the first value for the lighting parameter; and,

store the first image in the biometric database along with the first value for the lighting parameter when the collection of previously obtained images does not include a second image having a second value for the lighting parameter that meets the first predetermined condition relative to the first value for the lighting parameter.

2. The facial recognition system of claim 1 wherein the processor is further configured to:

identify quantitative features of the face of the individual in the first image that facilitate biometric validation;

create a biometric template of the first image using the quantitative features if the quantitative features meet predetermined requirements; and,

store the biometric template in the biometric database and associate the biometric template with the first image and the first value of the lighting parameter in the biometric database.

3. The facial recognition system of claim 1 wherein the processor is further configured to:

determine, when the collection of previously obtained images does include a second image having a second value for the lighting parameter that meets the first predetermined condition relative to the first value for the lighting parameter, a number of images in the collection of previously obtained images having a value for the lighting parameter that meets the first predetermined condition relative to the first value for the lighting parameter; and,

storing the first image in the biometric database along with the first value for the lighting parameter when the number does not exceed a predetermined number.

4. The facial recognition system of claim 3 wherein the processor is further configured to:

identify, when the number does exceed the predetermined number, a low scoring image having the lowest qualitative score among the collection of previously obtained images that have a value for the lighting parameter that meets the first predetermined condition relative to the first value for the lighting parameter; and,

replace the low scoring image with the first image in the biometric database if a qualitative score associated with the first image exceeds the lowest qualitative score associated with the low scoring image.

5. The facial recognition system of claim 1 wherein the lighting parameter is a degree of luminance in the first image.

6. The facial recognition system of claim 1 wherein the lighting parameter is a degree of contrast in the first image.

7. The facial recognition system of claim 1, further comprising a light sensor configured to generate a signal indicative of the first value of the lighting parameter.

8. The facial recognition system of claim 1 wherein the processor is further configured, in determining the first value for the lighting parameter associated with the first image, to evaluate a lighting level in the first image.

9. The facial recognition system of claim 1, further comprising an entitlement scanner configured to obtain entitlement data from an entitlement presented by the individual and wherein the processor is further configured to receive the entitlement data from the entitlement scanner and to identify the collection of previously obtained images of the face of the individual based on the entitlement data.

10. The facial recognition system of claim 1 wherein the processor is further configured to:

determine, when the collection or previously obtained images includes a second image having a second value for the lighting parameter that meets the first predetermined condition relative to the first value for the lighting parameter, whether the first image meets a second predetermined condition relative to the second image; and,

generate a signal indicating the faces of the individual in the first and second image are identical if the first image meets the second predetermined condition relative to the second image.