

VA Medical Review of Drivers

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Medical Review

To ensure the safety of motorists on Virginia's highways, drivers must meet certain requirements including vision, medical and mental standards.

Overall medical review requirements are based on the Code of Virginia as well as guidance from DMV's Medical Advisory Board.

Medical Advisory Board

Seven members:

- Appointed by the Governor
- Licensed physicians
- Currently practicing in Virginia



DMV's Goals

- Allow people to drive for as long as they can drive safely.
- Ensure that drivers and pedestrians are safe.



Reviewing Drivers

- DMV does not base driving on age but on function
- Each case is evaluated on its own merits
- DMV identifies drivers for review by
 - Driver's license applications
 - Reports of impaired drivers



Driver's License Application

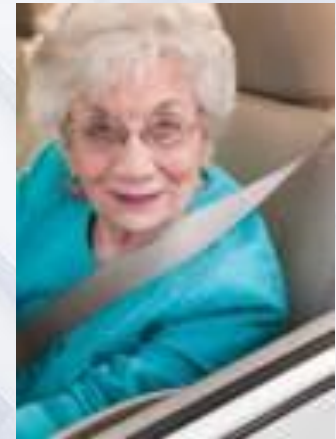
Medical questions on the DMV application inquire about:

- Vision conditions
- Physical and/or mental condition that requires medication
- Seizure, blackout or loss of consciousness
- Condition that requires the use of special equipment to drive

Reports of Impaired Drivers

DMV receives reports from:

- Law enforcement
- Physicians
- Courts
- DMV representatives
- Relatives
- Concerned citizens
- The Driver



Reports of Impaired Drivers

Statutes that encourage reporting of impaired drivers:

- Virginia Code § 46.2-322
- Virginia Code § 54.1-2966.1

DMV accepts reports by mail
or fax



Reports of Impaired Drivers

Information needed

- Identifying information about the driver
- Reason why reporting person is concerned
- Relationship to the driver
- Signature of person making the report (for letters and DMV report forms)
- Contact information for the reporting person



Medical Review

DMV takes the following actions after receiving a report:

Step 1: Review report on impaired driver

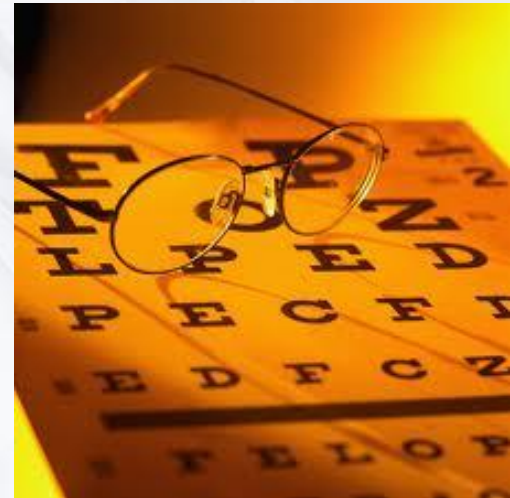
Step 2: Follow up with the person reporting a driver, if necessary

Step 3: Determine the types medical review requirements to be imposed, if warranted

Medical Review

Types of Review Requirements:

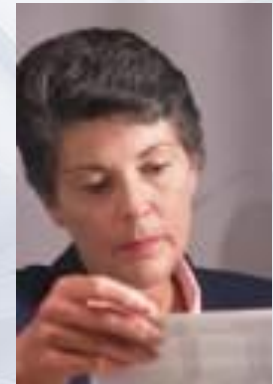
- Medical report
- Vision report
- Knowledge test
- Road test
- Driver evaluation



Medical Review

Step 4: Notify driver of requirements

- Driver is given 30 days to comply with initial requirements
- Driver is given an additional 15 days to pass tests, if required, after medical/vision reports



Medical Review

Step 5: Evaluate all information provided and test results

Step 6: Determine if additional information or tests are needed

Step 7: Review case with Medical Advisory Board, if necessary



Medical Review

Step 8: Determine next action(s)

- End medical review (no further requirements/action needed)
- Impose appropriate driver's license restriction(s)
- Require periodic medical/vision reports
- Suspend driving privilege



Medical Review Hearings

- A driver may contest the action taken by DMV and request an administrative hearing
 - Must be requested in writing
 - Scheduled and conducted by the DMV Hearings Office



The Mature Driver

- DMV offers many different programs, services, and safe driving tips to meet the changing needs of mature drivers
- Mature drivers are twice as likely to be hospitalized because of a crash than any other age group resulting in an average of 6.3 days in the hospital at an average charge of \$37,500.

The Mature Driver

- The likelihood of hospitalization or death of drivers involved in a crash increases with age
- Drivers 85 years old and over are 5 times more likely to be hospitalized and 8 times more likely to die than the youngest age group (15-20) when involved in a crash

The Mature Driver

- In 2011 (in Virginia):
 - There was a total of 7262 injuries for drivers ranging in age from 61 – 70+
 - There were 161 fatalities in the same age and gender range
 - There were 118 driver & passenger fatalities in the same age and gender range

Programs, Services, & Safe Driving Tips

- Disability Programs
- Replacing a Driver's License
- ID Services
- If You are Turning 80
- Disabled Parking Placards
- Driving and Prescription Drugs
- Mature Driver Safety Tips

Driving and Rx Drugs

- Avoid driving if you're not sure how a drug will affect you
- Take medications only at prescribed levels and dosages
- Do not drive when you feel ill, tired or disoriented
- Never combine medication and alcohol while driving

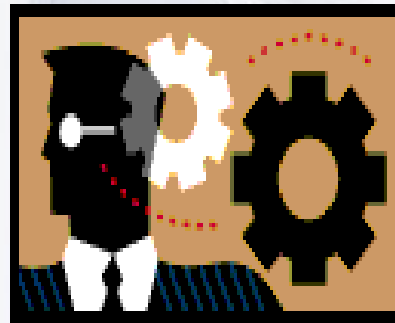


Rx Drugs (cont'd)

- Consult with your doctor or pharmacist about medications that may impair driving
- In case of an emergency, carry a list of all medications you are taking, including names and dosages

Mature Driver Safety

- Tips to reduce the risk of injury from motor vehicle crashes
- How do I know if my driving skills are declining?



How Old is Too Old to Drive?

Alternatives to Driving:

- Walking
- Carpooling with family and friends
- Taxi cabs
- Shuttle buses or vans
- Public buses, trains, and subways

Resources

Virginia GrandDriver

Initiative of the Virginia Department for
the Aging and DMV



**Virginia
GrandDriver**

**Drive Safer.
Stay Mobile.
Learn How.**

www.GrandDriver.net
1-800-552-3402

Virginia GrandDriver

- **Goal:**
 - Everyone stays on the road as safely as possible as long as possible
 - Provide resources to help drivers compensate for naturally occurring aging-related changes in driving skills

Virginia GrandDriver

- www.granddriver.net
 - Staying safe tips
 - Resource links
 - Alternative transportation

Assessment Tools

Driving Assessment

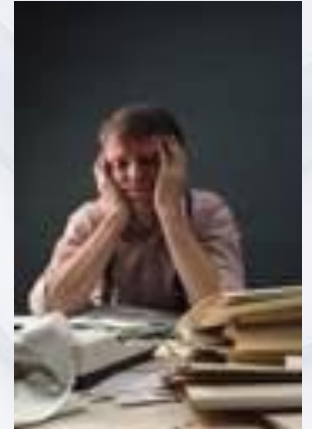
- Objective screening
- In-car and simulator performance options
- Maintains doctor/patient relationship
- Generally requires a physician referral



Assessment Tools

Psychological Assessments

- Trail Making Test, Part A & B
- Mini Mental State
- Clock Drawing Test
- Reaction Time Studies
- Screening for Geriatric Depression



Assessment Tools

Driving Assessments measure a person's ability to:

- Steer
- Control speed
- Change lanes
- Negotiate intersections
- Avoid road hazards
- Obey the law



Assessment Providers

**THE CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE
IN AGING AND GERIATRIC HEALTH™**

Pagels Driver Rehab Services

Driver Side Rehabilitation



Department of  Motor Vehicles

2007 NHTSA Study: Medical Review Process and License Disposition of Drivers Referred by Law Enforcement and Other Sources in Virginia

July 2011



NHTSA Study

- 2007: NHTSA – sponsored project to develop an intervention to increase law enforcement referrals
- Project described the medical review process outcomes of 100 drivers referred by law enforcement (LE)
- 105 drivers referred by 7 other sources

NHTSA Study

Driver Age and Gender:

- Referred drivers ages: 17 – 94
 - 49% Male
 - 51% Female
- Highest percent of referred ages:
 - 70 – 79 (23% of the sample)
 - 6% of state population is 70-79
 - 80+ (24% of the sample)
 - 3% of state population is 80+

NHTSA Study

Research Findings:

- Those who refer medically at-risk drivers to the VA DMV provide a valuable public safety service
 - Majority were quality referrals
 - Non-quality referrals may serve as data for the future if those drivers become crash involved or are referred again

NHTSA Study

Research Findings (continued):

- Inform and educate adult children of medically at-risk drivers
- Inform and educate physicians
- Inform and educate prosecutors and judges
- Red Flags of Medically At-Risk Older Drivers



References

- U. S. DOT/NHTSA (2011). *Medical review process and license disposition of drivers referred by law enforcement and other sources in Virginia. DOT HS 811 484.*
- Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (2012). www.dmvnow.com

Questions?