

## Medical Review Request

The purpose of this form is to request the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to conduct a medical review of a licensed driver.

Instructions: Print or type all information.

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <b>I request that the below named individual be re-examined for the privilege of operating a motor vehicle in Virginia.</b>  |   |   |   |
| If you change either your residence/home address or mailing address to a non-Virginia address, your driver's license or photo identification (ID) card may be canceled.  |   |   |   |
| Driver's Name  |   | Last  | First                                     |
|  |   |   |   |
|  |   | Middle  | Date of Birth                             |
|  |   |   |   |
| Driver's License or Social Security Number   | Vehicle Plate Number                        |   | Telephone Number                          |
|  |   |   | (      )                                  |
| Residence Address  |   |   |   |
|  |   |   |   |
| City   |   | State   | Zip Code                                  |
|  |   |   |   |
| Mailing Address (If different from above address)  |   |   |   |
|  |   |   |   |
| City   |   | State   | Zip Code                                  |
|  |   |   |   |
| Based on my observation, I believe this individual should be given the following tests:  |   |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Examination   | <input type="checkbox"/> Vision Examination | <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge Examination  | <input type="checkbox"/> Road Skills Test |
| I understand that the Department of Motor Vehicles may have additional requirements.   |   |   |   |
| Describe in <u>detail</u> the circumstances that led to this request. Please provide as much information as possible including a description of what appears to be the driver's mental, physical or visual impairment. Use a separate page if necessary. |   |   |   |
|  |   |   |   |
| Requestor's Name (Print or type)   |   | Signature   | Date                                      |
|  |   |   |   |
| Organization Name  | Telephone Number                            |   | Fax Number                                |
|  | (      )                                    |   | (      )                                  |
| Business Address   | City  | State   | Zip Code                                  |
|  |   |   |   |
| If you have questions, contact Medical Review Services<br>1-804-367-6203 (Voice)<br>1-800-272-9268 (Deaf or Hearing Impaired Only).<br>1-804-367-1604 (Fax)  |   | Mail or fax completed request to:<br>Department of Motor Vehicles<br>Medical Review Services<br>Post Office Box 27412<br>Richmond, Virginia 23269-0001<br>FAX: 1-804-367-1604 |   |

Code of Virginia § 46.2-322 provides that if the driver submits a written request, DMV will furnish the reasons for the examination, including the identity of anyone who supplied information regarding fitness to drive a motor vehicle. However, this law states that DMV cannot provide the information if the source is a relative or licensed medical professional treating the driver.

# State Licensing and Reporting Laws

Each state has its own licensing and license renewal criteria for drivers of private motor vehicles. In addition, certain states require physicians to report unsafe drivers or drivers with specific medical conditions to the driver licensing agency.

This chapter contains licensing agency contact information, license renewal criteria, reporting procedures and medical advisory board information, listed by state. These materials are intended to guide physicians in understanding their legal responsibilities and managing the driving safety of their patients. The information in this chapter should not be construed as legal advice nor used to resolve legal problems. If legal advice is required, please consult an attorney who is licensed to practice in your state.

*Please note that information may have changed since the publication of this guide. You should contact your State DMV for the most up-to-date information.*

## License renewal practices among states

Practices vary among states for license renewal based on age. A recent review summarized some of these nuances, and are reviewed in this paragraph.<sup>175</sup> Many states require renewal every four to five years, and one state requires no renewals until age 65 (Arizona). Fourteen states require some type of accelerated renewal for older drivers, ranging from age 60 to 80, with the length of the accelerated renewal cycle ranging from

one year (Illinois at age 87) to five years (Arizona, Colorado, South Carolina). Surprisingly, one state actually has a decelerating renewal for older drivers, with no renewal required after age 65 (Tennessee). Over time, there has been a trend toward lengthening the period of license renewal. Seventeen states have special renewal provisions for older drivers, including in-person renewal, vision tests, written tests, road tests, a medical certification of fitness, or some combination of these. Thus, a minority of states have requirements for more-frequent testing for adults over 65.<sup>176</sup> A variety of options can apply due to the special renewal provisions of older drivers. These include license renewal, revocation or suspension, restriction, or shortening of the renewal cycle.

A recent review indicates that in some jurisdictions in Australia age-based assessment has not been associated with safety benefits.<sup>177</sup> Some of the literature supports vision testing during license renewal for older adults. One investigator compared occupant motor vehicle fatalities for those over age 60 in states with and without a vision-related licensing laws and concluded there would be a 12.2-percent reduction in fatalities over the period of study if the majority of states without such laws were to adopt one.<sup>178</sup> Another study examined the

effects of license renewal timing, and tests of visual acuity, knowledge and road examinations on older driver fatalities. The researchers concluded that tests of visual acuity were associated with a lower fatal crash risk for older drivers.<sup>179</sup> Another study investigated the effect of renewal testing by comparing the crash rates of older adults in Indiana and Illinois (which at the time required vision, knowledge, and road testing at age 75) with similar controls in states that do not have age-based testing (e.g., Ohio and Michigan). In states that had age-based testing, there was a 7 percent reduction in involvement in injurious crashes, but an increase in at-fault single-vehicle crash rates.<sup>180</sup> The authors concluded that routine road testing was not warranted.

An examination of the effects of shorter licensure renewal periods for older adults along with an analysis of the crashes before and after discontinuation of road tests for those under 75 in Illinois was performed. Comparing changes in 1989 from before to after new policies were enacted, no effects were observed on crashes, fatal crashes, crash rates, or licensure rates of older drivers. Although there are no data to support an improvement in public safety when road testing the general older adult population during license renewal, mandatory road testing requirements along with vision testing have been

175. Molnar, L. J., & Eby, D. W. (2005). A brief look at driver license renewal policies in the United States. *Public Policy and Aging Report*. National Academy on an Aging Society. 15;1, 13–17.

176. Morrisey, M. A., & Grabowski, D. C. (2005). State motor vehicle laws and older drivers. *Health Econ*. 14(4):407–419.

177. Fildes, B. N., Charlton, J., Pronk, N., et al. (2008). An Australian model license reassessment procedure for identifying potentially unsafe drivers. *Traffic Inj Prev*. 9:350–359.

178. Shipp, M. D. (1998). Potential human economic cost-savings attributable to vision testing policies for driver license renewal 1989–1991. *Optom Vis Sci*. 75:103–118.

179. Levy, D. T. (1995). The relationship of age and state license renewal policies to driving licensure rates. *Accid Anal Prev*. 27(4):461–467.

180. Lange, J. E., & McKnight, A. J. (1996). Age-based road test policy evaluation. *Transport Res Rec*. 1550:81–87.

noted to decrease license renewal rates.<sup>181</sup>

A recent U.S. study raises further doubt about the efficacy of intensive screening during the license renewal process. Vision tests were not found to reduce crash risk, while an in-person renewal requirement reduced fatalities for drivers 85 and older by 16.3 percent.<sup>182</sup> This may result from license renewal staff requesting that older adults be evaluated, with subsequent revocation of their license or some older drivers deciding to give up their licenses rather than go through the renewal process.

These testing procedures and regulations do impose significant costs on states, and at times inconvenience and costs to individual drivers. If licenses are revoked, older adults face the problems of restricted mobility and loss of out-of-home activities, which may decrease social connectedness. In addition, the impact on family members and caregivers, such as time away from work, is not insignificant. This burden must be carefully weighed against the actual “added value” or benefits of improved public safety.<sup>183</sup>

## International experience

In Australia, different states have various requirements for older adults, ranging from no license renewal requirements, to vision, road, and/or requirement for a medical evaluation from a physician.<sup>184</sup> One study found similar crash rates across populations based on the number of licenses issued, indicating there were no demonstrable

safety benefits for mandatory assessment programs.<sup>185</sup> Similarly, a comparison of Swedish and Finnish licensing practices did not demonstrate an advantage for age-related license renewal requirements. Finland requires regular medical evaluations starting at age 70 for license renewals, whereas Sweden has no age-related requirements. The Finnish program not only did not have a reduction in crash rates but was actually associated with higher pedestrian fatality rates.<sup>186</sup>

## Specific state information

Information on each specific state was obtained from each state’s driver licensing agency and reflects the most current information at the time of publication. Please note that this information is subject to change. Contact your specific states statutes for up-to-date changes in the laws or requirements. This is especially important when it comes to creating a clinic policy or deciding on an individualized approach to reporting. Legal counsel is recommended to advise your decision-making in this area.

When information was not available from an individual state’s driver licensing agency, the following references were used and remain as useful resources for clinicians. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and Insurance Information Institute sites are usually updated at frequent intervals and the Web site will indicate the latest version.

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181. Levy, D. T., Werrick, J. S., Howard, K. A. (1995). Relationship between driver’s license renewal policies and fatal crashes involving drivers 70 years and older. *JAMA*. 274:1026–1030.

182. Grabowski, D. C., Campbell, C. M., Morrissey, M. A. (2004). Elderly licensure laws and motor vehicle fatalities. *JAMA*. 291:2840–2846.

183. Miller, T.R., & Levey, D.T. (2000). Cost-outcome analysis in injury prevention and control: eighty-four recent estimates for the United States. *Med Care*. 2000;28(6):562–582.

184. Fildes, B., Pronk, N., Langford, J., Hull, M., Frith, W., & Anderson, R. (2000). Model license re-assessment procedure for older and disabled drivers (Report # AP-176/00). Canberra, Australia: Ausroads.

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185. Langford, J., Fitzharris, M., Newstead, S., & Koppell, S. (2004). Some consequences of different older driver licensing procedures in Australia. *Accid Anal Prev*. 36: 993–1001.

186. Hakamies-Blomqvist, L., Johansson, K., & Lundberg, C. (1996). Medical screening of older drivers as a traffic safety measure: a comparative Finnish-Swedish evaluation study. *J Am Geriatr Soc*. 44:650–653.

# Virginia

Name of State & DMV  
contact information

Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles  
Attn: Medical Review Center  
PO Box 27412  
Richmond, VA 23269-0001  
[www.dmv.state.va.us/](http://www.dmv.state.va.us/)

804-367-0531 or 804-367-6203

## Licensing Requirements

|                          |  |   |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Visual acuity            | Each eye with/without correction.....  | 20/40   |
|                          | Both eyes with/without correction .....  | 20/40   |
|                          | If one eye blind—other with/without correction.....  | 20/40   |
|                          | Absolute visual acuity minimum .....   | 20/40 better eye, 20/70 daylight only,<br>20/200 better eye with restrictions.  |
|                          | Are bioptic telescopes allowed? .....  | Yes, with 20/200 through carrier,<br>20/70 through telescope—test<br>required.  |
| Visual fields            | Minimum field requirement.....   | 100° monocular and binocular;<br>70° monocular and binocular—<br>daylight only. 40 ° or better temporal<br>and 30° or better nasal—vision in<br>one eye only. |
|                          | Visual field testing device .....  | Stereo Optical/Titmus 10mm W<br>@333 mm.  |
| Color vision requirement | No   |   |
| Type of road test        | Behind-the-wheel test is administered with the DMV examiner instructing and evaluating the person on specific driving maneuvers.   |   |
| Restricted licenses      | Yes. A person can obtain a restricted license with a variety of restrictions if authorized by Virginia law and granted by DMV (based on performance on road test, for medical reasons, or for violation of probation) or by the court (based on conviction). The restrictions range from corrective lenses, hand controls, and 5-mile radius of residence, to daylight driving only, ignition interlock device, and to and from work/school. |   |

## License Renewal Procedures

|                              |   |  |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| Standard                     | Length of license validation.....                 | 5 years  |
|                              | Renewal options and conditions.....               | Customers may use alternative<br>method of renewing driver's license<br>applications every other cycle unless<br>suspended or revoked, 2+ violations,<br>DMV medical review indicator on<br>license, failed vision test. Alternative<br>methods include mail-in, Internet,<br>touch-tone telephone, fax, and<br>ExtraTeller. |
|                              | Vision testing required at time of renewal? ..... | Yes  |
|                              | Written test required?.....                       | Only if 2+ violations in 5 years   |
|                              | Road test required?.....                          | No   |
| Age-based renewal procedures | No  |  |

## Reporting Procedures

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Mandatory medical reporting | No  |
| Physician/medical reporting | Physicians are not required to report unsafe drivers. However, for physicians who do report unsafe drivers, laws have been enacted to prohibit release of the physician's name as the source of the report. |
| Immunity                    | No  |
| Legal protection            |   |
| DMV follow-up               |   |

# Virginia (continued)

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|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Other reporting | DMV relies upon information from courts, other DMVs, law enforcement officers, physicians and other medical professionals, relatives and concerned citizens to help identify drivers who may be impaired. |
| Anonymity       | Virginia law provides confidentiality, only for relatives and physicians.   |

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## Medical Advisory Board

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|------------------------------------|--|
| Role of the MAB                    | The board enables the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to comply with its responsibilities of monitoring drivers throughout the State who may have physical or mental problems. The board assists the commissioner through the development of medical and health standards for use in the issuance of driver's licenses. The board helps the department avoid the issuance of licenses to persons suffering from any physical or mental disability or disease that will prevent their exercising reasonable and ordinary control over a motor vehicle while driving it on the highways. They review the more complex cases and cases referred for administrative hearings and provide recommendations for medical review action. |
| Medical Review contact information | Questions about medical review can be directed to 804-497-7188<br><a href="http://www.dmv.state.va.us/webdoc/citizen/medical/index.asp">www.dmv.state.va.us/webdoc/citizen/medical/index.asp</a>   |

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