

Assessing Senior Drivers

Senior Driver Renewal Process

Ontario's senior driver programs aim to keep seniors driving for as long as they can do so safely. Once drivers reach 80 years of age, every two years they need to:

- Take a vision test
- Undergo a driver record review
- Participate in a 45-minute group education session and complete two in-class screening assignments
- If necessary, take a road test.

Medical referral resulting from a driver's licence renewal session

Depending on the outcome of the group education session you may be referred to the ministry's Medical Review Section for further assessment. Based on that referral you will be required to file a medical report.

What type of medical information will be required?

If you have been referred as a result of your group education session, you will need to have a *Cognitive Assessment* form completed by your physician or nurse practitioner. Please submit this form by the due date provided in the letter you receive from the ministry, or your licence will be suspended.

Your physician or nurse practitioner may conduct a variety of tests -- including pencil and paper tests and memory tests -- to help determine if you are okay to continue driving. If the report submitted by your physician or nurse practitioner confirms that you do not meet the required medical standards your driver's licence may be suspended.

If, however, the report shows that you would benefit from an independent on-road assessment you may need to undergo a functional assessment with an occupational therapist.

What to expect at a functional assessment

A functional assessment -- also called a *Driving Evaluation* -- is completed by an occupational therapist and a driving instructor. It includes an in-clinic medical assessment and an on-road driving evaluation. It can take up to 3-4 hours to complete the entire assessment at one of the ministry's approved Functional Assessment Centres. Occupational therapists who work at these centres have training and expertise to assess your medical condition's effect on your ability to drive safely.

The in-clinic portion will include a variety of tests appropriate to your medical condition:

- Vision assessment - results of a basic visual screening (e.g. visual acuity, peripheral vision, depth perception, night vision and glare recovery)
- Physical evaluation - tests relating to range of motion, joint movement, strength, sensation, balance, reaction time and mobility
- Cognitive & visual attention assessment- tests relating to attention, concentration, memory, and divided attention.

The on-road portion is an evaluation including basic driving manoeuvres to help determine if your medical condition affects your ability to drive safely. Once the evaluation is complete a report will be sent directly to the ministry and your case will be reviewed.

Note: The ministry is not responsible for any costs relating to the assessment process.

A complete list of Approved Functional Assessment Centres is available on the Medical Review web page. Visit the site noted below, click on Medical Review and select 'Approved Functional Assessment Centres'.

For more information on the medical review process and the national medical standards, please visit us at
<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/medical-review.shtml>

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What are the components of the Group Education Session?

The entire session is 90 minutes long and it consists of:

- a vision test
- a review of your driving record
- a short 45 minute education presentation
- a brief in-class screening component
- a road test if necessary*

There is no need to study for the screening components. The in-class screening component replaces the knowledge/written test and designed to better screen for drivers who may not be fit to drive and require a road test or a medical assessment. They also help to ensure that senior drivers are fairly and objectively assessed of their driving ability. (See examples on next page)

Information about the in-class screening component is available at: ontario.ca/seniordriver

Your driver's licence will not be taken away if you do not meet the renewal requirements.

**Road tests are not part of the Group Education Session. If one is required, it will happen at another time.*

Who decides if I need to take a road test?

A trained driver improvement counsellor reviews your driving record and how well you did on the screening component.

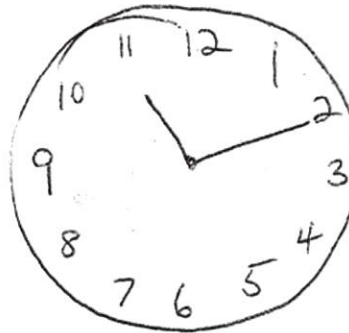
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The In-Class Screening Component consists of two tests.

Clock Drawing Test

e.g. draw a clock and show ten minutes after 11



Letter Cancellation Test

e.g. look for and cross-out all the letters "H"

H I H B D A H C F B H D E
F H A D K C E H I K G D H
H G H C G D H C B A H G
E B F H C D H F H G E K
H I H E B H G F B K F A H

Collision Involvement Program

What happens if I am involved in a collision at my age?

The Ministry of Transportation has programs for drivers of all ages who were involved in a motor vehicle collision. These programs require drivers to pass road tests to keep their licence.

There is a specific collision program for older drivers. If you are aged 70 and older and you were in a collision as a driver, and charged with a traffic offence and later convicted for driving improperly, you will have to pass a 3-part driving test.

This includes a:

- **Vision test**
- **Written test, and**
- **Road test**

A letter will be mailed to you informing you about what to do. You do not have to get tested until you receive the letter.

The tests are free and you can take the tests again if you do not pass the first time.

