

# OLDER DRIVER EVALUATIONS - FACT SHEET FOR PHYSICIANS

## General Information Regarding Older Drivers

- Arizona drivers enjoy an extended driver license which does not expire until the age of 65, although vision testing and photo need to be updated every 12 years.
- Drivers 60 years of age or older receive a driver license that is valid for only 5 years.
- No physician review is necessary to obtain or renew a driver license based on age

## Physician Reporting Requirements in Arizona

- Physicians are NOT required to report any patient
- A physician may voluntarily report a patient to the AZ Department of Transportation, Motor Vehicle Division (ADOT-MVD), who, in the opinion of the physician, has a medical or psychological condition that could significantly impair the person's ability to safely operate a motor vehicle. (Arizona Revised Statutes §28-3005)

To report a driver, complete this form:

<http://mvd.azdot.gov/mvd/formsandpub/viewPDF.asp?lngProductKey=2042&lngFormInfoKey=1861>

## Medical Review Program of ADOT's Motor Vehicle Division:

A physician is unable to revoke or restrict a person's license.

- Final determination of an individual's ability to drive is made by ADOT- MVD.
- ADOT-MVD may revoke, suspend, or restrict a person's driver license based on a physician's report and further evaluation by MVD. Examples of restrictions are:
  - Daylight driving only
  - No freeway driving
  - Driving within a defined radius of a person's home
  - Golf cart driving only

## Immunity from Liability

- Physicians who, in good faith, report drivers whose conditions may impair their driving, are immune from any civil or criminal liability. (A.R.S. § 28-3005)

## Identifying at Risk Drivers

- Physicians are well-suited to identify drivers at risk, based on ability, not age
- There are 3 main areas that should be evaluated:
  - 1) Vision - Basic visual acuity, or sharpness of vision
  - 2) Cognition - Decision making, judgment, and planning (needed for making left turns).
  - 3) Motor and Sensory Skills - Reaction time (needed for stopping fast enough to avoid a crash)
- Signs of unsafe driving include:
  - History of motor vehicle incidents/crashes
  - Forgetting how to locate familiar places
  - Failing to observe traffic signs
  - Making slow or poor decisions in traffic
  - Driving at an inappropriate speed
  - Becoming angry or confused while driving

- Medical conditions that may impair a driver's ability include:
  - Epilepsy
  - Arthritis
  - Vision impairments
  - Dementia (any type)
  - Cerebrovascular disease
  - Other neurodegenerative diseases
  - Substance abuse or dependence

**Assessments:**

- An MVD driving skills test or MVD Medical/Special Performance Evaluation drive (no additional fee) is the best way to assess driving skills
- Or
- A driver medical evaluation by a nationally certified Driving Rehabilitation Specialist (fee for service):

Adapted Driving Program  
Banner Good Samaritan Rehabilitation Institute  
1012 E. Willetta  
Phoenix, Arizona, 85006  
602-839-2317

DriveAble Solutions  
4120 N. 20<sup>th</sup> St., Suite G  
Phoenix, AZ 85016  
Phone: 602-840-2323

Driving to Independence  
1414 W Broadway Road, Suite 230  
Tempe, AZ 85282  
480-449-3331

Driving to Independence  
4720 N. La Cholla Blvd.  
Tucson, Arizona 85705  
520-219-0550

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American Medical Association's Physicians Guide to Assessing and Counseling Older Drivers (in conjunction with National Highway Traffic Safety Administration):

<http://www.ama-assn.org/resources/doc/public-health/older-drivers-guide.pdf>

American Academy of Neurology's Practice Parameter update: Evaluation and Management of driving risk in dementia:

<http://www.neurology.org/content/early/2010/04/12/WNL.0b013e3181da3b0f.citation>

Driver Fitness Medical Guidelines by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators:

[http://www.granddriver.info/uploadedFiles/MainSite/Content/DriverLicensingIdentification/At\\_Risk\\_Drivers/Driver%20Fitness%20Medical%20Guidelines.pdf](http://www.granddriver.info/uploadedFiles/MainSite/Content/DriverLicensingIdentification/At_Risk_Drivers/Driver%20Fitness%20Medical%20Guidelines.pdf)

Arizona Revised Statute (A.R.S. § 28-3005)

<http://www.azleg.gov/FormatDocument.asp?inDoc=/ars/28/03005.htm&Title=28&DocType=ARS>

Arizona Revised Statute (A.R.S. § 28-3159)

<http://www.azleg.gov/FormatDocument.asp?inDoc=/ars/28/03159.htm&Title=28&DocType=ARS>

