

Medical Review Section Driver Improvement Office

Introduction

The Medical Review Section of the Ministry of Transportation is responsible for the delivery of medical review programs including suspending driving privileges for drivers found to be unfit due to medical reasons and reinstating driving privileges for those individuals deemed to meet the medical standards.

In 2008 the Medical Review Section processed 191,000 medical reports. This includes:

- Mandatory physician reporting
- · Cyclical reporting for commercial drivers
- Commercial Licence Waiver Program
- Vision Waiver Program
- · Remedial Measures Program

In addition, Medical Review staff responds to approximately 185,000 telephone calls annually.

- Basic Medical Standards For Licensing
- · Vision Standards for Licensing
- Class G Vision Waiver
- Commercial Drivers
- Medical Review Process
- Medical Advisory Committee
- Licence Appeal Tribunal
- National Medical Standards
- Approved Driver Assessment Centres for Driving Evaluations
- Physicians Reporting Requirements
- Police
- Frequently Asked Questions

To Contact Us:

Ministry of Transportation Driver Improvement Office Medical Review Section 2680 Keele Street Downsview, ON M3M 3E6

General Enquiry: 416-235-1773

1-800-268-1481 (Inside Ontario only)

Fax: 416-235-3400

1-800-304-7889

<u>DriverImprovementOffice@ontario.ca</u>

Links:

- Canadian Medical Association (www.cma.ca)
- Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (www.ccmta.ca)
- Ontario Statutes and Regulations(www.e-laws.gov.on.ca)
- Canadian Driving Research Initiative for Vehicular Safety in the Elderly (www.candrive.ca)
- Driving & Dementia Pamphlet (www.pccchealth.org)
- Back on Track Program (www.remedial.net)
- DriveTest (www.drivetest.ca)
- Licence Appeal Tribunal (www.lat.gov.on.ca)

Basic Medical Standards

In Ontario all drivers must meet basic medical standards to operate a motor vehicle. Higher medical standards apply for those wishing to drive a commercial vehicle.

Ontario Regulation 340/94 (s. 14) outlines the basic medical standards for all licence holders. This section of the Regulation states that an applicant for or a holder of a driver's licence must not,

- Suffer from any mental, emotional, nervous or physical disability likely to significantly interfere with his or her ability to drive a motor vehicle of the applicable class safely; or
- Be addicted to the use of alcohol or a drug to an extent likely to significantly interfere with his or her ability to drive a motor vehicle safely

Vision Standards - Class G and M

In addition to the basic medical standards for all drivers there are also mandatory vision standards for driving.

Ontario Regulation 340/94 (s.18) requires that an applicant for or a holder of a Class G, G1, G2, M, M1 or M2 licence must have,

- A visual acuity as measured by Snellen Rating that is not poorer than 20/50, with both eyes open and examined together with or without the aid of corrective lenses; and
- A horizontal visual field of at least 120 continuous degrees along the horizontal meridian and at least 15 continuous degrees above and below fixation, with both eyes open and examined together

In May 2005 the ministry introduced a vision waiver program for Class G (G1, G2) for individuals who do not meet the 120 degree horizontal visual field requirement.

Vision Waiver Program - Class G (G1, G2)

The vision waiver program allows individuals who are unable to meet the horizontal visual field requirement the opportunity to demonstrate through a driving evaluation, whether they can compensate for the defect and drive safely. Other criteria for entry into the program include:

- Certain driving record requirements (See Regulation 340/94 s 21.2 for more information)
 - Does not have more than 6 demerit points on his/her driving record
 - Has not had his/her driver's licence suspended within the last 5 years as a result of a Criminal Code conviction for an offence committed by means of a motor vehicle
 - Has not had his/her driver's licence suspended within the last 5 years as a result of certain Highway Traffic Act convictions
 - Has not, within the last 5 years and within the time of vision loss, been involved in a collision with an associated conviction under the Highway Traffic Act for certain offences
 - Meets all other qualifications for the applicable class of licence
 - Does not have a medical or visual condition or disability that, alone or combined with a reduced visual field, may significantly impair driving ability.
- Satisfactory medical report
- Satisfactory vision assessment from an optometrist or ophthalmologist
- Functional assessment from an approved assessment centre for Class G Vision Waivers

The functional assessment consists of a number of standardized tests, both in-clinic and on-road.

What is the purpose of the vision waiver program?

What does "vision waiver" mean?

What requirements are being "waived"?

When did this program start?

Will drivers with a vision waiver be permitted to drive outside Ontario?

Why are there so few assessment centers to conduct assessments for vision waivers?

Medical reporting cycles for commercial licence holders (Class A, B, C, E and F)

- Applicants for a class A, B, C, E and F licence are required to submit a medical report on application
- Drivers under the age of 46 are required to submit a medical report every five years
- Drivers aged 46 64 are required to submit a medical report every three years
- Drivers aged 65 and over are required to submit a medical report annually

These requirements are in keeping with the recommendations of the *Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators* and are the basis of the U.S./Canadian Reciprocal Agreement for commercial drivers crossing the Canada/U.S. border.

Medical reporting for Class D licence holders

 All applicants for a class D licence are required to submit a medical report on application

Medical, Vision and Hearing Standards for Commercial Licences

Applicants for and holders of a commercial licence are required to meet higher standards due to the fact that they drive longer hours in often poor weather conditions, they are faced with more physical demands than those driving a private vehicle and due to the size/weight of the vehicle being driven.

Hearing standards apply to applicants for and holders of Class B, C, E and F licences. Ontario Regulation 340/94 (s. 17) requires that an applicant or holder of a Class B, C, E or F licence, whose hearing in one ear is better than in the other must be able to perceive in the better ear, with or without a hearing aid, a forced whisper at a distance of 1.5 meters or, if an audiometer is used to test the person's hearing, must not have a loss in the better ear of more than 40 decibels at 500, 1000 and 2000 hertz.

Vision standards apply to applicants for and holders of Class A, B, C, D, E and F licences. Ontario Regulation 340/94 (s. 17) requires that an applicant for or a holder must have,

- A visual acuity, as measured by Snellen Rating, that is not poorer than 20/30, with both eyes open and examined together and not poorer than 20/100 in the weaker eye, with or without the aid of corrective lenses; and
- A horizontal visual field of at least 150 continuous degrees along the horizontal meridian and at least 20 continuous degrees above and below fixation, with both eyes open and examined together

Medical standards apply to applicants for and holders of Class A, B, C, D, E and F licences. Ontario Regulation 340/94 (s. 17) states that an applicant or holder,

- Has no history or clinical diagnosis of diabetes that requires insulin for control;
- Is not taking any drug that, could, in the dosage prescribed or in the dosage recommended by the manufacturer, impair his or her ability to drive a motor vehicle of the applicable class safely;
- Has no established medical history of myocardial infarction, angina pectoris, coronary insufficiency or thrombosis;
- Has no established medical history of heart disease including arrhythmia or of respiratory dysfunction likely to interfere with the safe driving of a motor vehicle of the applicable class;
- Is not suffering from an aortic aneurysm, whether resected or not
- Is not suffering from hypertension accompanied by postural hypotension resulting in giddiness when under treatment;
- Has no established medical history of loss of consciousness or awareness due to a chronic or recurring condition;
- Has no established medical history of a disorder of the musculoskeletal or nervous system that may interfere with the safe driving of a motor vehicle of the applicable class;
- Has no established medical history of an intractable psychotic or psychoneurotic disorder, having particular regard for sustained hostile, aggressive, paranoid, suicidal or other destructive tendencies or depression unless it is medically determined that the condition from which the person has suffered is corrected or controlled

How often do I have to submit a medical report for my commercial licence?

How will I know when my report is due to the ministry?

Who can complete my report form?

What happens if I do not send in my medical report by the due date?

What happens if I no longer meet the standards for a commercial licence?

Medical Waiver Program for Commercial Drivers

An applicant for, or a holder of, a commercial licence who cannot meet the required medical standards may apply for a medical "waiver". This means that the individual may be able to hold a higher class of licence despite the fact that he/she may not meet the medical standards. See below for requirements.

Regulation 340/94 (s. 17{2} and s. 21 {1}) provides the authority for the Minister to waive the medical standards provided certain conditions are met and provided there is no worsening of the condition.

If an individual does not meet the required medical standards and may qualify for a waiver, the Ministry will mail an application package to the individual. When returned to the ministry, the completed medical waiver package will be reviewed by Medical Review staff and the appropriate medical advisors (e.g. cardiologist, neurologist etc.).

If the review confirms that the individual meets the medical standards found in the CCMTA's Medical *Standards for Drivers* the medical standards in regulation may be "waived". A waiver is granted with the requirement that the driver submit a detailed medical report at the dates determined by the Ministry.

Medical Review Process

When an unsolicited report is received from a physician in compliance with the mandatory reporting legislation found in <u>section 203 of the Highway Traffic Act</u>, it is screened for name, address, date of birth and licence number and matched with the individual's driving record. The same process exists for vision reports received from optometrists in compliance with <u>section 204</u> of the *Act*.

The report is then screened for diagnosis, prognosis, functional impairment, any prescribed medication, chronic, deteriorating or unstable conditions, any accompanying test results, memory or judgement impairment, impaired vision, loss of consciousness and how recent the episode occurred, the frequency of episodes and compliance with prescribed treatment.

The ministry reviews each case individually and assesses the medical information in conjunction with the medical standards found in <u>Regulation 340/94</u> as well as the national medical standards to determine an individual's medical fitness to drive.

A report that contains information about a medical condition that is deemed as a high risk to road safety (e.g. a recent episode of loss of consciousness, impaired memory, uncontrolled seizures, and unstable progressive conditions) would result in a licence suspension.

When a licence is suspended, MTO sends the driver a formal Notice of Suspension by regular mail. At the same time, the ministry will send a letter to the driver which will advise what type of medical information is required to have the case considered for reinstatement.

In cases where the medical information is deemed to be a lower risk to road safety, the driver may be required to file <u>additional medical information</u> before a decision is made in their case. In some cases, the condition may be monitored by MTO or no action is taken at all as the condition is deemed to be temporary or minor (e.g reports of

allergies, anaesthetic, hearing impairments for Class G licence holders etc.).

Depending on the nature of the medical condition, the Ministry may also downgrade a commercial licence and allow the driver to apply for a <u>waiver of the medical standards</u>, request a driver re-test (written/vision/road at DriveTest centre) or request for a <u>full driving evaluation</u> with an occupational therapist at an approved MTO Driver Assessment Centre.

Additional Medical Information

In cases where additional medical information is required, the driver is given the opportunity to file additional medical information. A letter is mailed to the driver outlining the information that is required and a specific timeframe is given for the driver to submit the medical information to the ministry.

If the required information is not received by the due date, a suspension notice will be mailed to the driver, or, in the case of a commercial licence downgrade, a new licence in the lower class will be issued. Reconsideration of the suspension/downgrade will be given when the additional information is received. Drivers who are unable to meet the timeframe for filing the additional information may be given an extension. Drivers can either phone or write the ministry for an extension. (Contact Us)

When additional information is received a review is conducted to determine if the required medical standards are met.

If the additional medical information results in a suspension (or continued suspension) of the driver's licence, in most cases, the driver has the option to appeal the decision to the Licence Appeal Tribunal. Suspensions for failing to meet mandatory vision requirements cannot be appealed.

If the additional medical information confirms that the driver meets the medical standards, the licence will be reinstated (if under suspension) provided there are no other outstanding suspensions or requirements on file. The driver will be advised of the outcome of the review by mail.

Why did my doctor or optometrist report my medical condition to the ministry?

I don't have a driver's licence. Why was I reported?

What happens when MTO receives a report from my physician or optometrist?

Why did MTO suspend my licence?

When will my licence be reinstated?

I have a medical condition that my physician feels may interfere with my driving ability. Does that mean I will automatically lose my driver's licence?

How can I appeal the decision to suspend/downgrade my licence?

My licence was suspended for failing to meet the vision standards. Can I appeal this suspension?

My doctor said it's okay for me to drive now. When can I start driving?

How does the ministry prioritize medical reports?

What is the fastest way for me to send my medical report to MTO?

Who has access to my information once a medical report is submitted?

How long does it take for my report to be reviewed?

Where do I call to find out the status of my file?

How long does it take before I can resume driving once my licence is reinstated?

Why can't I continue to use my old driver's licence?

How can I get a copy of a report that my doctor sent in?

Driving Evaluations

Individuals who are reported as being medically unfit to drive as a result of a neurological condition, mental illness or physical disability are sometimes required to provide confirmation that they are fit to drive by way of a formal driving evaluation. Driving evaluations may also be requested when an individual is suffering from various age related concerns or multiple medical conditions.

A comprehensive driving evaluation includes a full medical assessment in addition to an on-road evaluation. A driving evaluation is conducted by an Occupational Therapist and a qualified driving instructor. If you are required to undergo a driving evaluation the ministry will send you a list of approved centres along with your letter. These centres are located in hospitals, rehabilitations centres or private clinics. They are independently operated and are not a branch of the Ministry of Transportation.

If, during the course of the evaluation, it is determined that remedial lessons are required prior to returning to independent driving, a report will be sent to the ministry and a temporary licence will be issued (for the purpose of lessons only) provided there are no other outstanding suspensions on file.

If special adaptive equipment is required (e.g. spinner knob, hand controls etc.) a Ministry of Transportation road test will be required.

How will the ministry notify me if I am required to undergo a driving evaluation?

Who is responsible for the cost of the driving evaluation?

What does the fee include?

What are the components of a driving evaluation?

How does the ministry approve driver assessment centres?

Medical Advisory Committee

The ministry has a panel of expert medical advisors known as the Medical Advisory Committee. This committee is comprised of 25 physicians in the fields of cardiology, psychiatry, endocrinology, ophthalmology, internal medicine, physiatry, geriatric medicine and substance abuse.

These medical experts are contracted by the ministry to review complex cases (e.g. waiver applications, multiple conditions, detailed assessments from specialists) and provide an expert opinion to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles. This process may take up to five weeks. Recommendations may include:

- Licence suspension
- Reinstatement
- Deny/Approve waiver
- Downgrade a commercial class licence
- · Remain suspended
- Request additional information

Appeal Process

Section 50 of the *Highway Traffic Act* provides for the opportunity for a driver to appeal a medical suspension or medical downgrade from a commercial class licence. The Tribunal can confirm, modify or set aside the decision of the Registrar. The Tribunal's decisions in medical cases can be appealed to the Superior Court of Justice within 30 days from the date the Tribunal's decisions are released.

The driver's licence remains suspended / downgraded until the appeal is heard. The fee for the appeal is \$100. Information on the Licence Appeal Tribunal can be found at http://www.lat.gov.on.ca

National Medical Standards

In addition to the mandatory medical and vision standards found in legislation and regulation, the ministry applies national medical standards when reviewing medical information and making licensing decisions on fitness to drive. The standards used by the ministry are *Determining Medical Fitness to Operate a Motor Vehicle*, published by the Canadian Medical Association, and *Medical Standards for Drivers*, published by the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators.

These standards are developed by experts within the medical community and are reviewed and updated as required. These national standards are used by licensing authorities in all Canadian jurisdictions and provide for consistency in licensing decisions. In addition, having consistent medical standards allows for licensing reciprocity across Canada.

For more information:

- Canadian Medical Association
- Canadian Council of Motor Transport <u>Administrators</u>

APPROVED DRIVER ASSESSMENT CENTRES For Class "G" Vision Waiver



These Driver Assessment Centres are approved to conduct <u>Class "G" Vision Waiver Function Assessments</u>. Vision Waiver Assessments conducted at Non-Approved Centres will not be accepted. If you require a list of approved centres for a Medical Assessment, or if you require further information, please contact the Driver Improvement Office at (416) 235-1773 or 1 (800) 268-1481.

Skill Builders Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation Centre 100 Bell Farm Road Barrie, Ontario. L4M 5K5	Telephone Number: (705) 727-0319 Fax. Number: (705) 727-0236 Web Site: www.skillbuildersrehab.com
St. Joseph's Health Centre Parkwood Hospital Site 801 Commissioners Road East London, Ontario	Telephone Number: (519) 685-4070 Fax. Number: (519) 685-4066
DriveAgain 2700 Dufferin Street, Unit 44 (Dufferin Street & Castlefield Ave) Toronto, Ontario M6B 4J3	Toll Free Number: 1-888-640-0292 Telephone Number: (416) 640-0292 Fax. Number: (416) 640-0302 Web Site: www.driveagain.ca
Saint Elizabeth Health Care Centre Driver Assessment & Training Services 1140 Sheppard Ave. West, Suite 4 Toronto, Ontario	Telephone Number: (416) 398-1035 Fax Number: (416) 398-3206
The Ottawa Hospital Rehabilitation Centre Occupational Therapy Department 505 Smyth Road Ottawa, Ontario K1H 8M2	Telephone Number: (613) 737-8899 Ext.75311 Fax Number: (613) 737-8463
Sudbury Regional Hospital Laurentian Site Occupational Therapy Department 41 Ramsey Lake Road Sudbury, Ontario P3E 5J1	Telephone Number: (705) 522-2200 Ext: 3150 Fax Number: (705) 523-7051

APPROVED DRIVER ASSESSMENT CENTRES For Medical Assessments



Skill Builders Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation Centre 100 Bell Farm Road Barrie, Ontario. L4M 5K5	Telephone Number: (705) 727-0319 Fax. Number: (705) 727-0236 Web Site: www.skillbuildersrehab.com
William Osler Health Centre Assessment Solutions 169 Queen Street East, Suite 103 Brampton, Ontario L6W 2B2	Telephone Number: (905) 796-4959 Fax. Number: (905) 796-4952
Brant Community Healthcare System, 200 Terrace Hill Street Brantford, Ontario N3R 1G9	Telephone Number: (519) 751-5506 Fax Number: (519) 751-5861
Advance Therapy Inc. P.O. Box 271 Breslau, Ontario N0B 1M0	Toll Free Number: 1-888-648-3345 Telephone Number: (519) 648-3345 Fax Number: (519) 648-3345
Advance Driver Rehabilitation Service 5125 Harvester Road Unit 7 Burlington, Ontario L7L 5L4	Telephone Number: (905) 632-2410 Fax Number: (905) 684-3824
CBI Health CBI Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Centre 1315 Bishop Street, Suite 203 Cambridge, Ontario N1R 6Z2	Telephone Number: (519) 622-9093 Fax Number: (519) 622-5113
Cornwall Community Hospital Hôpital communautarie de Cornwall 3rd North Rehabilitation Department 510 Second Street East Cornwall, Ontario K6H 1Z6	Telephone Number: (613) 932-3300 ext. 4372/4323 Fax Number: (613) 936-4631
Englehart and District Hospital Timiskaming District Drivers Assessment Program 61 Fifth Street Englehart, Ontario P0J 1H0	Telephone Number: (705) 544-2301 Ext.5264 Fax Number: (705) 544-5222
The Driving Assessment Program, Rehabilitation Services Department St. Joseph Health Care Centre 100 Westmount Road Guelph, Ontario N1H 5H8	Telephone Number: (519) 824-2620 Ext.4355 Fax Number: (519) 767-4164
CBI Health CBI Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Centre 880 Upper Wentworth Street, Unit 2B Hamilton, Ontario L9A 5H2	Telephone Number: (905) 318-7044 Fax Number: (905) 318-9075

APPROVED DRIVER ASSESSMENT CENTRES For Medical Assessments



Drive Lab Inc./WRI Group - Hamilton 130 Wilson St., 2nd Floor Hamilton, Ontario L8R 1E2	Toll Free Number: 1-877-967-5522 Fax Number: (905) 851-8785
Hamilton Hospitals Assessment Centre Sir William Osler Health Institute 565 Sanatorium Road, Suite 204 Hamilton, Ontario L9C 7N4	Toll Free Number: 1-800 663 0423 Telephone Number: (905) 388-1035 Fax Number: (905) 318 8892
DriveAble/Kingston & Surrounding Areas 11 Princess Street Room 101 Kingston, Ontario K7L 1A1	Telephone Number: (613) 544-0034 Fax Number: 1-(613) 224-0270
Limestone Health Consultants Inc. 541 Day's Road, Unit #6 Kingston, Ontario K7M 3R8	Toll Free Number: 1-800-334-3326 Telephone Number: (613) 389-2350 Fax Number: (613) 389-5354
DriveAble in Kitchener-Waterloo & Surrounding Areas St. Mary's General Hospital C/O The Wellness Rehabilitation Centre Unit 1, 41 River Rd. E. Kitchener, Ontario N2B 2G3	Telephone Number: (519) 749-6787 Fax. Number: (519) 749-6880 Web Site: http://www.driveable.com/
CBI Health CBI Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Centre 249 Sherk Street Leamington, Ontario N8H 4X7	Telephone Number: (519) 324-9864 Fax Number: (519) 324-9867
DriveAble in London Parkwood Hospital 801 Commissioners Road East London, Ontario N6C 5J1	Telephone Number: (519) 685-4028 Fax Number: (519) 685-4040
Forest City Occupational Therapy 906 Maitland Street London, Ontario N5Y 2X1	Telephone Number: (519) 434-9094
DMA Rehability 1151 Florence St., Suite 300 London, Ontario N5W 2M7	Toll Free Number: 1-866-309-0046 Telephone Number: (519) 452-0046 Fax Number: (519) 452-1431
St. Joseph's Health Centre Driving Assessment and Rehabilitation Program Parkwood Hospital Site 801 Commissioners Road East London, Ontario N6C 5J1	Telephone Number: (519) 685-4070 Fax Number: (519) 685-4066

APPROVED DRIVER ASSESSMENT CENTRES For Medical Assessments



DriveAble in Milton 245 Commercial Street Milton, Ontario L9T 3C3	Telephone Number: 1-888-881-3414 Fax Number: 1-888-881-3414 drive.able@bellnet.ca Web Site: www.driveable.com
CDTS Inc. KeyDrivers 71 King Street West, Suite 201 Mississauga, Ontario L5B 4A2	Telephone Number: (416) 460-9199 Fax Number: (905) 829-8060
DriveAble ElderSafe Office of Saint Elizabeth Health Care Bronte Plaza 2318 Lakeshore Road West, Unit 2 Oakville, Ontario I6L 1H3	Telephone Number: (416) 398-1035 Toll Free: 1-877-397-1035 Fax Number: (416) 398-3206
Capital Region Driver Rehabilitation Centre 4-125 Springfield Road Ottawa, Ontario K1M 1C5	Telephone Number: (613) 744-4958 Fax Number: (613) 744-4479
CVE INC. 1825 Woodward Drive Ottawa, Ontario K2C 0P9	Telephone Number: (613) 237-7368 Fax Number: (613) 237-0950
DriveAble/Ottawa & Surrounding Areas 1893 Baseline Road, 1 st Floor Ottawa, Ontario K2C 0C7	Telephone Number: (613) 224 -7480 Fax Number: (613) 224-0270
The Ottawa Hospital Rehabilitation Centre Occupational Therapy Department 505 Smyth Road Ottawa, Ontario K1H 8M2	Telephone Number: (613) 737-8899 Ext. 75311 Fax Number: (613) 737-8463
Swanson & Associates 1729 Bank Street, Suite 305 Ottawa, Ontario K1V 7Z5	Telephone Number: (613) 260-1935 Fax Number: (613) 260-9375
DriveAble in Owen Sound Closing the Gap Healthcare Group 733 9 th Ave. East, Unit 4 Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 3E6	Telephone Number: (519) 370-2165 Fax Number: (519) 370-2114
Peterborough Driver Rehabilitation Service Mailing Address: Box 223 Millbrook, Ontario L0A 1G0 Assessment Site: Parkway Place Mall (Lower) 1135 Lansdowne St. West Peterborough, Ontario	Telephone Number:: (705) 932-2126 Fax Number: (705) 932-2126

APPROVED DRIVER ASSESSMENT CENTRES For Medical Assessments



Advance Driver Rehabilitation Services 27 William Street St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 5H9	Telephone Number: (905) 685-5591 Fax Number: (905) 684-3824
Sudbury Regional Hospital Laurentian Site Occupational Therapy Department 41 Ramsey Lake Road Sudbury, Ontario P3E 5J1	Telephone Number: (705) 522-2200 Ext.3150 Fax Number: (705) 523-7051
Sunnyside Rehabilitation Services 13275 Tecumseh Road Tecumseh, Ontario N8N 4M7	Telephone Number: (519) 739-6061 Fax Number: (519) 739-1419
Windsor Occupational Therapy 353 Jordan Lane Tecumseh Ontario N8N 5C3	Telephone Number: (519) 979 0017 Fax Number: (519) 979 5879
St. Joseph's Care Group St. Joseph's Hospital Driver Rehabilitation Clinic 35 North Algoma Street, PO Box 3251 Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 5G7	Telephone Number: (807) 343-2480 Fax Number: (807) 343-0144
DriveAgain 2700 Dufferin Street, Unit 44 (Dufferin Street & Castlefield Ave) Toronto, Ontario M6B 4J3	Toll Free Number: 1-888-640-0292 Telephone Number: (416) 640-0292 Fax Number: (416) 640-0302 Web Site: www.driveagain.ca
Saint Elizabeth Health Care Driver Assessment & Training Services (Formerly a program of Bloorview MacMillan) 1140 Sheppard Ave West, Unit 4 (Sheppard & Allen Road) Toronto, Ontario M3K 2A2	Telephone Number: (416) 398-1035 Fax Number: (416) 398-3206 Web Site: www.saintelizabeth.com
DriveABLE in Toronto Saint Elizabeth Health Care Centre 1140 Sheppard Ave. West, Unit 4 Toronto Ontario, M3K 2A2	Telephone Number: (416) 398-1035 Fax Number: (416) 398-3206 Web Site: www.saintelizabeth.com
On The Road Again CBI Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation Centre Niagara Health System, Welland Hospital Site 65 Third Street Welland, Ontario L3B 4W6	Telephone Number: (905) 732-6111 Ext. 33317 Fax Number: (905) 714-9473

APPROVED DRIVER ASSESSMENT CENTRES For Medical Assessments



Lakeridge Health Wellness & Assessment 223 Brock St. N. Whitby, Ontario L1N 4H6	Telephone Number: (905) 666-8033 Fax Number: (905) 666-0113
Windsor Regional Hospital DriveAble, Western Campus 1453 Prince Road Windsor, Ontario N9C 3Z4	Telephone Number: (519) 257-5112 Fax Number: (519) 257-5242
Health Sciences Centre Occupational Therapy Department 820 Sherbrooke Street Winnipeg, Manitoba R3A 1R9	Telephone Number: (204) 787-2317
Drive Lab Inc/WRI Group-Woodbridge 145 Haist Avenue Unit 8 Woodbridge, Ontario L4L 5V4	Telephone Number: (905) 851-9391 Toll Free: 1-877-967-5522 Fax Number: (905) 851-8785

Physicians' Duty to Report Patients

In Ontario the law requires that physicians report patients who, in the opinion of the physician, may be unfit to drive for medical reasons. The mandatory reporting requirement for physicians is found in <u>Section 203</u> of the Highway Traffic Act. The requirement states:

- Every legally qualified medical practitioner shall report to the Registrar the name, address and clinical condition of every person sixteen years of age or over attending upon a medical practitioner for medical services, who, in the opinion of such medical practitioner is suffering from a condition that may make it dangerous for such person to operate a motor vehicle.
- No action shall be brought against a qualified medical practitioner for complying with this section.
- The report referred to in subsection (1) is privileged for the information of the Registrar only and shall not be open for public inspection, and such report is inadmissible in evidence for any purpose in any trial except to prove compliance with subsection (1). R.S.O. 1980, c. 198, s. 203.

Similar provisions are in place for optometrists to report visual conditions (<u>s. 204</u>).

This legislation has been in place since 1968 and was enacted at the request of the medical community. The request was made due to the medical community's concerns about their inability to persuade unfit patients to stop driving.

To simplify the reporting process, the Joint Ministry of Health and Long Term Care-Ontario Medical Association Forms Committee has worked with the Ministry of Transportation to develop a reporting form for legally qualified medical practitioners to use when reporting a patient.

Please complete the form on your computer. Indicate with an "X" the medical condition(s) you are reporting, and print for signature.

Mail or fax completed forms to:
Registrar of Motor Vehicles, Medical Review Section
Ministry of Transportation
2680 Keele Street
Downsview ON M3M 3E6

Fax: 416-235-3400 or 1-800-304-7889.

For your convenience, this form can also be saved on your computer for future completion and printing.

To ensure document recognition, please do not photocopy this form.

To obtain copies of the **Medical Condition Report form**:

- Download the Medical Condition Report (PDF 713 KB).
 To complete this PDF file, you will require Adobe Acrobat Reader.
- To order forms: e-mail driverimprovementoffice@ontario.ca, or call 416-235-1773 or 1-800-268-1481

How to Complete the Form

Physicians are required by law to provide the patient's name, address and the clinical condition; however, by including the patient's gender and date of birth, we can accurately identify the individual.

We suggest you keep a copy for your records. If you send by fax, please do not mail the original. To expedite your patient's file, please provide further elaboration of clinical condition (if available) or attach as a separate report: Diagnosis; Other Relevant Clinical Information (i.e. current status - including results of investigations, medication(s), treatment and prognosis); and whether or not the condition is a serious risk to road safety, threat to road safety is unknown or condition is temporary - weeks/months

What Conditions to Report

The Canadian Medical Association publishes the "Physician's Guide to Driver Examination" to assist physicians in determining which conditions may make it dangerous to drive safely. The guide is available from the Canadian Medical Association.

How the Ministry Determines Licence Status

The ministry considers the details of the individual's clinical condition reported by the attending physician, using guidelines established by the Canadian Medical Association, and advice from the Ministry's Medical Advisory Committee, whose members are experts in the fields of neurology, cardiology, psychiatry, endocrinology, ophthalmology, internal medicine, substance abuse, geriatric medicine and physiatry.

The ministry relies on information provided on this form to help identify individuals who are at significant risk so that immediate action to suspend the licence of any individual reported to have a chronic or deteriorating condition that is likely to impair judgement or psychomotor skills or to be experiencing recurring or unexplained episodes of loss of consciousness.

If an individual is reported to have a clinical condition that is well controlled and the individual is under physician care, the ministry generally does not suspend the licence. Where stability may be questionable, the ministry may request follow-up medical information to confirm stability or request the individual undergo a driving examination or other appropriate assessments.

Patient's Right to Access This Report

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act requires the ministry to provide your patient with a copy of this report if requested. It may be withheld only if there is evidence that its release would threaten the health or safety of you, the patient or another individual. *If you are concerned that the release of this*

report would threaten someone's health or safety, make sure you notify the ministry by checking the appropriate box on the front of this form or by calling the ministry at 416-235-1773 or 1-800-268-1481.

Driving and Dementia Pamphlet

In 2003 MTO developed a pamphlet with the Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington Dementia Network to educate physicians about reporting drivers with dementia. There is also a pamphlet available for patients and family members that is helpful in explaining the medical review process and dealing with a diagnosis of dementia.

These pamphlets are available online at www.pccchealth.org Click on Clinical Services then on the Geriatric Psychiatry section.

Optometrists Reporting Requirements

Like physicians, optometrists in Ontario are required by law to report to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles any individual who may be suffering from a eye condition that may make it dangerous to drive. Section 204 of the <u>Highway Traffic Act</u> states,

- Every member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario shall report to the Registrar the name, address and clinical condition of every person sixteen years of age or over attending upon the optometrist for optometric services who, in the opinion of the optometrist, is suffering from an eye condition that may make it dangerous for the person to operate a motor vehicle.
- No action shall be brought against a qualified optometrist for complying with this section.
- The report referred to in subsection (1) is privileged for the information of the Registrar only and shall not be open for public inspection, and the report is inadmissible in evidence for any purpose in any trial except to prove compliance with section (1).

To simplify the reporting process the Ministry of Transportation has a reporting form for optometrists to use when reporting a patient.

Mail or fax completed forms to:

Registrar of Motor Vehicles, Medical Review Section
 Ministry of Transportation
 (see mailing address and fax numbers in the left column of this page)

For your convenience, this form can also be saved on your computer for future completion and printing. To ensure document recognition, please do not photocopy this form.

To obtain copies of the **Vision Report to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles** form:

- download the Vision Report to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles (PDF - 000 KB). To complete this PDF file, you will require <u>Adobe Acrobat Reader</u>.
- To order forms: e-mail <u>driverimprovementoffice@ontario.ca</u>, or call 416-235-1773 or 1-800-268-1481

How to Complete the Form

Optometrists are required by law to report the name, address and clinical condition; however, by including the patient's gender and date of birth, we can accurately identify the individual.

We suggest you keep a copy for your records. If you send by fax, please do not mail the original. To expedite your patient's file, please provide further elaboration of clinical condition (if available).

Regulation 340/94 requires that,

A Class G, G1, G2, M, M1 or M2 driver must have:

(1) A visual acuity as measured by Snellen Rating that is not poorer than 20/50, with both eyes open and examined together with or without the aid of corrective lenses; and

(2) A horizontal visual field of at least 120 continuous degrees along the horizontal meridian and at least 15 continuous degrees above and below fixation, with both eyes open and examined together.

A Class A, B, C, D, E or F driver must have:

- (1) A visual acuity as measured by Snellen Rating that is not poorer than 20/30 with both eyes open and examined together and not poorer than 20/100 in the weaker eye, with or without the aid of corrective lenses; and
- (2) A horizontal visual field of at least 150 continuous degrees along the horizontal meridian and at least 20 continuous degrees above and below fixation, with both eyes open and examined together.

Where the horizontal visual field of a driver is to be determined,

- (1) it shall be measured without the aid of extraordinary optical devices that enhance or modify vision or that interfere with the horizontal visual field, such as telescopic lenses, prism lenses or sidebar prisms;
- (2) the visual field representation must include the central visual fixation point at its centre;
- (3) the continuous horizontal visual field shall not include the natural blind spot; and
- (4) the continuous degrees of the horizontal visual field that are required above and below fixation shall be continuous throughout the required continuous degrees along the horizontal meridian.

Note: Visual defects, disease or injury of a complex nature may require further assessment and will be reviewed on an individual basis in accordance with the mandatory vision standards found in Regulation 340/94 and with Ministry vision guidelines and standards.

Police Reporting

Police are required under Section 199(3) of the Highway Traffic Act to report all collisions within 10 days to the Ministry of Transportation. The standard collision reporting form includes information about the condition of drivers involved in the collision.

For a number of years, police services have also reported drivers to MTO who may be medically unfit to drive; these reports were typically received by MTO on police service letterhead.

In response to recommendations from three Coroner's Inquests, MTO partnered with representatives from MCSCS, MAG, municipal police services and the Ontario Provincial Police to develop a reporting form to assist police to report potentially unfit drivers to MTO.

In July 2006, a new standardized reporting form that police officers may fax to MTO 24 hours a day, seven days a week was distributed to all police services in Ontario. (Contact Us)

Police officers may use this new form to report drivers who come to their attention upon the investigation of a collision, public complaint, and/or exhibition of poor driving.

This new form standardizes reports to MTO and prompts police for critical information needed by MTO to make an informed decision on whether the driver poses a threat to road safety.

The form can be used to report to the ministry unsafe drivers requiring evaluation or investigation, including:

- Drivers with suspected medical impairment;
- Drivers who show signs of significant driving incompetence; or
- Commercial vehicle drivers involved in a collision and who have "fallen asleep" at the wheel.

In 2007, MTO received 1,490 police reports which include the new standardized form and reports received on police letterhead.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

The Medical Review Process – Suspensions and Downgrades

Why did my doctor or optometrist report my medical condition to the ministry?

Under the <u>Highway Traffic Act</u> (s. 203 and 204) both physicians and optometrists are required to report to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles any patient age 16 or over who may be suffering from a medical/visual condition that may impair driving ability.

I don't have a driver's licence. Why was I reported?

Physicians are required to report any individual age 16 or over. This is to ensure that that if you do decide to apply for a driver's licence, all the medical requirements will be addressed prior to a licence being issued.

What happens when MTO receives a report from my physician or optometrist?

When a report is received it is screened and prioritized in terms of risk to road safety. The medical information is assessed by applying the mandatory medical standards found in <u>Regulation 340/94</u> under the *Highway Traffic Act* and the <u>national medical standards</u>.

Why did MTO suspend my licence? I feel fine.

The ministry must balance the needs of the individual with the safety of all road users. The first priority must always be safety. If your medical report indicates that the medical standards for driving are not met your driver's licence will be suspended. A notice of suspension will be sent by mail. At the same time a letter will also be sent to you advising you of what medical information is required to have your case reconsidered.

When will my licence be reinstated?

Your driver's licence will be considered for reinstatement when the appropriate medical information is received and reviewed. If your report indicates that the medical standards are met, and there are no other outstanding suspensions on your driving record, a letter advising you of the outcome of the review and a notice of reinstatement will be mailed to you.

I have a medical condition that my physician feels may interfere with my driving ability. Does that mean I will automatically lose my driver's licence?

No, you will not necessarily lose your licence. Not all medical conditions impair ability to an extent likely to significantly interfere with driving ability. The ministry will review your medical report in conjunction with the established medical standards and will advise you of the outcome of the review.

How can I appeal the decision to suspend/downgrade my licence?

Under Section 50 of the *Highway Traffic Act* you can appeal a medical suspension/downgrade of your driver's licence to the <u>Licence Appeal Tribunal</u>.

My licence was suspended for failing to meet the vision standards. Can I appeal this suspension?

Only vision suspensions for a Class "G" licence that relate to the visual field portion of the standard can be appealed. The visual acuity standard is mandatory and cannot be appealed. For more information on vision standards for driving, please go to <u>Vision standards for Driving.</u>

My doctor said it's okay for me to drive now. When can I start driving?

The ministry prioritizes incoming medical reports according to the risk to road safety and by date received. They are processed on a "first come, first served" basis. Some cases are more complex and/or have technical test reports/results and require a review by the ministry's Medical Advisory Committee. Once your file has been reviewed and a decision is made you will be notified by mail. See question 14 below for more information on the reinstatement process.

How does the ministry prioritize medical reports?

Medical reports are prioritized according to the risk to road safety as either high risk or low risk.

High risk conditions are conditions that are chronic, deteriorating, unstable or progressive such as

- Advanced dementia or Alzheimer's disease
- Uncontrolled seizures or diabetes
- Substance abuse, psychiatric disorders with symptoms of suicidal thoughts, extreme agitation, impulsive or violent behaviour etc.
- · Uncontrolled sleep apnea refusing treatment

Low risk conditions are deemed to be those that do not pose an immediate or serious risk to road safety; conditions that are stable and/or temporary, such as

- Controlled sleep apnea
- · Seizure occurring one year ago or more
- · Controlled diabetes
- Heart disease
- · Reactive depression
- Cast/splints
- Stable psychiatric disorders

What is the fastest way for me to send my medical report to MTO?

The fastest way for us to receive your report is by sending it via fax. Our fax numbers are 416-235-3400 or 1-800-304-7889. When faxing in a medical report please ensure that you keep the original report (do not mail the original) and a copy of the fax confirmation slip. By having the confirmation slip this will help in locating your report if you call in prior to it being attached to your file. Follow up by calling in and checking the status of your file via the ministry's Integrated Voice Response system (IVR). The system will prompt you on what key to press and when to enter your driver's licence number. Note that there is a slight delay in the prompt to enter your driver's licence number. The prompt takes approximately 15 seconds so please do not hang up or return to the previous menu.

How long does it take for my report to be reviewed?

Due to the complexity of some cases, it can take 4-6 weeks for the review to be completed from the date at which all the medical information has been received by MTO. However, many cases are reviewed in less time. High risk cases are reviewed in 2-3 weeks. Reports requiring a review by MTO's Medical Advisory Committee tend to be within the 5-8 week range.

Where do I call to find out the status of my file?

To find out the status of your file you can call 416-235-1773 or 1-800-238-1481 (Ontario only). You can get up-to-date information regarding the status of your file by using the ministry's Integrated Voice Response (IVR) system. The system will prompt you on what key to press and when to enter your driver's licence number. Note that there is a slight delay in the prompt to enter your driver's licence number. The prompt takes approximately 15 seconds so please do not hang up or return to the previous menu.

How long does it take before I can resume driving once my licence is reinstated?

Once your medical report is approved and entered on the ministry's database your driver's licence is reinstated immediately. The actual licence card will take approximately 6 weeks, however, in most cases a temporary driver's licence is attached to your reinstatement notice. The reinstatement notice will come in the mail a few days after your reinstatement is processed. If you cannot wait to receive the reinstatement notice and would like to obtain a temporary licence sooner you can visit your local Driver and Vehicle Issuing Office, pay the required fee and receive a temporary licence.

Why can't I continue to use my old driver's licence?

When your driver's licence is suspended you are required to return your licence to the ministry. Each licence has a unique serial number. Whether you return it or not, it is no longer valid.

Driving Evaluations

Why is the ministry asking me to be assessed at a driving assessment centre?

Individuals who have been reported by a physician for a medical condition that may effect judgment, co-ordination or motor power may be required to undergo a formal driving evaluation with an occupational therapist at a ministry approved assessment centre.

The ministry will make a decision to request a driving evaluation based on information provided by the physician relating to the extent of the deficits resulting from the medical condition.

How will the ministry notify me if I am required to undergo a driving evaluation?

When the ministry requires the results of a driving evaluation to

determine licensing eligibility a letter is sent to the driver along with a list of approved driver assessment centres. The assessment must be received by the due date given in the letter otherwise your licence will be suspended.

Who is responsible for the cost of the driving evaluation?

The ministry is not responsible for the driving evaluation fees. The cost of the evaluation is set by the assessment centre and is not covered by OHIP. The cost generally ranges from \$500 - \$800, but in some cases may be more. In some cases, insurance companies may cover the costs of the evaluation (if the medical condition/injury is the result of a motor vehicle collision).

What does the fee include?

The fee includes the services of an occupational therapist and a driving instructor, the use of the vehicle, the associated insurance costs and the preparation of a detailed report.

What are the components of a driving evaluation?

The components of a driving evaluation are an in-clinic medical assessment and an on-road driving evaluation. It takes 3-4 hours to complete and must be performed by a qualified occupational therapist.

The in-clinic portion of the assessment includes:

- A brief medical history general medical information, previous and current medical concerns, lifestyle issues, level of functioning, perception/understanding of abilities and limitations (if any)
- Physical assessment results of all tests performed, evaluations relating to range of motion, joint movement, strength, sensation, balance, reaction time, mobility (entering and exiting the vehicle)

- Vision assessment results of a basic visual screening (e.g. visual acuity, peripheral vision, depth perception, night vision and glare recovery)
- Cognitive and perceptual assessments to determine if
 the individual has the necessary cognitive and perceptual skills
 required for safe driving including results of all tests relating to
 visual perception, concentration, reaction time, decision making
 speed, impulse control, judgement and knowledge of the rules
 of the road.

The on-road portion of the evaluation consists of an in-car examination including basic driving maneuvers.

How does the ministry approve driver assessment centres?

Driver assessment centres apply to be on the ministry's list of approved centres. These centers may operate out of a hospital as rehabilitation centres or independently as privately-owned occupational therapy clinics. Any centre interested in delivering this service and being on the ministry's list of approved Driver
Assessment Centres may apply to the ministry and have their application screened against our criteria.

Class G Vision Waiver Program

What is the purpose of the vision waiver program?

The purpose of this program is to allow for continued mobility for persons who can demonstrate their ability, through various tests, to drive safely, but who otherwise could not hold a licence under existing vision standards. This program is for applicants for or holders of Class G1, G2 or G driver's licences. This program does not include any other class of licence. Applicant for or holders of classified driver's licences (Classes A, B, C, D, E and F) must meet all vision standards for licensing.

What does "vision waiver" mean?

"Vision waiver" means that the Ministry will "waive" a part of the vision standards for Class G (G1 & G2) licence applicants/holders, in certain cases, provided certain conditions are met and the person can demonstrate their ability to drive safely.

What requirements are being "waived"?

The requirement that is being waived is the vision standard relating to horizontal visual field (120 degree requirement) for Class G, G1 and G2 licence applicants/holders. The visual acuity component of the vision standard remains mandatory and cannot be waived.

When did this program start?

May 29, 2005.

Where does the ministry get the authority to "waive" these vision requirements?

The authority to issue a vision waiver is found in Regulation 340/94

Will drivers with a vision waiver be permitted to drive outside Ontario?

Yes. A reciprocal agreement exists between provinces which allows the holder of any valid licence from one province to drive in another province.

Why are there so few assessment centres to conduct assessments for vision waivers?

As a result of the vision waiver program a functional assessment protocol was developed. At this time, MTO is pilot testing the protocol with locations in six existing centres. It is the ministry's intention to release a Request for Qualifications for Driver Assessment Centres to deliver driving evaluations across the province.

Who is eligible for this program?

An applicant for or a holder of a Class G, G1 or G2 driver's licence, or equivalent, who:

- Has a visual acuity as measured by Snellen Rating that is no poorer than 20/50 with both eyes open and examined together, with or without the use of corrective lenses
- Reduction in horizontal visual field occurred more than three months ago
- Does not have more than 6 demerit points on his/her driving record
- Has not had his/her driver's licence suspended within the last 5
 years as a result of a Criminal Code conviction for an offence
 committed by means of a motor vehicle
- Has not had his/her driver's licence suspended within the last 5 years as a result of certain Highway Traffic Act convictions
- Has not, within the last 5 years and within the time of vision loss, been involved in a collision with an associated conviction under the Highway Traffic Act for certain offences
- Meets all other qualifications for the applicable class of licence
- Does not have a medical or visual condition or disability that, alone or combined with a reduced visual field, may significantly impair driving ability.

Commercial Licence Medical Reports

How often do I have to submit a medical report for my commercial licence?

All applicants for a class A, B, C, E and F licence are required to submit a medical report on application

- Drivers under the age of 46 are required to submit a medical report every five years
- Drivers aged 46 64 are required to submit a medical report every three years
- Drivers aged 65 and over are required to submit a medical report annually

How will I know when my report is due to the ministry?

The ministry's computer system automatically sends medical forms 90 days before the date that the medical report is due. This will allow you enough time to schedule an appointment with your doctor and return the completed form to the ministry by the due date. The form will be mailed to the address showing on the Ministry's database.

Who can complete my report form?

The form can be completed by a physician or Registered Nurse Practitioner licensed to practice on Ontario.

What happens if I do not send in my medical report by the due date?

If your medical report is not received by the due date given on the form, your licence will be downgraded to the next class that you medically qualify for (e.g. Classes A, B, C will be downgraded to a class D; Classes E & F will be downgraded to class G). Once a satisfactory medical report is filed with the ministry, your licence will be automatically up-graded to the class previously held, provided there are no outstanding tests or other requirements.

What happens if I no longer meet the standards for a commercial licence?

If your medical report indicates that you no longer meet the medical standards found in Regulation 340/94 you may be given the opportunity to apply for a <u>waiver of the medical standards</u>.

Freedom of Information

Who has access to my information once a medical report is submitted?

All medical information submitted to the Ministry is confidential and is not open for public inspection. Medical reports are viewed by medical review staff and, in some cases, members of the Medical Advisory Committee when determining fitness to drive.

How can I get a copy of a report that my doctor sent in?

Pursuant to the <u>Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</u>, you can request a copy of information on your file. You can make such a request by calling the Medical Review Section at (416) 235-1773 or 1-800-268-1481.

Police reports cannot be released by MTO. To obtain a copy of a police report you must go to the appropriate police service.

Can my spouse call in on my behalf and get information about my file?

No. All medical information on file with the Ministry of Transportation is confidential. Staff will only discuss the case with the person to whom the information belongs to. If you wish someone to call in on your behalf you must provide a written consent for staff to discuss the details of your file with someone other than you.