

Licensing Requirements for Drivers Aged 75 and Over

Information Sheet

If you currently hold a Queensland driver licence and are approaching 75 years of age, there are a few requirements you will have to prepare for in order to continue driving into the future. This fact sheet aims to describe some of the licensing requirements drivers aged 75 and over can expect.

Medical certificate requirements when you turn 75

Currently drivers aged 75 years and older are required to carry a valid medical certificate every time they drive. This certificate is issued by a doctor who assesses and determines that you are medically fit to drive.

Your medical certificate will have a maximum validity of 13 months. You need to ensure your medical certificate remains current. Before your certificate is due to expire you will need to be reassessed and provided with a new certificate if you wish to continue to drive.

Being certified as medically fit to drive is mandatory regardless of whether or not you have a medical condition.

Please note: Certificates issued prior to 7 July 2017 will expire on the stated expiry date.

Things to do before you turn 75

Approximately six weeks before you turn 75 you should receive a letter from the Department of Transport and Main Roads (the department) advising you of the requirement to carry a valid medical certificate.

It is important that you make an appointment to see your doctor when you receive this letter. You may wish to advise your doctor that you need the appointment for a medical assessment for the purpose of driving as this type of assessment may take longer than a standard consultation.

Once you turn 75 you must not drive if you do not have a valid medical certificate.

Self assessment checklist

Before you see the doctor you should think about the sort of things that might make driving more difficult. Assessing your driving skills and being aware of early warning signs are the best way to make sure you're not putting yourself, your loved ones, or other road users at risk.

The following list provides some of the warning signs to give you an idea about your general fitness to drive and the sorts of things you should discuss with your doctor.

Do you:

- Suffer from any serious health conditions such as arthritis, epilepsy, a heart condition, high blood pressure or anxiety?
- Take medication that may impact on your ability to drive safely?
- Have near misses when driving?
- Have difficulty maintaining concentration while driving?
- Feel exhausted after driving for an hour or less?
- Have difficulty with glare from oncoming headlights, streetlights or other bright or shiny objects, especially at dawn, dusk and at night?
- Find it hard to turn your head, neck, shoulders or body while driving or parking?
- Have your passengers warn you about things on the road you may not have seen, or seen too late?
- Regularly need your passengers to give you directions, such as when it is clear to pass?
- Have difficulty reacting quickly to other driver's actions?
- Ignore or misinterpret traffic signs and signals?
- Fail to judge distances between cars correctly?
- Drive at inappropriate speeds, either too fast or too slow?
- Feel overwhelmed in heavy traffic?
- Become easily flustered or angry?

If you answered yes to any of the questions you should consider modifying your driving behaviour. You should also discuss your concerns with your doctor.

Medical assessment process and outcome

If your doctor determines that you are fit to drive, you will be issued with a medical certificate. Depending on your circumstances you may be assessed as being eligible for an unconditional licence or your doctor may recommend that you be issued a conditional licence.

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To help you maintain your mobility and safety, your doctor may recommend that your driver licence be subject to certain driving restrictions, which will be identified on your medical certificate, for example:

- Only driving in daylight or in off-peak hours
- Only driving within a set radius (e.g. 5km) from home
- Only driving between specific locations (e.g. home, shops and medical centre)
- Only driving a vehicle which has certain modifications
- No highway or freeway driving.

If your doctor needs further information to make an assessment they may require you to see a specialist or undertake a driving assessment with an occupational therapist to assess your fitness to drive. If this happens you may not be able to drive until the assessment is finalised.

Medical certificates issued to drivers 75 years and over will have a maximum validity period of 13 months. However, your doctor may require you to undertake more regular checks and your medical certificate will reflect this. This will depend on whether you have a medical condition that affects your driving and how often your doctor would like to monitor your condition. This is a decision that only your doctor can make.

If you are diagnosed with a long term or permanent medical condition that affects your driving, you are required to notify the department.

If your doctor has assessed you as medically fit to drive you only need to present your medical certificate to the department when you renew your driver licence, or if your driver licence has been damaged, lost or stolen. However, if you present your medical certificate to the department, you will receive a reminder notice before your medical certificate expires reminding you to obtain a new medical certificate.

In some cases, if your doctor considers that continuing to drive may be unsafe, you will be issued with a medical certificate indicating that you do not meet the medical criteria to hold a licence and that you should no longer drive.

When renewing your licence, you are still eligible to select from the range of terms available to everyone (up to five years).

Please note: Certificates issued prior to 7 July 2017 will expire on the stated expiry date.

Surrendering your licence

If your doctor recommends that you give up driving altogether, you will need to surrender your licence to the department. This can be done by mail (Department of Transport and Main Roads, PO Box 525, Fortitude Valley Queensland 4006), in person to a Customer Service Centre or Driver Licence Issuing Centre, or by proxy (a person with a letter of authorisation) on your behalf. If you continue to drive without a medical certificate or do not comply with a licence condition, you may face a fine in excess of \$2,400.

If you decide to surrender your driver licence voluntarily you may be eligible to receive an Adult Proof of Age card free of charge to give you an alternative form of photo identity.

For more information please attend a Department of Transport and Main Roads customer service centre or Queensland Government licence issuing centre, visit www.qld.gov.au or call 13 23 80*.

** Check with your service provider for call costs.*