

3 Transportation

This section provides information about driving programs, tips for driver safety, transportation options for those who do not, or cannot drive, and services available to help with transportation issues.

Mature Driving Programs	71
Driving Evaluations	74
Medical Conditions and Driver Safety.....	74
Alternatives for Non-Drivers.....	75
Statewide Services	76



MATURE DRIVING PROGRAMS

As we grow older, many of us find our ability to drive has declined. Much of this loss of driving skill may be attributed to physical and/or medical conditions brought on by aging or disability.

Many communities offer driving classes that may refresh a mature driver's ability to drive defensively. Such programs are available throughout the state of Florida. Where there are such classes, they can be a worthwhile investment for those who need to renew and refine their driving skills after years of driving by "habit." These classes not only provide an opportunity to reinvigorate vital skills, but also may further benefit seniors by providing discounts on auto insurance premiums.

Driving Programs

Among the programs available for those wishing to improve their skills and take advantage

of auto insurance premium discounts are the following:

AARP Smart Driver Course, offered by AARP Driver Safety, is the nation's first and largest refresher course designed specifically for drivers age 50 and older. For more than 35 years, the course has taught over 16 million drivers proven safety strategies so they can continue driving safely for as long as possible. Courses are offered in both English and Spanish in either a traditional classroom setting taught by more than 4,000 AARP-trained volunteers, or through an interactive online course that may be taken from your home computer at your own pace. AARP membership is not required to take the course. After completing the course, you'll receive a certificate of completion that can be presented to your insurance agent for a possible reduction in your auto insurance premiums.

To locate a classroom course, visit aarp.org/findacourse. Course times, dates, and locations will

AGE-RELATED FACTORS AFFECTING DRIVING

- Vision loss
- Hearing loss
- Slower reaction time
- Changes in physical strength
- Changes in physical stamina

COMMON PROBLEM AREAS AMONG OLDER DRIVERS

- Failure to yield
- Carelessness
- Merging into traffic
- Making left turns
- Following traffic signals
- Improper lane change
- Driving at night
- Impaired driving (including prescription and over the counter medication)

be listed along with a phone number to call to register. Or call toll-free 877-846-3299. To register for the online course, visit aarppriversafety.org.

Florida Safety Council – Mature Driver Course

This is an approved insurance discount course and is offered either in a classroom or online. The goal of this class is to help mature drivers over the age of 55 within the state of Florida maintain their safe and defensive driving skills, obtain auto insurance discounts, understand their abilities, and learn techniques to compensate for changes. This class also provides defensive driving training for court-ordered seniors. More information on both the classroom and online course can be accessed at floridasafetycouncil.org.

Driver Improvement Courses The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) sponsors many driving improvement courses geared toward seniors. Many of these classes are offered

during the day in order to more easily accommodate elders who avoid driving at night. Insurance premium discounts are also offered as a benefit of attending these classes. For more information, contact DHSMV at 850-617-2000.

A complete list of approved courses can be found by accessing the DHSMV website at flhsmv.gov/driver-licenses-id-cards/florida-granddriver/mature-driver-discount-insurance-courses.

Educational Information

There are several educational programs available to help you drive safer longer and help you when the time comes for you to stop driving. These programs include:

CarFit CarFit is an educational program created by the American Society on Aging and developed in collaboration with the American Automobile Association, AARP, and the American Occupational Therapy Association. CarFit offers

older adults the opportunity to check out how well their personal vehicles “fit” them. The program enhances the seniors’ safety as drivers and helps increase their mobility in the community. More information on CarFit is available at car-fit.org.

Florida Grand Driver

Program The Florida Grand Driver Program, operated by DHSMV, provides information about aging and driving. The Grand Driver Program urges drivers 65 and older and their adult children to learn more about the effects of aging on the ability to drive. The program is an education and outreach initiative that provides information and resources on driving safely and how to plan for safe transitioning from driving. More information is available on the program’s website flhsmv.gov/driver-licenses-id-cards/florida-granddriver or from DHSMV at 850-617-2000.

Florida’s Guide for Aging

Drivers The Florida Department of Transportation and the Safe



Mobility for Life Program in the State Traffic Engineering and Operations Office has been partnering with the Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy at FSU to facilitate a statewide coalition to address the specific needs of Florida's aging road users.

Working together with their member organizations, the Safe mobility for Life Coalition's mission is to implement a strategic plan to increase the safety, access, and mobility for aging and road users and eliminate fatalities and reduce serious injuries. Please view the Safe Mobility For Life Fact Sheet

at: www.safeandmobileseniors.org/pdfs/FactSheetMay2018.pdf. You can view the Florida's Aging Road User Strategic Safety Plan at: www.safeandmobileseniors.org/pdfs/FDOT_Aging_SafetyPlan_FINAL.pdf.

The Safe Mobility for Life Coalition developed a guide to help you continue to safely drive as long as possible. The guide also provides information and education about the importance of planning ahead for your transportation needs so that you can remain independent and active in your community as you

age in place. This guide is free. To request a copy, contact the Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy Safe Mobility for Life Resource Center at 850-644-8115 or request a copy online at www.safeandmobileseniors.org/Outreach.htm#guide.

Disabled Parking Permit Instructions and Application Florida Statutes provides for the issuance of a disabled parking permit to any disabled person who qualifies. Please review the form instructions to see if you are eligible to apply. flhsmv.gov/pdf/forms/83039.pdf

Disabled, Disabled Veteran or Motorcycle International Wheelchair Symbol License Plate Florida Statutes provides for the issuance of a wheelchair symbol license plate to any owner or lessee of a motor vehicle who qualifies. Please review the form instructions to see if you are eligible to apply. flhsmv.gov/pdf/forms/83007.pdf

DRIVING EVALUATIONS

Driving on today's modern highways can be unnerving for even the most cautious driver. As adults age, they should pay close attention to their driving habits and reflexes to determine if they should change or even cut back their driving activity. It is not uncommon for functional decline related to aging – such as vision, memory, physical strength, reaction time, and flexibility - to affect your ability to drive safely.

Driving is such a fundamental part of independence, and the decision to alter, reduce, or surrender driving privileges can be very difficult for everyone involved, from the driver to family, caregivers, and physicians. If you or your loved ones begin to feel uncomfortable with your driving abilities, a formal driving evaluation can be conducted.

The DriveABLE™ Assessment

The DriveABLE™ Assessment program provides an objective, scientifically based method to

determine if an individual should continue to drive. The DriveABLE™ assessment includes in-office and in-car evaluation components. These components measure decision-making, complex judgment, motor speed control, and short-term memory skills. The assessment includes a written report, which details any areas of concern and makes a professional recommendation about the individual's current driving ability. For additional information about DriveABLE™ or to find a location site near you, visit driveable.com.

Florida's Memory Disorder Clinics

Memory Disorder Clinics offer driving evaluations programs, mobility counseling, and community education regarding senior driving issues. These programs provide an objective assessment of driving safety and assess general strengths and weaknesses in driving performance. Recommendations for driving restrictions may be made, but are separate from

any government agency that regulates road safety. See the Resource Directory at the back of this guide to find a Memory Disorder Clinic near you.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND DRIVER SAFETY

Are you concerned about the driving ability of a family member or friend due to a medical condition? The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles makes it easy for anyone to report a driver who may be unsafe to operate a motor vehicle as a result of a medical condition. The report is strictly confidential. For additional information on how to report an unsafe driver or to obtain a medical reporting form, visit flhsmv.gov/driver-licenses-id-cards/florida-granddriver/medical-reporting-medical-review-process.

After receiving the medical reporting form, DHSMV investigators will advise the driver that he or she is under medical review. The driver may

be asked to provide medical information from his or her physician as a part of the investigation. Investigators may also interview family members or neighbors as well. Once the medical information is received and reviewed and the investigation is complete, DHSMV's investigators and the Medical Advisory Board provide a recommendation regarding the individual's ability to drive. This recommendation may be to:

- Require additional information from the driver;
- Require the driver to re-take the driving test; or
- Revoke/deny a license.

If a license is denied/revoked, the driver may request an administrative hearing to appeal the decision.

For information on how to report unsafe driving, visit flhsmv.gov, call 850-617-3814 or email medical@flhsmv.gov. You can

also get detailed information in the *Medical Conditions & Driver Safety Brochure* found at flhsmv.gov/courts/latestinfo/ABrochureForMedicallyAtRiskDrivers.pdf.

The medical reporting form can be found online by visiting flhsmv.gov/forms/72190.pdf.

ALTERNATIVES FOR NON-DRIVERS

Many older adults may have difficulty finding transportation to social events, medical appointments, and other daily activities. A decision to stop driving is not an easy one, but it does not have to mean a complete loss of independence. Many cities have public transportation systems, para-transit services, taxis, and Dial-A-Ride programs. The Safe Mobility for Life Coalition developed Find a Ride Florida; it is an online listing of transportation service providers in all of Florida's 67 counties. FindaRideFlorida.org

QUICK FACT:

Dial-A-Ride provides door-to-door service in many Florida communities. Charges for these services are usually assessed on a low per-mile fare basis.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

- Public door-to-door service
- Private taxis and Dial-A-Ride services
- Church, civic, and volunteer groups
- Bus (or other public transportation)
- Ride sharing

The local Area Agency on Aging also has a complete listing of transportation options in their service area. See the Resource Directory at the back of this guide to find an Area Agency on Aging near you.

Public Transportation

Public transportation frequently offers discounted senior rates and often offers wheelchair accessibility. This may provide a low-cost option for senior non-drivers. Your local transit authority can provide information regarding routes, fares, and schedules. A minimum co-payment may be required.

Para-transit Service

Para-transit service is a door-to-door transportation program administered by Florida's Transportation Disadvantaged program, and is available to seniors in every county. This service includes pick-up and drop-off from your home to medical appointments, stores, and other authorized destinations. Eligibility is determined before pick-up, and trips must be reserved at least one day in advance. Para-transit services vary from county to county. For information, contact your case manager or

the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged at 1-800-983-2435.

Ride Sharing

Ride sharing consists of two or more people sharing rides in a common vehicle. Ride sharing can be done through carpooling or "vanpooling." You do not need to own a vehicle to participate. Contact family, friends, and neighbors to explore ride-sharing opportunities if they do not already exist in your community.

Information about driving alternatives in your community may be obtained through the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged at 1-800-983-2435, or you can call the Elder Helpline at 1-800-96-ELDER (1-800-963-5337). You can also contact the Florida Senior Safety Resource Center at the Department of Transportation at fssrc.php.ufl.edu.

STATEWIDE SERVICES

Florida's Department of Transportation offers statewide information on travel conditions and provides roadside assistance.

My Florida 511

The Department of Transportation's free 511 Travel Information System provides bilingual (English and Spanish) real-time travel reports on all Florida interstate highways; toll roads, including Florida's Turnpike, Miami-Dade Expressway Authority roads and Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority roads; and many other metropolitan roadways. The statewide system provides information on roadway conditions such as commuter travel times, congestion, construction, lane closures, severe weather, crashes, and emergency evacuation affecting traffic. Callers can access traffic, transit, travel times, airports, seaports, or request information on a specific roadway, city, or county. My Florida 511 is available 24 hours a day by dialing 511, or on the Web at FL511.com.

The following types of information are provided statewide for travelers throughout Florida, and are regularly updated by the Florida Department of Transportation:

- Traffic Warnings and Updates,
- Traveler Information,
- Highway Construction Information,
- Traffic Information System, and
- Statewide 511 Travel Information.

Road Rangers Service Patrol

The Road Rangers Service Patrol is an effective element of the Florida Department of Transportation's incident management system. Examples of incidents are traffic accidents, stranded motorists, and road debris.

Road Rangers patrol congested areas and high-incident locations of Florida's urban freeways to spot problems before they can escalate

into major traffic issues. The Rangers' vehicles are equipped to help drivers with such items as booster cables, jacks, sand, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, reflective cones. The vehicles are white and display a Road Rangers logo on the rear and sides.

The program has helped to:

- Reduce the number of accidents,
- Remove road debris,
- Reduce incident duration by assisting the Florida Highway Patrol, and
- Help disabled or stranded motorists.

This program has enhanced safety and provided a service to the motoring public.

The Road Ranger Service Patrol is funded by the Florida Department of Transportation and its partners. This limited service is free. For Road Ranger assistance dial *FHP (347).

INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE 511 SYSTEM

- Traffic reports and drive-time summaries on highways
- Public transportation information
- Information on airports
- Information on ports



QUICK FACT

For Road Ranger assistance dial *FHP (347)