



**COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

# **Shifting Gears Older Driver Safety**

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# Agenda

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- Age-Related Changes
- Warning Signs of Unsafe Driving
- Driver Fitness
- Driver Training
- RMV License Renewal Policies
- How to Make an Appointment
- Massachusetts Traffic Safety Laws
- Safe Driving Resources



# Most Older Drivers Regulate/Limit Driving

- Self-Imposed limits
- Drive familiar roads
- Avoid driving at night
- Avoid high traffic hours
- Less likely to use mobile devices while driving
- Ages 55-74, involved in fewer crashes than other age groups *(IIHS, 2020)*

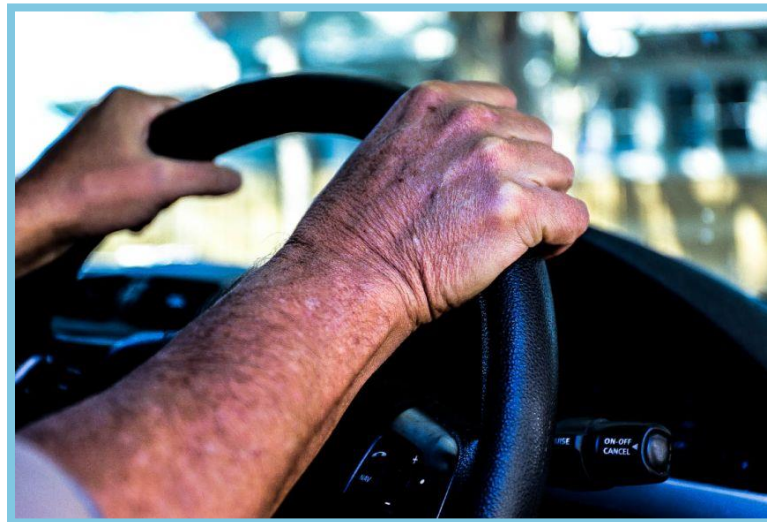


# Crash Rates Increase With Age

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Highest Crash Rate - Drivers 75+ years

Highest fatality rate – Drivers 80+ years



# Medical Conditions

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## Functional Impairments:

- Vision
- Reaction Time/Reflexes
- Cognitive Ability
- Hearing



# Divided Attention

Divided Attention is problematic, especially for older drivers:

- Talking w passengers
- GPS & mobile devices
- Eating/drinking
- Adjusting controls
- Pain



Driving is an extremely complex task.

Driver makes 25+ decisions within one mile.

(AOTA)

# Set Do Not Disturb!

## Hands-free while driving. It's the law!



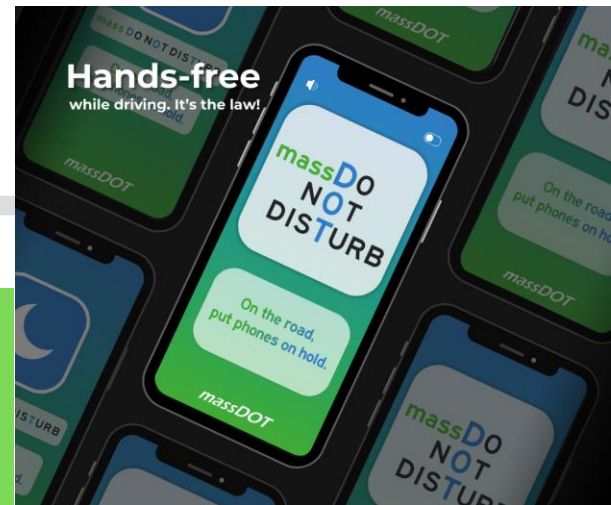
Turn on **DO NOT DISTURB**

**iOS:**

Swipe down from the top right corner to access Control Center, then tap the crescent moon icon.

**Android:**

Swipe down twice from the top of the screen, then tap the "Do Not Disturb" tile.



Hands-free  
while driving. It's the law!

# Medications

- Certain medications may impact driving
- Drivers 65+ are more likely to use prescription medications
- MGL Chapter 90, Section 24 *Operating Under the Influence* (O.U.I.) includes prescription and over the counter medication







## Warning Signs of Unsafe Driving

- Difficulty seeing at night, dusk, or dawn
- Difficulty keeping up w/ speed limit
- Being intimidated by passing vehicles
- Difficulty seeing police officer on detail
- Getting lost on once familiar roads
- Scratches, dings, dents or near misses
- Easily distracted while driving
- Difficulty following detours

Sources: "RMV Safe Driver Checklist" and "We Need to Talk"



## **Most Common Collisions: Right of Way**

- Intersections
- Turning left
- Merging
- Changing lanes
- Exiting from parking lots
- Exiting from driveways
- Backing up



## Improve Driver Physical Fitness

Driving requires agility, flexibility, range of motion & strength.

- Daily/Weekly Exercise & Stretching
  - 2.5 to 5 hours moderate exercise weekly (CDC)
- Suggested Exercises/Stretches:
  - head rotation
  - chin to chest
  - trunk rotation
  - foot circles



Driving requires brain systems to work together.

(Source: Harvard Medical)

## Improve Cognitive Fitness

- Daily/Weekly exercise, especially cardio
- Living near green space (The Brink/BU)
- Practice mindfulness
- Visualization
- Learn new skills; language; music; books
- Socialize
- Book discussion groups



## **Driver Training Programs & Resources**

- AARP – Driver Safety Class (4 hours)
- AAA – *Roadwise* Driver (online)
- CarFit – AOTA, AAA & AARP Event
- Local Driving School Instruction
- Driving Evaluation @ Hospital

# What's Your Driving Retirement Plan?

Prepare for *Driving Retirement* Now

- Women outlive driving ability by 10 years
- Men outlive driving ability by 7 years



# How to Plan for Driving Retirement

- Plan Ahead – mobility can change, even temporarily
- Identify/Assess
  - Where have you driven recently?
  - How would you get there if you didn't drive?
- Research Types of Services Available in Area
  - Public Transportation
  - Local Shuttle Vans
  - Friends & Family
  - Ride Sharing Services
- Create a Transportation Savings Account



# Worried About An Older Adult's Ability to Drive?

Have the conversation sooner rather than later in life.

- Provide alternatives to driving
  - Councils on Aging
  - MassMobility
  - Public Transportation
  - Travel Trainers
  - Ride Sharing
  - Volunteer Drivers
- Be respectful & understand their needs and wishes
- Connect with friends or community members who have voluntarily retired from driving

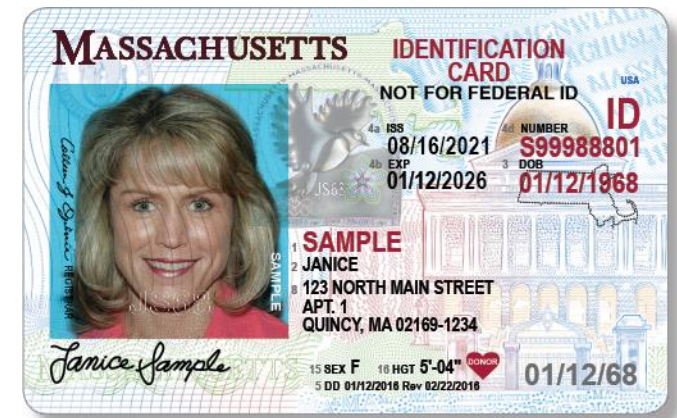




# Driver's License is a Privilege Not a Right

Mass ID card, free of charge, with completed License Surrender Affidavit, if license is valid & unexpired.

- Complete [License Surrender Affidavit](#) & send it and driver's license to Medical Affairs
- License Surrender Affidavit is for medical reasons
- Medical clearance will be needed to have the license reissued



# In Person License Renewal - Age 75

Massachusetts General Law, [MGL c.90, § 8](#), requires in-person license renewal starting at age 75. License holder must take and pass a vision screening test at the RMV or must provide a *Vision Screening Certificate* completed by eye doctor.



# Appointment Line for Customers Age 65+

License holders age 75+ must renew in person.  
RMV is by appointment only.

## To Make an Appointment...

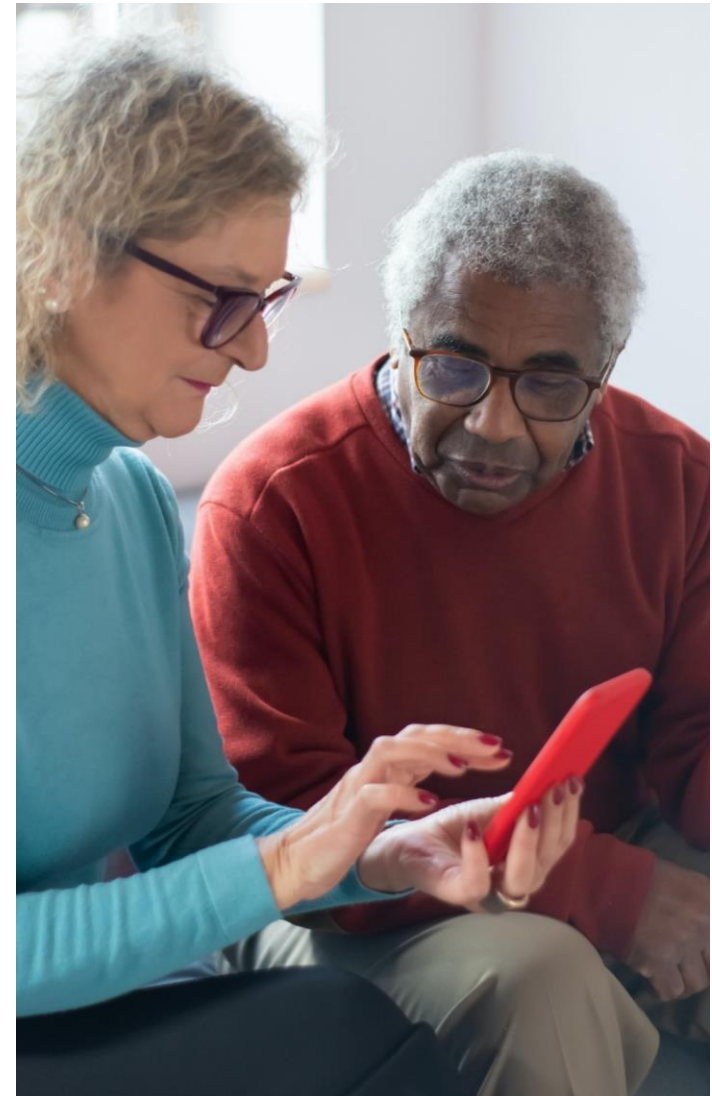
- 1. Call** (857) 368-8005; or
- 2. Click:** [Make/Cancel a Reservation](#) . Select “Appointments”, then select “Schedule a Service Center Appointment”, then select “Driver’s License and ID Services for Existing Driver’s License and ID Holders”; or
- 3. Email:** [MassDOTRMVSeniors@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:MassDOTRMVSeniors@dot.state.ma.us)

# Recent Massachusetts Laws

- **Vulnerable Road User Law (2023)**
  - Leave at least 4 feet when passing vulnerable user
  - Pedestrians; Cyclists; & people using Wheelchairs; Skateboards, rollerblades; horse-drawn carriages & farm equipment traveling on road.
- **Wipers On = Headlights On (2017)**
  - Motorists must have their headlights on when using windshield wipers
- **Move Over Law (2009)**
  - Motorists approaching emergency/ maintenance vehicle, with flashing lights, Must move over to next adjacent lane, or if not safe to move over, You must Slow Down while passing vehicle.
  - Includes: Police and Fire vehicles, Ambulance, Tow Trucks, and DPW or Highway vehicles.

# Resources

- [Mass.Gov/RMV Older Driver Safety](#)
- [Your Health and Driving Safely](#)
- [Safe Driver Checklist](#)
- [At the Crossroads - Family Conversations about Alzheimer's Disease, Dementia, & Driving](#)
- [MassMobility Transportation Resources MassDOT](#)
- [\*We Need to Talk - The Hartford/Safe Driving for a Lifetime\*](#)





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Visit [Mass.Gov/RMV](https://www.mass.gov/RMV) for more information.

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