

# Before Starting the Conversation About Driving...

You may have reasons for talking to your loved one about their driving. Even if you do not see warning signs, it is wise to make a plan before there is a crisis.

## Some warning signs to look for:

- ▶ Multiple dents and scrapes on the driver's vehicle
- ▶ They hit a mailbox or other object
- ▶ They are confused when driving or forget their way home

## Some common problem areas:

- ▶ Making left turns
- ▶ Driving at night
- ▶ Merging into traffic
- ▶ Changing lanes
- ▶ Yielding to traffic
- ▶ Following traffic signals
- ▶ Impaired driving (prescription and over-the-counter medication)



## Events that can help start a conversation:

- ▶ The person is having surgery
- ▶ They comment about problems with night vision
- ▶ They have lost a partner and are worried about being the sole driver



## Know what options and help is available, for you and for them.

- ▶ A primary care provider can help identify warning signs and other issues.
- ▶ Driver rehabilitation specialists work with people of all ages and abilities, exploring alternative transportation solutions for drivers with special needs. This includes helping older drivers and their families master the challenges of diminishing driving skills.
- ▶ Many self-evaluation options are available to help the individual reach the right conclusion. You can review them with the loved one.

## Printed Resources

Access to local resources are available in the Florida's Guide to Safe Mobility for Life. To receive a free copy contact:  
Safe Mobility for Life Resource Center  
P.O. Box 3061121  
Tallahassee, FL 32306  
[contact@safemobilityfl.com](mailto:contact@safemobilityfl.com)  
850-644-8426

## On-line Resources

The Hartford's "Family Conversations with Older Drivers"  
[thehartford.com/talkwitholderdrivers](http://thehartford.com/talkwitholderdrivers)

University of Florida's Fitness-to-Drive Screening Measure  
[fitnesstodrive.php.ufl.edu](http://fitnesstodrive.php.ufl.edu)

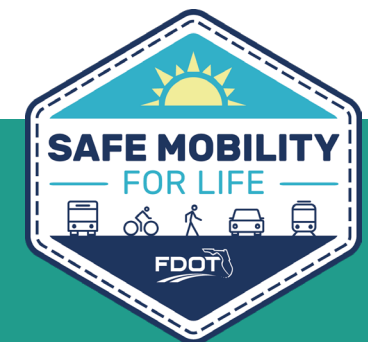
Find a Driver Rehabilitation Specialist  
[www.aota.org/olderdriver](http://www.aota.org/olderdriver)

FLHSMV Medical Reporting/Medical Review Process  
[flhsmv.gov](http://flhsmv.gov)  
Search option > Medical Reporting

# Families & Caregivers



## Tips for Talking with Aging Drivers About Safe Driving Concerns



[SafeMobilityFL.com](http://SafeMobilityFL.com)

# How to Start a Conversation

You may feel that there never is a good time to bring up the issue but proper planning and preparation can help.

A family member or caregiver should talk about safe driving to ensure the older adult drives safely for as long as practical. Involve the individual in the plan for what to do when they cannot drive safely. Remember, it is not just the individual's safety that is affected. Everyone on the road can be affected by an unsafe driver.

Do not wait for a crisis! Start talking now!

## Use a script and plan what to say.

Do not get discouraged by what you think their response will be. Write down every point that you want to get across to them and make sure you say it to them. They will hear you, even if at first they are resistant.



## Follow these tips to create your script:

- ▶ Use "I" messages instead of "You" messages, e.g. "I am concerned about your driving," rather than, "You are not a safe driver."
- ▶ Focus on the driver's skills, not their age.
- ▶ Assure them the goal is to maintain their independence while staying safe.

## Be informed about aging issues.

- ▶ Learn about effects of aging on driving ability.
- ▶ Find out how to use adaptive equipment.
- ▶ Explore what community transportation options are available.

## How NOT to say it:

- ▶ Do not bring it up at a family gathering.
- ▶ Do not bring it up during another stressful situation.
- ▶ Do not threaten or bully.

## How to say it:

- ▶ Be calm at all times, even if they become defensive or withdrawn.
- ▶ Be respectful and recognize that the older adult has years of driving experience.
- ▶ Be supportive since alternatives to driving may not be apparent to the older adult who feels they will lose their independence.

## When necessary:

- ▶ Limit access to the vehicle or keys.
- ▶ Medically impaired drivers of any age who may pose a threat to public safety, can be reported confidentially to the Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV).

To get a copy of the FLHSMV Medical Referral Form please contact:

### Division of Motorist Services

Attn: Medical Referral Section

Neil Kirkman Building, MS 86

Tallahassee, FL 32399-0500

Phone: 850-617-3814

Email: [medical@flhsmv.gov](mailto:medical@flhsmv.gov)

[flhsmv.gov/pdf/forms/72190.pdf](http://flhsmv.gov/pdf/forms/72190.pdf)



## What happens after a driver is reported?

The FLHSMV carefully reviews the Medical Referral Form to ensure the information is valid. Depending on the findings, the driver may be required to:

- ▶ Submit a medical report from their doctor for review by the Medical Advisory Board; or
- ▶ Take a re-examination (vision, written, or driving test).

The Medical Advisory Board considers all available facts including the driver's medical history, driving record, and any unsafe driving events. Their recommendation may be to:

- ▶ Require the driver to submit additional medical reports; and/or
- ▶ Require the driver to re-take the driving test; or
- ▶ Deny the license.

If a driver license is denied, the driver may provide additional or updated medical information for reconsideration by the Board.

**“Any physician, person, or agency having knowledge of any licensed driver’s or applicant’s mental or physical disability to drive...is authorized to report such knowledge to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles...”**  
Section 322.126(2), (3), Florida Statutes.