

# Families & Caregivers



Talking with Aging Drivers About Safe Driving Concerns



[SafeMobilityFL.com](https://www.SafeMobilityFL.com)

# Before Starting the Conversation About Driving...

Talking about driving with someone you care for is tough – but important. Even if you do not see warning signs, it is wise to understand the impact that aging can have on safe driving skills and make a plan before there is a crisis.

## Some warning signs to look for:

- > Unexplained dents and scrapes on the driver's vehicle
- > Confusion when driving
- > Getting lost or disoriented in familiar places
- > Decline in visual and spacial skills

## 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:

- > Upcoming surgery or hospitalization
- > Expressing concerns with seeing at night
- > Loss of a partner who was the primary driver



Visit [fdot.tips/caregivers](https://fdot.tips/caregivers) or scan the QR code to find more resources that address safe driving concerns.



## Know what options and help is available:

- > 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.
- > Visit [FindaRideFlorida.org](https://FindaRideFlorida.org) to discover available transportation options to help create a transportation plan.

# How to Start a Conversation

A family member or caregiver should talk about 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.

Be proactive, not reactive. Start talking now!

## Plan in advance what to say

First, it is important to learn and understand all the places your family member or friend currently visits in their personal vehicle. The loss of being able to get around without driving can be overwhelming and needs to be addressed. Write down your concerns and ideas on how the individual's transportation needs will continue to be met.

## 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 age.
- > Assure the driver the goal is to maintain independence while staying safe.



Scan the QR code to download the Medical Referral Form 72190 or write to FLHSMV:



Bureau of Motorist Compliance  
Attn: Medical Review Program  
Neil Kirkman Building, MS 86  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0500

## Be informed about aging issues:

- > Learn about the effects aging can have on driving ability.
- > Find out how to use adaptive equipment.
- > Explore what community transportation options are available.

## When necessary:

- > Limit access to the vehicle or keys.
- > Anonymously report any medically at-risk drivers who pose a threat to public safety to the Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV).

## What happens after a driver is reported?

The FLHSMV carefully reviews the Medical Referral Form 72190. 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 information 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 information; and/or
- > Require the driver to take a re-examination; or
- > Cancel the license.

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



WHAT TO DO	WHAT NOT TO DO
Remain calm, even if the individual becomes defensive or withdrawn.	Avoid bringing it up at a family gathering or celebration.
Be respectful of the fact the driver may have years of driving experience.	Do not bring it up during another stressful situation.
Show support. A change in driving routine can be overwhelming to anyone.	Never threaten or bully.

**“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), Florida Statutes.**

# Safe Mobility for Life Resource Center

Florida's Safe Mobility for Life Coalition has many resources to help aging road users stay safe and mobile.

**Visit:**

[safemobilityfl.com/resourcecenter.htm](https://safemobilityfl.com/resourcecenter.htm)

**Email:**

[contact@safemobilityfl.com](mailto:contact@safemobilityfl.com)

**Call:**

833-930-2952



**Visit:**

[flhsmv.gov/driver-licenses-id-cards/  
medical-review](https://flhsmv.gov/driver-licenses-id-cards/medical-review)

**Email:**

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

**Call:**

850-617-3814



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

