

Customer service guide for **drivers** with a **medical condition**

For more information go to www.direct.gov.uk/driverhealth



The role of our Drivers Medical Group

Our Drivers Medical Group promotes road safety by deciding whether drivers who have medical conditions are fit to drive safely. To do this, we employ fully qualified medical advisers (doctors) who are supported by administrative staff.

What we need from you

- If you already hold a driving licence and you develop a medical condition, the law requires you to tell us about any condition that may affect your ability to drive safely. If you are involved in an accident and it is found that your health condition was a contributing factor, you may be prosecuted and your insurance may not be valid. To check what conditions you need to tell us of you can visit **www.direct.gov.uk/drivingandmedicalconditions** You must also let us know if a medical condition you have already told us about gets worse. Your GP will be able to give you advice on whether you should drive while medical enquiries are being made.
- If you are applying for a driving licence, the application form has a health section which you must fill in. You must tell us if you suffer from any of the medical conditions listed on the form. Once we have received your application, the law allows you to drive as long as:
 - you have held a licence before
 - you are not disqualified, and
 - you have not been, and would not be, refused a licence for medical reasons.

Details of this are on the application form.

What happens next – stage 1

- Firstly, we will normally ask you to fill in a medical questionnaire to give us more details about your condition. To save time you can get this from **www.direct.gov.uk/driverhealth**.
(This may not be needed if you are applying for a lorry or bus licence and you have provided a medical examination report (D4) with your application.)

- We will also ask you to give our medical adviser permission to ask for medical information from your doctor, if we need this. You can provide your consent by signing the consent and declaration page attached to the questionnaire.

This can be returned to us by post to:

- Drivers Medical Group, DVLA, Swansea, SA99 1TU
- e-mail to eftd@dvla.gsi.gov.uk
- fax to 0845 850 0095.

What happens next – stage 2

- If possible, we will make a decision based on the information you provide.
- If we need more information, our medical adviser may:
 - contact your doctor or consultant (or both)
 - arrange for you to be examined by a local medical officer or specialist; or
 - ask you to take a driving assessment, eye test or driving test.

What happens next – stage 3

Once the medical adviser has all the information he or she needs, we will make a decision about your licence.

The decisions we make

- You may be able to keep your licence or get a new one.
- We may give you a driving licence for a period of one, two or three years if the medical adviser decides that your medical fitness to drive needs to be reviewed in the future.
- You may get a driving licence which states that special controls need to be fitted to the vehicles you drive so you can overcome the effects of a physical disability.
- We may withdraw your licence or turn down your application. We will only do this if our enquiries confirm that, as a result of your medical condition, you are not fit to drive.

If we have to take this course of action we will:

- explain why we made this decision and, if possible, tell you when you can reapply for your licence, and
- send you a notice which will explain your right to appeal to a magistrates' court if you live in England or Wales, or to a sheriff court if you live in Scotland.

How are the medical standards on fitness to drive set?

- Standards for safe driving are set by the EC Directive 91/439/EEC and are based on the advice of the Secretary of State's Honorary Medical Advisory Panels.
- There are six separate panels covering the major conditions and disorders. The panels are made up of experts from particular medical fields. These experts provide advice on how the particular medical conditions affects safe driving.
- The panels meet regularly and will review the standards in the light of medical research and advancements in medical science.
- There are higher standards in place for driving lorries and buses (because of the size and weight of the vehicle and also the length of time drivers may spend at the wheel).
- The standards for driving are set out in a booklet 'At a glance guide to the current medical standards of fitness to drive' which is available on our website for GPs and consultants to view. Go to **www.direct.gov.uk/driverhealth** and click on medical standards.

Applying the medical standards

- Our medical advisers apply these standards and decide on whether a person is fit to drive.
- The law on issuing driving licences is contained in the Road Traffic Act 1988 and The Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations 1999.

Our standards of service

We aim to provide a polite and efficient service.

We also aim to complete our enquiries as quickly as possible. The time we take to deal with your case depends on the medical condition you have and the information we have to gather.

- If you provide enough information we aim to make a decision within 3 weeks.
- If we need to carry out further investigations, we aim to reply within 90 working days.

We will keep all the information provided by you or your doctors confidential and use it only for the purposes allowed by law. Under the Data Protection Act and for a small fee, you will be entitled to see the personal information. However, our registration under the act allows us to withhold certain information.

How you can help us

You can help us improve our service by doing the following.

- Filling in all forms clearly in black ink and CAPITAL LETTERS.
- Making sure you fill in all the relevant parts of the forms.
- Give us as much detail as possible about your medical condition.
- Giving us full details (name, address, email address and fax number) of your doctors. This includes all doctors who may be treating you. You will have to give these details if we send you a medical questionnaire to fill in.
- Quoting your medical case number (this will be on any letter we have sent you), your driver number or your full name and date of birth when you contact us.
- Telling us about any change in your medical condition.

General information

- There is general information on driver licensing in booklet 'Driving Licences' (D100). You can get this from us, Post Office® branches and DVLA local offices. You can also get more information at **www.direct.gov.uk/driverhealth**

Further information and how to contact us

Visit

www.direct.gov.uk/driverhealth

By phone

Car drivers and motorcyclists: 0300 790 6806

Lorry and bus drivers: 0300 790 6807

between 8am and 5.30pm Monday to Friday, and between 8am and 1pm on Saturdays (car/motorcycle drivers only).

If you have hearing or speech difficulties, contact us by textphone on 0300 123 1278. This number will not respond to an ordinary phone.

By post

You can contact us at:

Drivers Medical Group

DVLA

Swansea

SA99 1TU.

By fax

0845 8500095

By email

eftd@dvla.gsi.gov.uk

Please quote your medical case number, driver number or full name and date of birth.

If you are following up a letter you have received from us, please phone the number on the letter, or write to the person named on the letter, quoting our reference.

If you are not happy with the service you have received, you should first contact the person you have been dealing with.

If you need more information on our complaints procedures, you can get the leaflet 'How to contact us or make a complaint', (INS101) from www.direct.gov.uk/motoringleaflets

