

Criteria for a Fit to Drive Program

The three main areas that need to be kept in mind when developing a Fit to Drive Program are:

- 1) Understand individual physical abilities and limitations as well as an individual's mental capacity.
- 2) Organizations and drivers should honestly communicate regularly and respectfully regarding changes in abilities and limitations.
- 3) Plan accordingly to accommodate changing driver privileges

How Aging Affects Driving

1. Sensing: We need to use our eyes and ears to help us drive safely. When our eyesight and hearing diminishes as we age, this can impact one's ability to drive safely, therefore drivers, especially those above 55 years of age can be at a higher risk for accidents.
2. Deciding: The ability to process information as we drive is a critical part of safe driving. Those who are mentally sharp and can process information quickly can handle challenging situations behind the wheel. As we age, especially over 55 years of age, deciding can become more challenging for drivers and can increase one's risk for an accident.
3. Acting: The final step to safe driving is being able to act quickly after we have sensed a situation and decided what needs to be done to avoid an accident. Our physical skills such as using our arms, hands, legs and feet are very important in acting (maneuvering and/or braking) to steer clear or stop to avoid an accident. If we have physical limitation, this can become challenging for drivers.

Elements of a Fit to Drive Program -

1. How Age Affects Driving
2. How Medications Affect Driving
3. Assessing an Older Drivers Skill
4. Helping an Older Driver Cope
5. Retiring From Driving
6. Overcoming Resistance

NOTE: See Exhibit VI-3.2 for Guidelines on How to Help an Older Driver and More Information on Elements of a Fit To Drive Program.