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INTRODUCTION

This guide for aging drivers, their families and caregivers was created by DRIVE SMART COLORADO www.drivesmartcolorado.com with support from Michigan and Florida. DRIVE SMART COLORADO is a non-profit with a mission to reduce traffic crashes and deaths through community collaboration and education. DRIVE SMART COLORADO founded an Older Driver Coalition in 2014 with a mission of their own: Address safe driving and transportation needs of seniors by providing resources to support independence so they remain integral members of their community as they transition from drivers to passengers.

We all want to maintain our independence as we get older. For many people, their independence is linked to their car. Drivers who use smart self-management to review their driving skills can retain their independence longer, while limiting risks to themselves and others.

It is important to understand how aging and aging-related changes in health status affect the ability to drive safely. This guide is intended to help with that understanding. It also provides references to where more information and services may be obtained.
POPULATION FACTS

Like the rest of the United States, the population in Colorado is getting older. The total population of Colorado in 2013 was 5,264,894. Out of that, 651,527 (12 percent) of Colorado residents are 65 or older. The Colorado State Demography Office (SDO) projects the 65 and over population will increase by 160 percent by 2040.

Today’s older adults continue to drive into their later years and for more miles than in the past. Research suggests that older adults can expect to outlive their ability to drive safely by seven to 10 years.

ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT: GENERAL SAFETY AND OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

Colorado and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) have made roadway changes to help residents with visual and physical issues associated with aging, including:

Colorado and the Colorado Department of Transportation specifically, was an early adopter of roundabouts to improve intersection safety. Examples include several I-70 interchanges in the mountain corridor area, I-25 north of Denver, etc. During major projects, CDOT often installs roundabouts in place of regular intersections to improve safety.

CDOT has recommended “protected left turn traffic signal phases” (left on green arrow only) as a general safety policy to reduce the frequency of “approach-turn” crashes. This type of signal phasing helps everyone to more safely make left turns.
CDOT actively upgrades intersections with what are called “mast arm” traffic signal pole configurations (often mounted at all four corners of the intersection). This replaces the old diagonal “span wire” mounted traffic signals. The new mast arm mounting allows individual traffic signal “heads” to be positioned over each driving lane to improve signal visibility and understanding.

CDOT, along with many local agencies, are upgrading to the larger 12 inch signal heads/lenses from the older 8 inch lenses whenever improvements are made to intersections. New brighter and highly visible LED lenses are also often installed during intersection upgrades. CDOT also adds signal head back plates to help signal discernibility against bright or cluttered backgrounds. Similarly, yellow reflective strips are often added around the edges of these back plates to help with both daytime and night signal conspicuity.

For general pedestrian safety, countdown pedestrian signals and longer walk phase times are being phased into many intersections during upgrades.

The use of advance street name signs and advance warning signs have also been a staple of CDOT highway design. These give drivers a “look ahead” which allows them to prepare for a change in the driving regime or help with navigation.

Ongoing testing and reviewing of improved pavement marking methods and materials are occurring that eventually will assist the driving public to better negotiate roads both day and night and in inclement weather.
LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

Individuals Over the Age of 65
Colorado residents may hold a Colorado driver’s license OR Colorado ID card - not both.

Driver licenses:
• May not renew their driver’s license online (C.R.S. 42-2-118 (1.5) (a) (I)).
• May renew their driver’s license in an office.
• May renew-by-mail every other renewal cycle (licenses or ID cards that were valid for 10 years are not eligible to renew by mail).

Identification Cards:
First time applicants or those wishing to step down from a driver’s license to an identification card must visit an office.
• Individuals over the age of 60 wishing to obtain an identification card in lieu of a driver’s license may do so at no charge (over 60 years old FREE).
• 65 years of age and older: may either visit an office or renew online/by mail every time (ID cards that were valid for 10 years are not eligible to renew online or renew-by-mail).

• You must provide enough documentation to prove your name, date of birth, identity and lawful presence in the United States
• You must provide your Social Security number or show your original, non-laminated Social Security card
• You must provide proof of address. Proof of address is anything that shows your name and current residential address such as vehicle registration, check book, bank statement, utility bill, rent agreement, pay stub, school record, medical record, etc.

Renew Your ID Card:
Reduce your wait time and schedule an appointment online. You may renew your adult ID card any time prior to the expiration date - you shouldn’t wait until it expires.

For additional information please call: 303-205-5694.

RE-EXAMINATION
Re-Examination Of Driving Skills:
Why do I have to take a re-exam when my license hasn’t expired yet?
There are several reasons that the State may require you to come in and take a re-examination. When you have two accidents on your record within three years of each other, we will ask you to take a re-examination. You may also be asked to take a re-examination if a family member or doctor feels, for medical reasons, you should take a re-examination. A law enforcement officer may also file an incident report requesting that you take a re-examination.
How do I request a re-examination for a family member?
The department can request a driver to take a re-examination based on written information received from a doctor, a law enforcement agency, a court or an immediate family member. You must call the Department of Revenue and request a DR2401 or send a letter to request a re-examination.

Can the request for re-exam be kept confidential?
The request cannot be kept confidential. The driver has the right to know why he/she is being required to take a re-examination. The driver can upon proof of identification and a $2.20 fee be provided a copy of the written information used by our office to request the re-examination.

What if the family member in question has medical issues?
If the driver has medical issues the family member should contact the driver’s doctor and have the doctor provide a written request for the re-examination.

Can re-examinations be extended if I can’t take my re-examination?
Re-examinations cannot be extended unless requested by a doctor. The doctor must provide, on letterhead, the reason for the extension and the length of the extension. If the extension time period is to be longer than two weeks from the original time request then the restraint will go into effect. When the driver is able to take and pass the re-examination on the first attempt, the action will be rescinded.

Colorado State Law
How is the driver notified that he/she needs to take a re-examination?
The driver is notified by mail that he/she has twenty days from the date of the correspondence to take a re-examination. The letter informs the driver to contact the nearest full service driver’s license office. Be sure to keep your address current with the Department of Revenue because the notice will be sent to the address on file. You have thirty days to notify the department when you change your address (42-2-119).

A re-examination (vision, written and driving) will be required for one or more of the following reasons:

- Involvement in 2 crashes within 3 years.
- Involvement in a fatal crash.
- Incident report from any law enforcement agency.
- Medical report from a doctor.
- A family member submitting a written request.

The notice of re-exam allows the driver 20 days to complete the re-exam (pass or fail). Failure to complete the re-exam within 20 days will result in cancellation and denial of your driving privilege. After you have taken the examination, your license may be returned, you may be issued a license or permit with restrictions, or your driving privilege could be canceled and denied depending on the results of the examination.
42-2-111. Examination of applicants and drivers - when required

(1) (a) The department shall examine every applicant for a driver’s or minor driver’s license. The executive director of the department, in the director’s discretion, may conduct the examination in any county convenient for the applicant. The examination shall include a test of the applicant’s eyesight, his or her ability to read and understand highway signs that regulate, warn, and direct traffic, and his or her knowledge of the traffic laws of this state, an actual demonstration of the applicant’s ability to exercise ordinary and reasonable care and control in the operation of a motor vehicle, and such further physical and mental examination as the department finds necessary to determine the applicant’s fitness to operate a motor vehicle safely upon the highways; except that an applicant seeking renewal of a driver’s license by mail under section 42-2-118 need only submit the information required by that section.

(2) Repealed.

(3) (a) If the department has evidence that indicates that a licensed driver or minor driver is incompetent or otherwise not qualified to be licensed, it may, upon written notice of at least ten days to the licensee, require such driver to submit to an examination.

   (b) If a fatal motor vehicle crash involving one or more licensed drivers or minor drivers occurs, the department, if deemed appropriate, shall mail a written notice to all such drivers involved in the crash requiring such drivers to submit to examination. If the department has not mailed a written notice to any driver involved in a fatal crash within ninety days after the department receives notice regarding such crash, the department shall not require an examination of such driver based upon such crash.

   (c) Upon the conclusion of an examination required under this subsection (3), the department shall take such action as it deems appropriate and may deny, cancel, suspend, or revoke the license of such person or permit that person to retain such license subject to the restrictions under section 42-2-116. Refusal or failure of the licensee to submit to such examination shall be grounds for suspension or revocation of such person’s license. Such decision of the department shall be reviewed by a court of record upon appeal to that court by the party aggrieved.

(4) The department shall prepare and print rules, requirements, and regulations for the mandatory use of license examiners and the same shall be strictly adhered to in the examination of all drivers.
42-2-112. Medical advice - use by department - physician immunity

(1) In order to determine whether any licensed driver or any applicant for a driver’s license is physically or mentally able to operate a motor vehicle safely upon the highways of this state, the department is authorized, pursuant to this section and upon the adoption of rules concerning medical criteria for driver licensing, to seek and receive a written medical opinion from any physician, physician’s assistant, or optometrist licensed in this state. Such written medical opinion may also be used by the department in regard to the renewal, suspension, revocation, or cancellation of drivers’ licenses pursuant to this article. No written medical opinion shall be sought pursuant to this section unless the department has reason to believe that the driver or applicant is physically or mentally unable to operate a motor vehicle safely upon the highways of this state.

(2) In addition to the written medical opinion sought and received pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, the department may consider a written medical opinion received from the personal physician, physician’s assistant, or optometrist of an individual driver or applicant. Any written medical opinion requested by the applicant or driver from a personal physician or optometrist shall be provided to the department at the expense of the applicant or driver. Any written medical opinion required by the department shall also be at the expense of the applicant or driver.

(3) No civil or criminal action shall be brought against any physician, physician’s assistant, or optometrist licensed to practice in this state for providing a written medical or optometric opinion pursuant to subsection (1) or (2) of this section if such physician or optometrist acts in good faith and without malice.

(4) A written medical opinion received by the department which relates to an individual applicant or driver is for the confidential use of the department in making decisions on the individual’s qualifications as a driver, and the written medical opinion shall not be divulged to any person, except to the applicant or driver, or used in evidence in any trial or proceeding except in matters concerning the individual’s qualifications to receive or retain a driver’s license.

(5) Written medical opinions received by the department pursuant to this section, in addition to other sources of information, may be used by the department in the adoption of administrative rules concerning medical criteria for driver’s licensing.
REPORTING UNSAFE DRIVERS

Reporting an unsafe driver to the Colorado Department of Revenue, Division of Motor Vehicle (The Department) may be through referrals for driver re-examinations from medical professionals, law enforcement, family members and/or Driver Licensing staff. All information provided remains confidential to the extent permitted by law. Anonymous tips cannot be accepted.

Physicians and optometrists are not required but may report to the Department a patient’s mental and physical qualifications to operate a motor vehicle as required by law.

Upon the Department receiving a report the Department will issue a notice to the driver and the driver is required, per existing law, to request a re-exam of their driving ability and/or provide documentation that they have met the physical or mental requirements per the physicians recommendations.

AM I SAFE TO DRIVE?

For most adults, the driver’s license is the most important document that offers mobility and independence. Many of us see cars as physical extensions of ourselves that take us wherever we want, whenever we want. However, the time may come when driving is no longer a safe option. The decision to stop driving is never an easy one. However, the key for a positive transition from driving to being a passenger is planning.

Warning Signs/Self-Assessment

Our driving skills may deteriorate slowly so that we are unaware of what is happening. Self-awareness is the key to safe driving. The self-assessment below, taken from the Physician’s Guide to Assessing and Counseling Older Drivers (published by the American Medical Association) can help you decide if you should have your driving abilities evaluated.

If you check any of the boxes on the following safety assessment, your safety or the safety of others may be at risk when you drive. Talk with your doctor about ways to improve your safety if you are experiencing any of the conditions or symptoms that may be affecting your ability to drive safely. If you notice one or more of these warning signs you may want to have your driving assessed by a driver rehabilitation specialist, request a driver re-examination with the Colorado Department of Revenue - Motor Vehicle Division or attend a driver’s refresher class.
Check the box if the statement applies to you:

☐ I get lost while driving.
☐ My friends or family members say they are worried about my driving.
☐ Other cars seem to appear from nowhere.
☐ I have trouble finding and reading signs in time to respond to them.
☐ Other drivers drive too fast.
☐ Other drivers often honk at me.
☐ I feel uncomfortable, nervous, or fearful while driving.
☐ After driving, I feel tired.
☐ I feel sleepy when I drive.
☐ I have had some “near-misses” lately.
☐ Busy intersections bother me.
☐ Left-hand turns make me nervous.
☐ The glare from oncoming headlights bothers me.

☐ My medication makes me dizzy or drowsy.
☐ I have trouble turning the steering wheel.
☐ I have trouble pushing down the foot pedal.
☐ I have trouble looking over my shoulder when I back up.
☐ I have been stopped by the police for my driving.
☐ People no longer will accept rides from me.
☐ I have difficulty backing up.
☐ I have had crashes that were my fault in the past year.
☐ I am too cautious when driving.
☐ I sometimes forget to use my mirrors or signals.
☐ I sometimes forget to check for oncoming traffic.
☐ I have more trouble parking lately.

FAMILY AND CAREGIVER INVOLVEMENT

Families, friends or caregivers can be effective in helping you with the issues of aging and safe driving. It is important for everyone involved to prepare to start this conversation by knowing and understanding:

- Signs and symptoms indicating driving problems (warning signs/self-assessment).
- Tips on observing the older adult’s driving abilities.
- How to understand the meaning of driving from the loved one’s perspective.
- Suggestions on how to begin the driving discussion.
- How best to talk about appropriate driving choices and alternative ways to travel around the community.
- Community resources for driving evaluation and remediation.
- Strategies for driving reduction or retirement of the car keys.
- Local transportation options.
This conversation can be difficult for everyone involved but do not let the following reasons stop you from having it:

- Apprehension about the older driver’s response.
- Fear of being disrespectful.
- Isolation of the older driver if they live alone.
- Burden on others for rides.
- A crisis (crash) has not yet occurred.

Developing a transportation plan early can be a solution for everyone to maintain quality of life and independence when driving may no longer be a safe option.

Most older drivers alter their driving habits as they age. However, it is not always obvious when their actions behind the wheel are cause for concern. That is when the actions of family, friends, a physician or law enforcement become important. There are many organizations that have developed resources to help older drivers and their caregivers make driving decisions. One example, the Hartford Advance 50 Team, together with the MIT AgeLab, created free publications to help families address sensitive subjects and foster meaningful family conversations about older driver safety. For more information please visit: www.thehartford.com (search older driver). AARP offers a free online seminar called “We Need to Talk.” The course teaches how to assess a loved one’s driving skills and provides tools to have this important conversation. For more information please visit: www.aarp.org/driving36.

**CHANGES IN DRIVING BEHAVIOR**

Family members or caregivers need to be aware of potential problems affecting safe driving when the older adult:

- is forgetful or confused;
- uses bad judgment when driving;
- fails to follow the rules of the road;
- cannot see where they are going;
- exhibits aggressive driving;
- drives well below the speed limit;
- experiences multiple traffic crashes (dents or dings on the car); or
- neighbors, friends or others indicate there is a problem.
DOCTORS AND THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY

Doctors and health care providers are also important partners for you in planning your safe driving needs. They can help you be more aware of how medical conditions may affect your physical or mental function that can impact your safe driving fitness. When the effects of a medical condition are progressive, periodic evaluations are required. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s (NHTSA) Driver Fitness Medical Guidelines (www.nhtsa.gov/Driving+Safety/Older+Drivers), medical conditions that affect safe driving can fall into these three categories:

- Conditions that create functional limitations.
- Conditions that involve a possible loss of consciousness.
- Use of substances (alcohol, drugs and medications) judged to be incompatible with safe driving.

DRIVING SKILLS ASSESSMENT

Consider having an evaluation of your driving. A driver rehabilitation specialist can help you determine how a visual, physical or mental condition may be affecting your ability to drive safely. They will also help you develop and implement a plan for how you may drive safely despite your limitations. In some cases, simple changes in driving habits might make driving safer or simple vehicle adaptive devices can help you continue to drive safely. Some examples of adaptive vehicle equipment available are large side mirrors, seat belt adaptors, pedal extenders, steering wheel turning knobs, braking devices and seat lifts.

Your local hospital’s occupational therapy department may be able to help you locate a driver rehabilitation program in your area. There are driver evaluation programs that use Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialists (CDRS). The Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists (ADED) www.ADED.net, the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) website also has a directory to find driver rehab specialists at http://myaota.aota.org/driver_search/index.aspx/index.aspx
For Colorado, the following programs employ CDRS and are open to the public:

**Fitness to Drive**
Penrose Hospital
Colorado Springs, CO
(719) 776-5200
www.penrosetestfrancis.org/psf/specialties/rehabilitation-services/fitness-to-drive-driving-rehabilitation-program/

**Adaptive Driving Program**
Spaulding Rehab
Aurora, CO
(303) 367-1166
http://spaldingrehab.com/service/adaptive-driving-program

**Adaptive Driving Program**
Center for NeuroRehab
Services
Ft. Collins, CO
(970) 493-6667
http://www.brainrecov.com

Driver education schools are another resource for refreshing, assessing or improving your driving skills. Contact schools in your area to see if they offer the services you are interested in. Keep in mind that there is no regulation of ‘older driver assessors’ in this capacity.

**SAFETY TIPS FOR ROAD USERS**

We all want to maintain our ability to go where we want, when we want, especially as we grow older and enjoy more leisure time. Self-awareness is the key. People who can accurately assess their fitness to drive can adjust their driving habits and stay safe on the road. With smart self-management, you can retain the independence that comes with driving, while limiting the risks to yourself and others.

**Self-Regulation Tips**
Many older drivers self-restrict their driving to avoid risky situations. Some common strategies are to:

• drive only during the daylight if you are having trouble seeing at night;
• drive only during good weather conditions;
• avoid rush hour and heavy traffic;
• avoid fast-paced highway driving; and
• avoid driving in unfamiliar areas.

A few additional strategies older drivers should consider are:

• If left turns are a problem or make you nervous, make three right turns, make left turns at traffic lights with a turn arrow or pick a less busy intersection for your left turn.
• Map out safe routes, such as those with well-lit streets, less traffic, left turns with left-turn arrows, clear signs and easy parking.
• Drive with a friend.
• Let someone else drive when you are uncomfortable.
Safety Tips for Drivers

All drivers should:

- not drive impaired (alcohol, recreational or medical marijuana, prescription drugs or other potentially impairing substances);
- always wear your eyeglasses, if applicable, and make sure they are a current prescription;
- avoid distractions while driving, such as mobile phones, eating, pets, etc.;
- always wear a seat belt;
- avoid driving while taking medications that make you drowsy or dizzy;
- drive when rested and avoid driving for long periods;
- choose a vehicle that has a comfortable fit, provides maximum visibility and minimal physical strain;
- take care of your car by making sure it stays well-tuned, there is plenty of gas, has proper and safe tire tread and keep lights, windshield and mirrors clean;
- make sure all objects and occupants are secured so they do not become airborne during a crash;
- look twice before turning as most crashes occur at intersections;
- make sure to always signal when changing lanes;
- increase following distance during inclement weather;
- drive slowly when approaching a crosswalk and be prepared to stop for pedestrians;
- stop far enough in advance so drivers in other lanes can also see the pedestrian in time to stop;
- not pass other vehicles that are stopped for pedestrians;
- keep at least three feet between your vehicle and a bicyclist when passing;
- be aware that pedestrians and bicyclists may cross your intended path if you are waiting for a gap in traffic to safely make a turn;
- check your blind spots before changing lanes or merging, especially in heavy traffic;
- give yourself extra time to respond by leaving at least a four-second distance between your car and a motorcycle in front of you;
- be aware of pedestrians, bicyclists and motorcyclists as they can be very hard to see, especially in bad weather or at night; and
- give a full lane to a motorcycle when passing, and do not share lanes.
The decision by an older driver to retire the car keys can be loaded with symbolism of physical decline, dependence and aging. It is understandable why relinquishing this “signature privilege of adulthood” is often difficult for drivers and uncomfortable for the driver’s family to discuss. The Driver Planning Agreement (DPA) also known as Advance Driving Directive (ADD) is a document to help address this sensitive issue. The purpose of the agreement, or directive, is for the older driver to name the person that he/she wants to initiate the discussion about continued driving (or retiring the keys) when the time is right. Unlike a health care Power of Attorney (which transfers decision making about medical decisions to the agent at the appropriate time), the DPA/ADD does not appoint someone to make the “stop driving decision” for the driver. Rather, it is a conversation starter about the older driver naming a person that they would like to have bring up this touchy, and often emotional, subject.

To download a hard copy of the Driver Planning Agreement, please go to www.drivesmartcolorado.com/programs/older-adult-driver.
SAFETY TIPS FOR WINTER DRIVING

Note: Four-wheel drive (4WD) vehicles do not stop faster on ice than two-wheel drive (2WD) vehicles. The heavier the vehicle, the longer it takes to stop.

• Always wear your seat belt!

• Maintain Traction: Make sure your tires have good tread, keep tires at the car manufacturer’s recommended pressure and routinely check tire pressure during cold weather. Consider carrying chains in your vehicle during winter months. Start and stop gradually to avoid losing traction; drive at steady speeds; accelerate slightly when approaching a hill, then maintain a steady speed going up; and gear down on downgrades.

• Skids: If your vehicle begins to skid, remove your foot from the accelerator or brake, steer in the direction of the skid and once steady, turn the wheel straight and proceed.

• Braking: Be gentle with braking pressure; know what type of brake system you have – gently pump disc brakes to avoid locking the wheels. Locking your wheels will send your vehicle into a skid (anti-lock brakes will provide this action for you) and avoid braking on a curve by driving through them at a safe, steady speed.

• Slow down! Most crashes occur by driving too fast for conditions.

• Use your low-beam headlights in bad weather, especially where snow is falling or blowing heavily. Leave extra space between you and the vehicle ahead of you.

• Wash your car for better visibility to other drivers and remove ice and snow from all lights, windows and the license plate before driving.

Be prepared for the unexpected. Have an emergency kit in your vehicle in case you become stranded. This should include items such as: cell phone and charger; an extra winter coat, pants, hat, boots and gloves; blanket; nonperishable food; flashlight with batteries; dry container of matches; jumper cables; tow strap; first-aid kit; shovel; salt or sand; road reflectors or emergency warning lights; and a spare tire and jack. If stranded, stay in your vehicle, turn on your flashers, call for help and wait until help arrives.

In addition to an emergency kit, be sure to check your vehicle to make sure it is in safe operating condition. Check the windshield wiper fluid, heater/defroster, wiper blades, antifreeze, lights, fuel system, ignition, exhaust system, tire tread, battery and brakes and have a full tank of gas to keep the fuel line from freezing.
SAFETY TIPS FOR PEDESTRIANS

• Avoid roads and interstates where pedestrians are restricted or prohibited.
• Use extra caution at intersections.
• Only cross in a marked crosswalk, especially on multi-lane and higher speed streets.
• Use sidewalks when provided. When there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic on the shoulder of the roadway.
• Make it easy for drivers to see you by dressing in light colors and wearing reflective material both in front and back.
• Use a flashlight at night or in dimly lit locations.
• Do not count on drivers always paying attention.
• Make eye contact with drivers to be sure they see you.
• Watch where you are going at all times.
• Avoid any alcohol or drugs, which can impair your ability to walk safely.

SAFETY TIPS FOR BICYCLISTS

• Always ride with traffic and follow the rules of the road.
• Do not ride on the sidewalk.
• Ride on the trail, paved shoulder, bike lane or bike route.
• Make it easy for drivers to see you by dressing in bright colors and wearing reflective material both in front and back.
• Watch for debris that might make you fall or swerve.
• Watch for turning traffic.
• Wear appropriate safety gear, including a helmet.

SAFETY TIPS FOR MOTORCYCLISTS

• Get properly trained and endorsed.
• Wear appropriate safety gear, including a helmet, gloves, boots, eye protection and a jacket to protect you in a crash.
• Bright colors and reflective materials will increase your visibility.
• Be extra cautious, paying attention to the signals and brake lights of other vehicles, especially trucks.
• Conduct a safety inspection of your motorcycle before each ride.
• Watch your speed, especially in bad weather or at night.
• Never hang out in another vehicle’s blind spot.
KEEPING SAFE WHILE DRIVING

To keep you safe while driving, it is important to know the resources that are available in Colorado.

CarFit
CarFit is an educational safety program created by the American Society on Aging and developed jointly with the American Automobile Association (AAA), AARP and the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). CarFit is designed to keep you safe and comfortable by improving the “fit” between you and your vehicle. CarFit helps promote safe driving conversations while providing you information about transportation safety and mobility resources available in your community. CarFit checkups are free, fun and don’t take much of your time.

Trained volunteers will help you learn things such as:

- what is the clear line of sight over your steering wheel?
- what is the proper position of your vehicle seat and all mirrors?
- what is the safe distance between you and your air bag?
- what is the proper use and fit of your seat belt?
- To find a CarFit event near you, visit www.car-fit.org.

Driver Safety Courses
Refresh your knowledge of safe driving practices, traffic signs and roadway features by taking a driver safety class. Classroom and online classes are available. To find a course near you, contact your local AAA branch or AARP Smart Driver Program.

- AAA: www.seniordriving.aaa.com
- AARP Smart Driver: www.aarp.org/driving36

THE IMPACT OF AGING ON DRIVING

Most people see a steady decline in some of the skills important for driving as they get older. Generally, starting at age 55 there often is a slow decrease in how well we process information, remember and judge driving events, such as the distance of oncoming traffic. However, the changes of aging do not affect all drivers in the same way. Specific skills, such as vision, memory, strength, flexibility and quick reaction time decline as we age but the rate varies from person to person. Your health is closely connected to your driving. You must be able to see well enough to detect hazards in different types of lighting, judge distances, adjust to the speed of traffic and read road signs. Your brain must be alert enough to quickly decide the correct course of action in any type of traffic situation, including unexpected ones.

Your body must also be able to respond and react quickly. Driving presents particular challenges to older adults because of changes in vision, cognition and physical function. The increased use of medications as we get older may affect
driving as well. It is your responsibility to understand how your limitations affect your driving. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) “Older Drivers” web page (http://www.nhtsa.gov/Driving+Safety/Older+Drivers) provides links to a series of pamphlets that address the more common medical conditions that affect an older person’s ability to drive safely, such as Alzheimer’s, arthritis, cataracts, stroke, etc. You may also contact NHTSA for free traffic safety information at 888-327-4236. The website (www.nhtsa.gov/Driving+Safety/Older+Drivers) also provides information for medical professionals, with two noteworthy publications: Driver Fitness Medical Guidelines and the Physician’s Guide to Assessing and Counseling Older Drivers.

Vision
The main sense you use in driving is vision. Visual decline is the most important loss for aging drivers.

Aging eyes need:
- more light to help distinguish features along the roadway;
- to be closer to properly read traffic signs and markings; and
- more time to recover from the glare of bright headlights at night or the sun.

It is important that you see well to help ensure safe driving. Have your eyes checked as recommended by a vision specialist. If you wear glasses or contact lenses for driving, please remember to:
- always wear them when you drive, even if you are only traveling a short distance. If your driver’s license indicates that you must wear corrective lenses and you are not wearing them, it may result in missing a stop sign, getting involved in a crash or receiving a ticket.
- keep an extra pair of glasses in your car in case your regular glasses get broken or lost. This will also help if you only use glasses for activities such as driving and you forget your regular pair when you get in the vehicle.
- avoid wearing dark glasses or tinted contact lenses when driving at night, even if you think it will help with headlight glare. Dark or tinted glasses/lenses can shut out light. You need as much light as possible to help you see clearly when driving at night.

Hearing
Good hearing is important because it alerts you to the sirens, horns and other audio cues needed to drive. Hearing often changes as you get older. You should see your audiologist or other hearing specialist regularly because it is important to maintain your hearing, and wear hearing aids if necessary. It is as important to keep a hearing aid up-to-date as it is the prescription for your eye glasses or contacts. Avoid turning your
hearing aid down (or off) even if you think that it reduces distraction.

**Medication**
Roadwise RX is a free confidential online tool developed by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety that adults can use to explore how medications may affect safety behind the wheel.  
www.seniordriving.aaa.com

**Cognition**
Cognition is the act of processing information for knowledge and understanding. It includes your ability to think, use your senses, pay attention, learn, read, and problem solve. Driving is a very complex activity that requires you to use many of these skills whether you are driving a short or long distance.

Driving is a complex task that requires you to process and remember several objectives simultaneously, such as how to operate your vehicle in all kinds of conditions, what traffic signs and signals mean and how to get to your destination safely. You must be able to do all these things while processing all other information you encounter when you are behind the wheel.

**Faulty cognition may result in:**
- distraction or disorientation as you are driving;
- problems maintaining control of your car for long distances;
- slower response to traffic signs, signals or markings;
- trouble recognizing changes in traffic conditions, traffic hazards and emergencies;
- delayed reaction to seeing and responding to the position of other cars, trucks or motorcycles as they change lanes or as you enter the roadway;
- trouble recognizing and safely responding to pedestrians and bicyclists;
- problems properly operating the controls in your car, such as confusing the brake and gas pedals;
- improper use of your turn signal to warn other drivers when your car is turning or changing lanes; or
- trouble planning and safely maneuvering your driving route. Frequently becoming lost or confused when driving. This can result in panic and sudden irrational changes while driving, such as losing control of your car.
Dementia
Dementia is a decline of cognition due to loss of or damage to nerve cells in the brain and can affect many of the critical abilities you need to drive safely. These may include perception and visual processing, maintaining attention, responding to multiple stimuli, making correct decisions, and acting appropriately in difficult traffic situations. People in the early stages of dementia may still be able to operate a vehicle under normal circumstances but will have increased difficulty as the disease progresses. The NHTSA Driver Fitness Medical Guidelines lists the following signs to help determine if a person needs evaluation for possible dementia:

- Scores from simple screening tools show possible cognitive issues.
- Has had a recent crash or moving violation.
- Has been prescribed medications for memory problems.
- Uses medications, such as tranquilizers, benzodiazepines, neuroleptics, or antidepressants.
- Is 80 years or older.
- Has a recent history of falls.

Physical Condition
As we age, we usually lose muscle mass and bone strength, which increases your chances of injury or death in a crash. Drivers age 65 or older have four times the odds of sustaining serious injuries compared to drivers under age 24. Aging can also result in sensory issues in your hands and feet, such as tingling, numbness, and problems telling where they are positioned. These can affect your ability to feel, grasp, manipulate or release objects. Loss of strength results in trouble keeping a firm grip on your steering wheel or keeping consistent pressure on the pedals with your legs and feet. Decreased flexibility may cause rigidity or limited range of motion in the neck, torso, arms, legs or joints. Vertigo, dizziness, or loss of balance can occur, along with muscle spasms or tremors that may cause you to lose control of your vehicle.

Common Driving Errors
Taking into consideration how aging effects your driving, these are the most common problem areas:

- Making left turns
- Driving at night
- Merging into traffic
- Changing lanes
- Keeping up with the flow of traffic
- Yielding to traffic
- Following traffic signals
- Impaired driving (including prescription and over-the-counter medication)
RETIREMENT FROM DRIVING

Those of us who drive want to continue driving as long as we can do so safely. However, for many of us, the time will come when we must limit or stop driving for our safety and the safety of others. Consideration should be given to the transportation options available in the area where you plan to retire. You may want to choose a location closer to services or one that has access to alternative transportation options.

Develop a Transportation Plan

Currently, nine out of 10 older adults prefer to grow old in their own homes. However, in order to “age in place” comfortably you need access to transportation when you are no longer able to drive safely. If you have no other transportation options, you may feel forced to continue driving even when it is no longer safe or stop driving altogether and stay home, which can lead to isolation and depression. Learn about your transportation options now, create a transportation plan, and try them out. Options you may have in your area include bus and trolley services, senior shuttles, walking, friends and family, taxis, community driving services, etc.

- If you are concerned that you do not know how to use public transportation, there are programs available that help people learn how to use them, or you can ask a friend to accompany you.

- Ask questions about the services and schedules of each type of transportation available to you, including whether they offer evening or weekend rides.

- The costs associated with taxi cabs and other fee-for-hire transportation services can be offset by the savings you’ll realize once you’re no longer paying for owning, maintaining, insuring and parking your car.

- Using alternate transportation releases you from the worries of driving and parking your own car.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLANNING TABLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Where do I want to go?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grocery Store</td>
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<td>Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doctor’s Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
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<td>Entertainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visit Family/Friends</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>Transit provider</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cripple Creek City Shuttle</td>
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<td>El Paso/Fountain Valley Senior Citizens Program</td>
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<td>Mountain Community Senior Services</td>
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<td>Park County Senior Coalition</td>
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<td>Teller County Senior Coalition</td>
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<td>Silver Key Senior Services</td>
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<td>Amblicab Paratransit Service</td>
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<td>Mountain MetroMobility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disabled American Veterans (DAV)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gold Camp Connector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teller County Senior Coalition</td>
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TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS IN THE PIKES PEAK REGION
(includes Teller and El Paso Counties)
Transportation Options in Colorado
(representes a partial listing)

Representing, Servicing and Promoting Transit in Colorado
www.coloradotransit.com/Transit-in-Colorado/Transit-Director

Getting There Guide. A resource guide to transportation services for the Denver Metro Area.
www.drmac-co.org/

North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization is a resource for locating transportation services that offer alternatives to moving around the region by personal vehicle.
www.nfrmpo.org

Mountain Rides help those who live in the Northwestern Colorado region find transportation.
www.mtnride.org/ride-resources/

Complete listing of Colorado’s Area Agencies on Aging
www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDHS-VetDis/CBON/1251651403806

COMPLETE RESOURCE LISTS

For a complete list of downloads from this document. Please visit:
DriveSmartColorado.com/resources
Colorado Area Agencies on Aging

Colorado’s 16 Area Agencies on Aging are trusted, unbiased, organizations that provide information, resources, and services to older adults, persons with disabilities and their family caregivers. Professional resource specialists provide information and assistance on housing options, in-home services, home-delivered meals, care management, caregiver relief services, legal assistance, counseling, training, transportation options, nursing facility transitions and Medicare and Medicaid assistance.

Region 1
Northeastern Colorado Assoc. of Local Gov.
Robert (Bob) Held, AAA Director
970.867.9409
Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Yuma

Region 2A
Larimer County Office on Aging
Lynda Meyer, AAA Director
970.498.7750
Larimer

Region 2B
Weld County AAA
Eva Jewell, AAA Director
970.346.6950
Weld

Region 3A
DRCOG AAA
Jayla Sanchez-Warren, AAA Director
303.455.1000
Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Gilpin, Jefferson

Region 3B
Boulder County Area Agency on Aging
Sherry Leach, AAA Director
303.441.3570
Boulder

Region 4
PPACG Area Agency on Aging
Guy Dutra-Silveira, AAA Director
719.471.2096
El Paso, Park, Teller
Region 5
East Central Council of Governments
Terry Baylie, AAA Director
719.348.5562 Ext. 5
Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson, Lincoln

Region 6
Lower Arkansas Valley AAA Region
San Juan AAA Region
12 Alpine AAA
Melody Dowell, AAA Director
719.383.3166
Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero, Prowers

Region 7
Pueblo AAA Region
10 League for
Mike Espinosa, Program Coor.
719.583.6120
Pueblo

Region 8
South-Central
Colorado Seniors Inc.
Frances Valdez, AAA Director
719.589.4511
Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, Saguache

Region 9
San Juan AAA
Christina Knoell, AAA Director
970.264.0501
Archuleta, Dolores, La Plata, Montezuma, San Juan

Region 10
League for Economic Assistance & Planning
Eva Veitch, AAA Director
970.249.2436
Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray, San Miguel

Region 11
Assoc. Governments of Northwest Colorado
Dave Norman, AAA Director
970.248.2717
Garfield, Mesa, Moffat, Rio Blanco, Routt

Region 12
Alpine AAA
Jean Hammes, AAA Director
970.468.0295
Eagle, Grand, Jackson, Pitkin, Summit

Region 13
Upper Arkansas AAA
Steve Holland
719.539.3341
Chaffee, Custer, Fremont, Lake

Region 14
Huerfano/Las Animas Area COG
Veronica Maes, AAA Director
719.845.1133
Huerfano, Las Animas
# COLORADO AREA AGENCIES ON AGING REGIONS

## 1
**Robert (Bob) Held, AAA Director**  
Single Entry Point (SEP)  
Northeastern Colorado Association of Local Governments  
231 Main Street, Suite 211  
Fort Morgan, CO 80701  
Phone: 970.867.9409  
Fax: 970.867.9053  
Email: bheld@necalg.com  
Website: [www.NortheasternColorado.com](http://www.necalg.com)  
Northeastern Region  
Counties: Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Yuma

## 2-B
**Eva Jewell, AAA Director**  
Single Entry Point (SEP)  
Weld County Area Agency On Aging  
P.O. Box 1805  
315 C. N. 11th Ave.  
Greeley, CO 80631  
Phone: 970.346.6950  
Fax: 970.346.6951  
Email: EJewell@co.weld.co.us  
Website: [www.co.weld.co.us](http://www.co.weld.co.us)  
Northeastern Region  
Counties: Weld

## 3-B
**Sherry Leach, AAA Director**  
Boulder County Area Agency on Aging  
P. O. Box 471  
3482 North Broadway  
Boulder, CO 80306  
Phone: 303.441.3570  
Fax: 303.441.4550  
Email: bcaaa@bouldercounty.org  
Website: [www.bouldercountyaging.org](http://www.bouldercountyaging.org)  
Northeastern Region  
Counties: Boulder

## 3-A
**Jayla Sanchez-Warren, AAA Director**  
DRCOG Area Agency on Aging  
1290 Broadway, Suite 700  
Denver, CO 80203  
Phone: 303.455.1000  
Fax: 303.480.6790  
Email: jswarren@drcog.org  
Website: [www.drcog.org](http://www.drcog.org)  
Northeastern Region  
Counties: Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Gilpin, Jefferson

## 4
**Guy Dutra-Silveira, AAA Director**  
Single Entry Point (SEP)  
PPACG Area Agency on Aging  
15 South 7th Street  
Colorado Springs, CO 80905  
Phone: 719.471.2096  
Fax: 719.471.1226  
Email: gdutra@ppacg.org  
Website: [www.ppacg.org](http://www.ppacg.org)  
Southern Region  
Counties: El Paso, Park, Teller

## 5
**Terry Baylie, AAA Director**  
East Central Council of Governments  
P. O. Box 28  
128 Colorado Avenue  
Stratton, CO 80836  
Phone: 719.348.5562, ext. 5  
Fax: 719.348.5887  
Email: baylie@prairiedevelopment.com  
Website: [ecaaa.tripod.com](http://ecaaa.tripod.com)  
Northeastern Region  
Counties: Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson, Lincoln

## 6
**Melody Dowell, AAA Director**  
Single Entry Point (SEP)  
Lower Arkansas Valley Area Agency on Aging  
P.O. Box 494  
13 West Third St Room 110  
La Junta, CO 81050  
Phone: 719.383.3166  
Fax: 719.383.4607  
Email: melody.dowell@state.co.us  
Website: [www.oterogov.com](http://www.oterogov.com)  
Southern Region  
Counties: Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero, Prowers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Agency/Association</th>
<th>Address/Location</th>
<th>Phone/Fax</th>
<th>Email/Website</th>
<th>Counties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mike Espinosa, Program Coor.</td>
<td>Pueblo Area Agency on Aging</td>
<td>2631 E. 4th Street, Pueblo, CO 81001</td>
<td>719.583.6120 Fax: 719.583.6323</td>
<td><a href="mailto:espinosam@co.pueblo.co.us">espinosam@co.pueblo.co.us</a></td>
<td>Southern Region Counties: Pueblo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Frances Valdez, AAA Director</td>
<td>South-Central Colorado Seniors, Inc.</td>
<td>P.O. Box 639, 1116 3rd Street, Alamosa, CO 81101</td>
<td>719.589.4511 Fax: 719.589.2343</td>
<td><a href="mailto:francesv@qwestoffice.net">francesv@qwestoffice.net</a></td>
<td>South-Central Region Counties: Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, Saguache</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Christina Knoell, AAA Director</td>
<td>San Juan Basin Area Agency on Aging</td>
<td>P.O. Box 5456 (451 Hot Springs Blvd.), Pagosa Springs, CO 81147</td>
<td>970.264.0501 Fax: 1.888.290.3566</td>
<td><a href="mailto:christinaknoell@sjbaaa.org">christinaknoell@sjbaaa.org</a></td>
<td>Western Region Counties: Archuleta, Dolores, LaPlata, Montezuma, San Juan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Eva Veitch, AAA Director</td>
<td>Region 10 League for Economic Assistance &amp; Planning</td>
<td>300 N. Cascade Ave., Suite #1, Montrose, CO 81401</td>
<td>970.249.2436 Fax: 970.249.2488</td>
<td><a href="mailto:eveitch@region10.net">eveitch@region10.net</a></td>
<td>Western Region Counties: Garfield, Mesa, Moffat, Rio Blanco, Routt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Dave Norman, AAA Director</td>
<td>Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado</td>
<td>P.O. Box 20000-5035, 510 29 1/2 Road, Grand Junction, CO 81502</td>
<td>970.248.2717 Fax: 970.248.2702 or 970.248.2849/2883</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dave.norman@mesacounty.us">dave.norman@mesacounty.us</a></td>
<td>Western Region Counties: Archuleta, Dolores, LaPlata, Montezuma, San Juan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Jean Hammes, AAA Director</td>
<td>Northwest Colorado Council of Governments</td>
<td>P.O. Box 2308, 249 Warren Ave., Silverthorne, CO 80498</td>
<td>970.468.0295 Fax: 970.468.1208</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aaa12@nwccog.org">aaa12@nwccog.org</a></td>
<td>Western Region Counties: Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray, San Miguel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Steve Holland, AAA Director</td>
<td>Single Entry Point (SEP)</td>
<td>139 East 3rd Street, Salida, CO 81201-2612</td>
<td>719.539.3341 Fax: 719.539.7431</td>
<td><a href="mailto:stephen.holland@uaacog.com">stephen.holland@uaacog.com</a></td>
<td>Southern Region Counties: Chaffee, Custer, Fremont, Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Veronica Maes, AAA Director</td>
<td>Huerfano/Las Animas Area Council of Governments</td>
<td>300 South Bonaventure Avenue, Trinidad, CO 81082</td>
<td>719.845.1133 Fax: 719.845.1130</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vmaes@sccog.net">vmaes@sccog.net</a></td>
<td>Southern Region Counties: Huerfano, Las Animas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WEB-SITE RESOURCES

Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) 2014 Strategic Highway Safety Plan
(Includes an Emphasis on Aging Road Users - Page 42)

Video Toolkit on Medical Conditions in Older Drivers
http://www.nhtsa.gov/Driving+Safety/Older+Drivers/Video+Toolkit+On+Medical+Conditions
In addition to videos on conditions such as arthritis, driving after a stroke, diabetes and other medical issues, there are videos specifically for law enforcement and the Department of Motor Vehicles.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration on Older Drivers
http://www.nhtsa.gov/Driving+Safety/Older+Drivers

The Hartford
www.Thehartford.com (SEARCH: Older Drivers)

American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)
www.aarp.org (SEARCH: Older Drivers)

American Automobile Association (AAA)
www.seniordriving.aaa.com

National Institute on Aging - National Institutes of Health
www.nia.nih.gov/ (SEARCH: Older Drivers)

For a complete list of downloads from this document. Please visit:
DriveSmartColorado.com/resources
This resource guide made possible with generous funding from the following: