

Older Driver Family Assistance Program

If you are concerned about an older family member's driving



The Westchester County Department of Senior Programs and Services may be able to help

Caregivers, family and friends often don't know where to turn for help when they are worried about the safety of an older driver.

The Westchester County Older Driver Family Assistance Program provides information and referrals to services for:

- Older driver skills assessment
- Vision rehabilitation
- Driver re-training and improvement of functional performance
- Alternate transportation services

For more information, call (914) 813-6188

**THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SENIOR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM**

THE OLDER DRIVER FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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THE OLDER DRIVERS FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Caregivers, family and friends frequently don't know where to turn when they are worried about the safety of an older driver.

Fortunately, the Westchester County Department of Senior Programs and Services has a program that can help. The Older Driver Family Assistance Program, sponsored by the department's Family Caregiver Support Program, can assist with information, referrals to driver safety programs, in-car evaluations, vision rehabilitation and driver retraining.

This guide, compiled by the Older Driver program, acts as a first step in helping you identify resources in Westchester County that can help keep the older driver driving safely. For seniors who can no longer drive safely, it offers information on options for transportation.

If you are concerned about the safety of an older driver, professionals in the field of aging services are available to discuss your individual issues, and help you work toward a solution.

For referrals or an appointment, contact the Older Driver Family Assistance Program at (914) 813-6188.

ASSESSING THE OLDER DRIVER

Going for a ride with an older driver is the best way to assess whether he or she is experiencing any safety problems. It is a good idea to take notes and to date them. This way you will be able to judge whether there has been a decline in abilities over time.

If you can, get your loved one to take the following quiz. If the older driver refuses, you can still use it as a guideline to identify problems the driver may be experiencing. The senior driver may learn that they need to take action to improve their driving. They might need to adjust driving routes, limit their driving, take a course or consult their doctor.

Am I a Safe Driver?

Check the box if the statement applies to you.

- I get lost while driving.**
- My friends and family members say they are worried about my driving.**
- Other cars seem to appear out of nowhere.**
- I have trouble seeing signs in time to respond to them.**
- Other drivers drive too fast.**
- Other drivers often honk at me.**
- Driving stresses me out.**
- After driving, I feel tired.**
- I have had more “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 on the gas pedal or brakes.**
- I have trouble looking over my shoulder when I back up.**
- I have been stopped by the police for my driving recently.**
- People will no longer accept rides from me.**
- I don't like to drive at night.**
- I have more trouble parking lately.**

If you have checked any of the boxes, your safety may be at risk when you drive. Talk to your doctor or other professionals about ways to improve your safety when you drive.

HAVING THE CONVERSATION

Having a conversation with your loved one concerning their driving ability can be daunting. Most people tend to think they are good drivers, and the idea of limiting or even ending their driving careers can be highly emotionally charged. Driving gives us a sense of independence and control over our lives that few would give up willingly. Keep in mind, however, the goal is often not asking a senior to stop driving, but rather to ensure that they are driving safely.

Ideally, you should have a conversation with your loved one about safety before there is a problem. Periodic conversations about traffic safety, changing traffic conditions, and changing health conditions, can make the topic seem routine and less threatening to the driver. It can also pave the way for you if the time comes when you must sit down and confront problems the driver is having.

Many times, however, family members may be concerned but do not approach the subject for fear of the driver's reaction, or to avoid feelings of guilt if the driver loses their privilege of driving. They may also not want to take on the added responsibility of providing transportation for their loved one.

But remember, while it may be uncomfortable to broach this subject, it may save your loved one and others from being involved in an accident that may result in injury or even death.

If you are having the conversation for the first time, focus on the goal: keeping your loved one and others on the road safe. Sometimes, it is easier if one person – hopefully someone the driver usually listens to – approaches the subject. Prepare for the conversation by putting together a list of your concerns. Think of concrete examples, and try to be ready with a possible solution to the problem, such as a driver improvement course.

Once you sit down to talk, emphasize that you care about the safety of the driver, and are there to support the driver. During the discussion, try to remember it can be very hard for older drivers to admit they are having a problem. They may fear that they will be forced to give up their independence if they stop driving.

For more information on how to talk about your safety concerns of an older driver, please call the Older Driver Family Assistance Program at (914) 813-6188.

DRIVER IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

Defensive driving programs offer the senior driver an opportunity to keep current on new driving rules. They refresh their knowledge of the rules of the road as well as provide safety tips. Many insurance companies give seniors a discount on their car insurance upon completion of a defensive driving class.

We have included the names of the most frequently requested programs. There may be others offered in your community. It is recommended that you check with your insurance company before you choose a program.

AARP Driver Safety Program

For information about specific classes:

1(888) 227-7669

1(845) 831-7702

Mount Vernon or New Rochelle 914 668-7048

Website: www.aarp.org/55alive/

AAA Driver Improvement Program

For information about specific classes:

(914) 948-4600

1(516) 873-2407(Headquarters)

Website: www.aaa.com

Click on safety.

National Safety Council's Defensive Driving Course

Driver Improvement Programs

For schedule:

1(800) 734-7883

Website: www.driver-improvement.com

DRIVING SCHOOLS FOR IN-CAR EVALUATIONS

Some driving schools offer in-car evaluations. They are designed to help identify problem-driving habits and provide instruction on how to correct them. Driving schools are not required to file reports with any agency or family member.

We have included a listing of driving schools that have been recommended to us by a hospital rehabilitation program.

This list should not be considered an endorsement from the Westchester County Department of Senior Programs and Services. It serves only as a partial listing of driving schools specializing in in-car evaluations. You may find additional schools in your phone book.

Golden Crown Driving School

White Plains, NY

(914) 949-0419

(914) 245-8156

Eagle Institute of Driving

Bronx, NY

(914) 965-7777

(718) 829-1165

West-Put

Mahopac, NY

(845) 628-6047

NYHADS

Bronx, NY

(718) 365-5058

Meltzer's Driver Training Center

Wappingers Falls, NY

(845) 297-3966

Formula One Driving School

Mamaroneck, NY

Contact: Isa Marinaro

(914) 381-4500

DRIVER REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

WHAT IS A DRIVER REHABILITATION PROGRAM?

A driver rehabilitation program specializes in the evaluation of the neces



sary skills for safe driving in individuals who have physical, mental or cognitive conditions. These programs typically have three phases: a clinical evaluation, a behind-the-wheel road test, and a driver-training program if indicated.

WHO PERFORMS DRIVER REHABILITATION EVALUATIONS?

Occupational therapists are typically the rehabilitation specialists who conduct driver rehabilitation evaluations. Occupational therapists work with individuals to help them reach their highest potential for independent living. As an activity that contributes to independence and quality of life, driving falls within the domain of occupational therapy practice. In addition to assessing functional ability, cognitive and physical skills, occupational therapists are trained to consider a client's overall life situation and needs, including his or her psychological and social well-being. While a primary goal of occupational therapy is to facilitate independence, there are times when an evaluation reveals that a person should no longer drive. In these cases, the occupational therapist will help the client access appropriate counseling and transportation alternatives to ease the stress.

WHAT IS ASSESSED DURING A CLINICAL DRIVING EVALUATION?

The clinical driving evaluation typically involves a variety of clinical evaluations, computerized testing, and possibly a driving simulator. The following information and skills are evaluated:

- History – frequency, length and reason for trips; location of trips (city vs. rural); type of roadways (highways, busy intersections, etc.); driving at night, rush hour, or adverse conditions; use of another individual to help navigate; presence of other individual who could drive; familiarity with the roadways and the area; seat belt use; routine vehicle maintenance
- Medications – prescription and over the counter medications
- Communication abilities – ability to read road signs, interpret symbols, and speak
- Physical abilities – vision, hearing, trunk and limb mobility, sensation, strength and coordination, reaction times.



WHAT IS ASSESSED DURING A BEHIND-THE-WHEEL DRIVING EVALUATION?

Behind-the-wheel driving evaluations are performed in a specially modified vehicle with an additional set of brakes for the evaluator and any mechanical adaptations needed by the driver (e.g., hand controls, steering devices, control extensions, etc.). During the behind-the-wheel evaluation, the occupational therapist looks at the ability of the driver to get into the car, adjust the equipment (seating and visual elements), start the car, and drive. The driving elements evaluated include: gap acceptance, positioning of the vehicle on the road, observation for hazards, path of driving, speed, and communication (e.g., interpretation of road signs and communication with other drivers). The evaluation may take place on a set course or in the local community.

WHERE CAN I LOCATE A DRIVER REHABILITATION PROGRAM?

Most driver rehabilitation programs are located in medical facilities that specialize in rehabilitation. See below for programs located in Westchester and neighboring counties.

Additional Driving Rehabilitation Specialists may be located in the directory at the Association of Driver Rehabilitation Specialists' Web site at <http://www.driver-ed.org>. The New York State Occupational Therapy Association and the Westchester County Department of Senior Programs and Services does not endorse any of these specialists.



WHAT HAPPENS TO THE INFORMATION FROM THE DRIVER REHABILITATION EVALUATION?

The occupational therapist conducting the evaluation will document the results in the client's medical record if conducted in a hospital setting. These results are also reported to the referring physician and the client. With the client's permission, the results and recommendations will

be discussed with the client's family.

Occupational therapists are not required to report the results of the driver evaluation to the state Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and will not do so without the client's written consent. Since the Department of Motor Vehicles is the entity that grants and suspends driving licenses the results of the driver rehabilitation evaluation are *recommendations* only. It is the driver's responsibility to disclose his or her potentially disabling condition to the DMV (typically done at the time of license renewal). Concerned drivers may request the DMV perform a re-evaluation of their skills. The DMV can receive information about medical conditions or mental conditions from an accident report, a report by a physician or police officer, or a letter from a member of family of the driver or other citizen.

The American Medical Association recommends that physicians use their best judgment when determining when to report impaired drivers to the state DMV. New York State laws do not require physicians to report impaired drivers.

DOES INSURANCE COVER THE COST OF A DRIVER REHABILITATION EVALUATION?

Insurance will typically cover the cost of a driver rehabilitation evaluation by an occupational therapist if the person has a medical diagnosis and a referral from a physician.

DRIVER REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

Burke Rehabilitation Hospital

Outpatient Occupational Therapy
785 Mamaroneck Ave.
White Plains, NY 10605
(914) 597-2326

Helen Hayes Hospital

Paula Terry Berg, OTR/L
Route 9W
West Haverstraw, NY 10993
(845) 786-4358

Meltzer's Driver Training Center

Matthew Meltzer, BS, CDRS
44 Dorothy Heights
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590
(845) 297-3966

Saint Francis Hospital

Mary Beth Meyer, OTR, CDRS
241 North Road
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
(845) 431-8229

Veterans Administration Hospital at Castlepoint

Maura Timm, MS, OTR
Castlepoint, NY 12511
(845) 831-2000 ext. d5853



VISION REHABILITATION

Vision is the primary sense used in driving. Normal aging affects a number of eye functions key to seeing objects on and near the roadway. Our ability to see in the dark diminishes, as does the ability to focus rapidly and to recover from sudden glare, such as an oncoming headlight. Many older adults can adapt their driving when they recognize these normal changes. Keeping windshields, mirrors and headlights clean can help, as can adaptive equipment such as larger rearview mirrors. Regular vision checkups with your eye care specialist are vital for maintaining good vision and correcting problems as they arise. It is especially important to diagnosis vision problems conditions such as glaucoma, cataracts and macular degeneration, which can make driving difficult or even impossible.

If the older driver needs specialized vision rehabilitation, Lighthouse International may be able to help. Its local telephone number is (914) 683-7500.

TRANSPORTATION

It is important to be aware of the transportation alternatives in the community. The local senior citizen center is a good resource. Many senior citizen programs provide nutritious midday meals as well as a variety of senior social activities at senior centers within their community. They may provide transportation to their center for these programs. Some may have transportation, one way or round trip, to local doctors or a van that will take seniors to the supermarket or a shopping mall. Senior centers may have information on other resources such as taxi coupons or volunteer drivers.

We have listed the telephone numbers in each community and the transportation services available. These services are often limited to specific days or times so please plan ahead.

Amawalk

Nutrition Program

232-0807

Senior activities, shopping, medical

232-8441

Ardsley

Nutrition Program, shopping
693-1550

Armonk

Shopping
273-1771
Medical
273-3631

Bedford

(Bedford Village, Bedford Hills, Katonah)
All senior programs, shopping
666-7203

Briarcliff Manor

Nutrition program, shopping, medical
762-1350

Bronxville

Nutrition Program
337-0390
Shopping, medical
771-3340

Buchanan

Nutrition, shopping, medical
528-5164

Chappaqua

Most senior recreation programs
Shopping and errands, medical
238-8888

Cross River

Senior Meetings, shopping, medical
232-6162

Croton-on-Hudson

(Village residents)

Shopping

271-5804

Nutrition, shopping, medical

528-8377

Crugers

Nutrition Program, shopping, medical

528-8377

Dobbs Ferry

Nutrition Program, shopping

693-1550

Eastchester

Nutrition Program

337-0390

Shopping, medical

771-3340

Elmsford

See Greenburgh

Greenburgh, Unincorporated Town of

Ted Young Community Center Nutrition Program

Senior activities

989-3621

Veterans Park, nutrition, shopping, medical

693-8997

Harrison

Senior club, shopping, medical
670-3026

Hastings-on-Hudson

Nutrition Program and senior clubs
Shopping
478-2586

Hawthorne

All local senior programs, shopping
592-6441

Irvington

Senior events, shopping, medical
591-7786

Jefferson Valley

Nutrition Program
Senior programs, shopping, medical
962-7447

Katonah

All senior programs, shopping
666-7203

Larchmont, Village of

Senior Center, shopping, medical
834-8840

Lewisboro, Town of

Senior meeting, shopping, medical
232-6162

Mamaroneck, Town of

Nutrition Program

Mamaroneck, Village of
Nutrition Program, shopping, medical
698-8477

Millwood
Most senior recreation programs
Shopping and errands, medical
238-8888

Mohegan Lake
Nutrition, senior programs
Shopping, medical
962-7447

Montrose
Nutrition Program
Shopping, medical
528-8377

Mount Kisco
Nutrition Program, shopping
666-8931

Mount Pleasant
(Unincorporated Areas of Mount Pleasant)
All local senior programs, shopping
592-6441

Mount Vernon
Armory Nutrition Program, shopping
665-2434
Doles Nutrition Program, shopping
665-2447

New Castle

Most senior recreation programs
Shopping and errands, medical
238-8888

New Rochelle

Nutrition and senior programs
Shopping, medical
235-2363

North Castle

Senior Programs, shopping
273-2944
Medical
273-3631

North Salem

Nutrition Program, shopping
669-5665

Ossining

Nutrition Program
Shopping, medical
762-1350

Peekskill

Senior Services: 734-4254
Nutrition, Shopping:
734-4254

Pelham

Medical
738-1374

Pleasantville, Village of
Nutrition Program
Shopping, medical
769-2021

Port Chester
Nutrition Site, shopping, medical
939-4975

Pound Ridge
Shopping, medical
764-5472

Purchase
Senior club programs
Shopping, medical
670-3026

Rye
Shopping, medical
967-2535

Rye Brook
Nutrition, shopping and errands
Medical
939-7904

Scarborough
Nutrition program
Shopping, medical
762-1350

Scarsdale
Senior programs
Shopping, medical (taxi voucher)

Shrub Oak

Nutrition Program

Senior programs, shopping, medical

962-7447

Sleepy Hollow

Senior Nutrition and Programs

Shopping, medical

366-5109

Somers, Town of

Nutrition Program

232-0807

Senior activities, shopping, medical

232-8441

South Salem

Senior meeting, shopping, medical

232-6162

Tarrytown

Nutrition, shopping, medical

631-7873

Tuckahoe

Nutrition

337-0390

Shopping, medical

771-3340

Valhalla

All local senior programs

Shopping

Verplanck

Nutrition Program, shopping, medical
528-8377

White Plains

Nutrition Program, shopping, medical
422-1352

Yonkers

Nutrition Program, shopping, medical
963-4411

Yorktown Heights

Nutrition Program
Senior programs, shopping, medical
962-7447

PARA-TRANSIT AND ADDITIONAL TRANSPORTATION **ALL COUNTY RESIDENTS**

Para Transit is a shared ride, curb-to-curb, public transportation service provided by Westchester County to assist individuals with disabilities who are not able to use the larger Bee-Line system buses. It serves as a safety net for people who do not have the functional capability to ride the fixed route of the Bee-Line buses. An application must be completed in order to receive Para Transit services. Fares are \$3 each way. The Office for the Disabled administers the Para Transit program. For additional information on how to apply for this service, please call 995-2956.

Bee-Line Bus Transportation

Westchester County residents have many transportation options. The Bee-Line buses run through much of the county and offer reduced fares for seniors over 65. Many regular Bee-Line bus routes have lifts for riders who can't climb stairs or who use a wheelchair. All scheduled trips on the following routes are accessible:

Locals: 6, 13, 14, 16, 19, 23, 25, 26, 30, 52, 55, 76, 78.

Commuter: 18, 33, 34, 38, 39, 40, 70, 71.

Loops A through H and T, as well as 20/21 Local/Express.

The driver will provide assistance, secure wheelchairs and announce the main stops and transfers. A yellow strip can be pressed to tell the driver to stop at the next stop.

For schedule information call (914) 813-7777.

There is also access to our towns and cities via the Metro-North Railroad. Nearby airports and Amtrak are available for long distances.

Handicapped parking applications are only available through local municipalities.

The Office for the Disabled no longer provides the passes. To find the contact information for your particular town, village or city, visit www.westchestergov.com/disabled and click on “Handicapped Parking Permits.”

For more information, call:

Para Transit	995-2956
Westchester County Bee Line	813-7777
Metro North Trains	(800) 638-7646

LAST RESORT – REQUEST FOR DRIVER REVIEW BY NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Request For Driver Review

The “Request For Driver Review” is an option for family members or friends who are concerned about someone’s driving ability.

Possible Medical Conditions or Mental Conditions

(From: <http://www.nydmv.state.ny.us/license.htm>)

The DMV receives information about the possible conditions of a driver from many sources. Drivers can provide the information in answers about medical conditions on a driver license application or a renewal form. The DMV can receive information about the medical or mental conditions from an accident report, a physicians report, or a police report, or from a letter from a member of the family or other citizen.

Physicians Reports: If a physician reports a condition that can affect the driving skills of a patient, the DMV can suspend the driver license. The DMV suspends the driver license until a physician provides certification that the condition is treated or controlled and does not affect driving skills. The DMV can require that the physician certify again in the future that the condition is controlled and not dangerous. If the DMV does not receive the required certification, the DMV can suspend the driver license until it receives certification.

Other Reports: If the DMV receives a report from a source that is not a physician, the DMV decides each case separately. The DMV can schedule a reexamination for the driver, or an evaluation interview with a license examiner.

After an evaluation interview, the license examiner can require that the driver take a re-examination or ask for specific tests. The license examiner decides if a re-examination or specific tests are required.

A re-examination can include a vision test, a written test, a road test or two or more of these tests. If the driver does not appear for a re-examination or does not pass the test, the DMV revokes the driver license.

To report possible medical or mental conditions, you must complete form DS-7 (Request For Driver Review).

This form provides the only method to report a possible medical condition. Make sure that you include all the required information and that you provide the details about the condition of the driver. A notary public must observe that you sign the form and then must notarize the form. Send the original completed form to:

Driver Improvement Bureau

NYS Department of Motor Vehicles
6 Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12228

The DMV **does not** accept reports by e-mail or by telephone. The DMV decides the action to take or can decide to take no action.

Privacy. If a person uses the Freedom of Information Law to request a copy of the form that you filed, the DMV does **not** disclose your name or other information that identifies you. If the person who sends the report is a person who is in a position of authority, (for example, physician or a police officer) the DMV **does** disclose the name of the person who sent the report.



REQUEST FOR DRIVER REVIEW



INSTRUCTIONS:

- This form is to be used by concerned citizens to report a driver who appears to be unable to drive safely. *(Law enforcement personnel must use the DS-5 Police Agency Request for Driver Review; Physicians must use the DS-6 Physician's Request for Driver Review.)*
- The Department will not act on your request unless you complete all four parts below and on Page 2, and provide all required information. Please provide as much factual detail as possible.
- Sign the completed form in the presence of a notary public, and mail the original signed and notarized form to:
 Driver Improvement Bureau
 New York State Department of Motor Vehicles
 6 Empire State Plaza
 Albany, NY 12228
- Forms that are not notarized will not be accepted.
- Be aware that the review you are requesting may lead to the suspension or revocation of the driver's license of the person you are reporting.

PART 1 - Identification of the person whose ability to drive is in question *(Please print.)*

Last Name (Required)		First Name (Required)		M.I.	Date of Birth (if not known, give approximate age) - (Required)	
Street Address (Required)						
City (Required)					State (Required)	Zip Code
Make of Vehicle the Person Normally Drives			Color of Vehicle		License Plate Number	

PART 2 - Your identification *(Please print.)*

A representative of the NYS DMV may contact you concerning your request for driver review.

Your Name <i>(Print name in full)</i> - (Required)		Your Date of Birth (Required)	Client ID No. <i>(from your NYS Driver License or Non-Driver ID card)</i>			
Your Home Address <i>(Include Street & Number)</i> - (Required)						
City (Required)		State (Required)	Zip Code (Required)	Your Daytime Telephone Number <i>(Area Code)</i> - (Required)		

Your relationship to the driver you are reporting:

- Daughter
 Son
 Sister
 Brother
 Wife
 Husband
 Mother
 Father
 Neighbor
 Other *(explain)*

PART 3 - Your reasons for reporting this driver

Explain why you feel the person you identified in Part 1 should have his/her driving abilities reviewed. Be as specific as possible, and include specific incidents, observations, dates, locations, etc.

PART 3 - (Continued from Page 1)

If you know other people who agree with your assessment of this driver, who DMV may contact, please identify them below:

Name	Address	Daytime Telephone Number
Name	Address	Daytime Telephone Number
Name	Address	Daytime Telephone Number
Name	Address	Daytime Telephone Number

PART 4 - CERTIFICATION:

I certify that the information I provided above is true and accurate. I understand that any false statement given by me may be punishable by law.

 _____ (Your Signature - Sign name in full) _____ (Date - Month/Day/Year)

A Notary Public must complete the following:

State of _____ County of _____ ss:

on this _____ day of _____, 20_____, before me personally appeared _____ to me known and known to me to be the same person described in and who executed the forgoing instrument, and s/he duly acknowledged to me that s/he executed the same.

Notary Public, State of _____
(Please affix stamp)

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Kathleen Golisz, OTR, MA, BCN

New York State Occupational Therapy Association

Driving Rehabilitation Liaison

c/o Mercy College Occupational Therapy Program

555 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522

914-674-9331 x601

Lisa Edelstein, MS, OT/L,

Burke Rehabilitation Hospital, White Plains, NY