

Information update

May 2018

VicRoads Medical Review

This information sheet explains the VicRoads medical review process and what it means for you. It is designed to accompany a letter from VicRoads requiring a medical report.

Why are we assessing your fitness to drive?

Medical impairments increase the risk of accidents, injuries and deaths on the road.¹ To protect you and all road users, the law requires us to investigate whenever we hear that a person's health may be affecting their fitness to drive.

We have asked you to undergo a medical review because either:

- you have indicated that you have a medical condition or disability that may affect your driving; or
- we have received advice from another source that raises concerns about your fitness to drive.

Who raised concerns about your health?

- If the police notified us, this will be stated in the letter you receive.
- If someone other than the police notified us (e.g. medical practitioners or community members), their identity is only disclosed with their consent or where required by law.

What do you need to do now?

If you no longer wish to continue driving:

- Advise VicRoads in writing and enclose your driver licence/learner permit card.
- You may also request a refund of any unused part of your driver licence fee.²

If you wish to continue driving:

- Make an appointment with your doctor or specialist to complete the report(s). We suggest you make an appointment as soon as you can (as there may be a waiting period), and advise the staff of the reason for your visit, as the consultation may take longer than usual.
- Please ensure your doctor or specialist completes all parts of the report. If the report is incomplete we may need to ask you to return to your doctor to complete the form.
- Return the report(s) to VicRoads by the due date. You can return the report(s) by email, post or fax using the contact details listed at the top of the letter we sent you. We recommend returning the reports by email because it is fast and ensures you have a submission record.

Can I have more time to provide my report?

You may request an extension of time if you are unable to provide the requested report(s) by the due date. You should contact VicRoads and discuss your need for more time. We will assess your request and advise you of the decision. Providing details of your appointment with your doctor or specialist will assist us in making this decision.

Will you need to do anything else after submitting your initial report(s)?

We will use the initial report(s) you send to help us decide if you meet the national medical standards for the licence category you hold. However, sometimes the initial report identifies issues that require further assessment to determine if they are affecting your fitness to drive.

If further assessment is needed, we will send you a letter requesting you to:

- provide a specialist report; and/or
- complete an on-road driving assessment.

How will we make a decision about your fitness to drive?

We are required by law to assess your fitness to drive using national medical standards.³ These standards outline the medical requirements needed to drive in Australia, and are based on expert medical opinion and research.

¹ For details, see *Influence of Chronic Illness on Crash Involvement of Motor Vehicle Drivers: 2nd Edition*, published by the Monash University Accident Research Centre and available at: monash.edu.au/miri/research/reports/muarc300.pdf.

² Refunds are not applicable to learner permits.

³ These standards are set out in *Assessing Fitness to Drive*, published by Austroads and available at: austroads.com.au. Section 27(3) of the Road Safety Act 1986 requires VicRoads to assess the results of medical tests and examinations in accordance with the Guidelines, which were issued by the Minister in accordance with section 96B.

Figure 1 The medical review process



*VicRoads will generally contact you by post within 10 business days from receiving your report

How long does the medical review process usually take?

The length of the medical review process varies depending on how complex it is to determine if a medical condition is affecting your fitness to drive. The steps involved in the medical review process are outlined in Figure 1.

Will you be allowed to continue driving?

If the medical review assessment shows that you meet the national medical standards for your category of licence, there are three common outcomes:

- You will be able to keep your driver licence/learner permit and continue driving.
- You will be able to keep your driver licence/learner permit and continue driving, but your fitness to drive will need to be assessed again in the future (for example, each year or every three or five years). Periodic review might be necessary because some medical conditions change over time or require ongoing management.
- You will be able to keep your driver licence/learner permit and continue driving but only under certain conditions (for example, only driving a vehicle with modified controls or only driving during daylight hours or in certain areas).

If the medical review assessment shows you do not meet the national medical standards, unfortunately you won't be able to continue driving. We understand that stopping you from driving could make things very difficult for you. Please be assured that we would not make this decision lightly.

When would we suspend or cancel your licence?

We will suspend or cancel your driver licence/learner permit if you:

- do not provide a report when requested to do so;
- fail or decide not to undertake a driving assessment when requested to do so;
- are assessed as medically unfit to drive; or
- fail to comply with a condition imposed on your driver licence/learner permit.

If we suspend or cancel your licence, can you get it back?

Yes, you can apply to get it back if your medical condition improves. We will provide further information about this process if, after receiving your report, we suspend or cancel your driver licence/learner permit.

Can you appeal our decisions?

If we vary, suspend or cancel your licence/learner permit you can appeal our decision. There are two ways to do this:

- you may write to VicRoads and ask for an internal review;
- you may appeal to the Magistrates' Court.

How much will the medical review cost?

The cost of your medical review will depend on the type and number of medical reports required and whether you need to undertake an on-road driving assessment. Unfortunately, we are not able to help you pay for your medical review. We understand that medical appointments and driving assessments can be expensive, and may be difficult for some people to afford. For this reason, we will only request additional reports when they are absolutely necessary.

Where can I get further information about the VicRoads medical review?

Further information is available on the VicRoads website: vicroads.vic.gov.au or by calling VicRoads on 13 11 71 (TTY 13 36 77, Speak and Listen 1300 555 727).