

ALTERNATIVES

For some, carpooling with family members or friends is a solution. For individuals in large urban centres, there are bus services. For others, taxi or paratransit services may be viable options. Some prefer to use travel companion services offered by community organizations in their area, and others move to be closer to services and loved ones.

DID YOU KNOW?

Anyone who has doubts about someone's ability to safely drive a vehicle can notify the SAAQ and describe the events witnessed. The information provided must make it possible to positively identify the driver.

TO REACH US

ONLINE

saaq.gouv.qc.ca

BY TELEPHONE

Québec area: 418-643-7620

Montréal area: 514-873-7620

Elsewhere: 1-800-361-7620

(Québec, Canada, United States)

TDD / TTY

For the hearing impaired

Montréal area: 514-954-7763

Elsewhere in Québec: 1-800-565-7763

BY MAIL

Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec

C. P. 19600, succursale Terminus

Québec (Québec) G1K 8J6

IN PERSON

At one of our service centres.

Phone us before leaving. In most cases, we can provide you with the information you need and you will not have to make the trip.



Senior Drivers and Their Caregivers

DRIVING IS A COMPLEX ACTIVITY THAT REQUIRES GOOD PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH.

At ages 75 and 80, and every two years thereafter, drivers must undergo a medical examination in order to ensure that they are able to safely operate a vehicle. These examinations may reveal certain difficulties, but they may also be the source of solutions (e.g. wearing contact lenses or no longer driving at night) that allow senior drivers to keep their licence.

During these examinations, the physician asks questions about the driver's medical history and performs a full physical examination. The physician also takes note of any medication prescribed to the driver and performs any other tests that may be necessary.

Rest assured! Very few drivers who undergo a medical examination have their licence withdrawn:

- > 50% are issued a licence with conditions
- > 45% are issued a licence without conditions
- > 4% have their licence (or a licence class) cancelled
- > Less than 1% have their licence (or a licence class) suspended

Friends and family members of seniors must be on the lookout for the warning signs of unsafe driving. For example, have you noticed that an elderly person that you are close to:

- > is confused when merging onto or exiting a road?
- > forgets the route that he or she usually takes?
- > stops at intersections at the last minute, or forgets to stop altogether?
- > needs a passenger's help in order to drive?
- > has difficulty backing up?
- > gets honked or shouted at by other drivers on a regular basis?

Friends and family members of a senior who has started to show these signs need to have a frank and open discussion about that person's driving issues.

If need be, suggest a consultation with a health care professional, a review of driving knowledge and skills, or a look into the other transportation options available. Some seniors decide for themselves that it is time to give up driving.

Sometimes, senior drivers only need to change their driving habits. These changes might include:

- > avoiding driving during rush hour;
- > planning for long trips and including rest stops along the way;
- > driving only in familiar surroundings;
- > avoiding driving at night or in bad weather;
- > avoiding driving when they do not feel well or when they have taken medication that could reduce their ability to concentrate or cause drowsiness;
- > choosing a vehicle that can make driving easier (automatic transmission, power windows, etc.).

