

# Returning to Driving

## A Step-by-Step Guide to Returning to Driving in Ireland

### 1. Consult your GP

Before resuming driving, discuss your medical condition with your GP or consultant. They will assess your fitness to drive based on the current Sláinte agus Tiomáint Medical Fitness to Drive Guidelines. These guidelines are regularly updated and provide specific advice for various medical conditions .

### 2. Understand Mandatory Reporting Requirements

Certain medical conditions must be reported to the NDLS. These include:

- Epilepsy or seizures
- Stroke or transient ischaemic attack (TIA)
- Diabetes treated with insulin or sulphonyl urea tablets
- Serious vision or hearing impairments
- Neurological disorders (e.g., Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis)
- Severe psychiatric illnesses
- Sleep disorders (e.g., sleep apnoea, narcolepsy)

Failure to report these conditions can result in fines up to €5,000 and potential prosecution if an accident occurs.

### 3. Complete a Medical Report Form (D501)

If your condition requires reporting, your doctor must complete a Medical Report Form (D501). This form assesses your medical fitness to drive and must be submitted to the NDLS within one month of completion.

## 4. Undergo Driving Assessments if Necessary

Depending on your condition, you may need to undergo:

- Off-Road Assessment: Conducted by an occupational therapist to evaluate cognitive and physical abilities related to driving.
- On-Road Assessment: Performed by a specialist driving assessor (IWA) to observe your driving skills in real traffic conditions.
- These assessments help determine if you can drive safely or if vehicle adaptations are needed.

## 5. Inform Your Insurance Provider

Notify your car insurance company about your medical condition and any vehicle adaptations. Failure to do so may invalidate your insurance policy.

## 6. Apply for Licence Amendments if Required

If your driving licence needs to reflect medical conditions or vehicle adaptations, apply for a change of personal details through the NDLS. This ensures your licence accurately represents your driving capabilities.

## 7. Consider Vehicle Adaptations

If physical limitations affect your driving, vehicle modifications can assist. Consult with an occupational therapist or driving assessor to determine suitable adaptations. Examples include:

- Left Foot Accelerator Pedal: For drivers with right leg impairments.
- Hand Controls: Allow acceleration and braking using hand-operated devices.
- Steering Wheel Knob: Facilitates easier steering for those with limited hand strength.
- Ensure any adaptations are installed by certified professionals and inform your insurance provider of these changes.

## Additional Resources

- Road Safety Authority (RSA)
- National Driver Licence Service (NDLS)
- Headway Ireland: Support for individuals with brain injuries.
- For personalized advice, consult with your occupational therapist or healthcare provider.