

# 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.