

Driver Evaluation Program Frequently Asked Questions

Why was I referred to the Driver Evaluation Program (DEP)?

If you received a letter to attend the DEP from SGI-MRU (SGI Medical Review Unit), that means that SGI received medical information that indicated you have a medical problem that **may** impact safety and function for the activity of driving.

The goal of this program is to determine if your medical issues have any impact on safe driving performance. If there is no impact on your driving function, you will be supported in maintaining or for reinstating your license. If there is some impact on driving ability, then, the goal will be to determine whether there are any recommendations to improve function and safety or whether driving is prohibited.

Medical information provided to SGI can be reported from your family physician, specialist, occupational therapist, other health care providers, ABI services, other SGI departments, school divisions or from concerned community members.

Being referred to the DEP, allows you to obtain a functional assessment of driving ability; that means the focus on the assessment is not to follow the rules of the road perfectly. It takes longstanding driving habits and driving style into account. When you drive, you are not required to drive “perfectly”, but you have to demonstrate awareness of the traffic around you, respond appropriately, and drive in a safe manner.

If difficulties are demonstrated, but can be compensated for, then recommendations will be provided on measures that can be taken to be safe. This may include specific techniques or adaptive equipment. For example, this may also include driving in restricted driving areas such as a small area within the community you live in.

There are three possible outcomes from this assessment:

- Driving with no restrictions, regular license
- Driving with some restriction (example; a specific distance, community, daytime driving, specific routes, or adaptive equipment).
- Driving prohibited temporarily or permanently.

How long does the assessment take?

The amount of time the assessment takes can vary depending on the type of problem you have. Assessment time usually is between 4-6 hours and typically completed over 2 days. You can bring snacks and extra breaks can be provided.

Can I drive my own vehicle?

For insurance and liability issues we must be in a driver instructor’s vehicle. The driver instructor has a brake and/or brake/accelerator to ensure safety of the driver and the assessors in the vehicle.

Can I have someone come with me to the assessment?

This assessment is considered to be independent for the individual being referred. They can have a support person present at the beginning of the interview for communication and to clarify any questions they may have. They may NOT take part in the testing process.

Who pays for the evaluation?

There are times that a third party will cover the cost of the assessment. This may occur if possible driving limitations or difficulties are related to a specific injury or disability that the company has agreed to financially cover. For example, after a work related injury or after sustaining injuries from a motor vehicle accident. Otherwise, you are responsible for the cost of the assessment.

I have not driven in a city in a long time or I only drive in the town that I live in. How do you assess drivers from rural areas?

If your goal is to only drive in the small community that you live in, that will be taken into account when you drive. When you drive during the assessment, you will be driving in driving environments or situations that you will potentially encounter in the areas that you drive. For example, if you drive in a community that does not have traffic lights, speed is 40 km throughout the town, there is one school and no high speed driving (over 60km/hr) is involved, then when you drive for the assessment, you will be required to interact with low traffic flow, deal with parked vehicles, respond to stop signs, yield signs, uncontrolled intersections and school zones.

If you want to drive on highways then you have to demonstrate ability and safety for driving on those types of roadways. For example, you may have to drive on gravel roads, secondary highways, divided highways etc.

That means that the assessment will address whatever your driving goal is. For example:

- Driving with no restrictions, which means you are required to drive in low speed and high-speed driving areas (below 60 km and above 100 km), interact with both low traffic flow and busier congested traffic flow, merging from low to high speed environments and from high to low speed areas, basic navigation skills including finding road signs and other driving tasks that are required for any independent driver in various familiar and unfamiliar situations.
- Driving only in the community of Asquith. You would be required to drive under 60 km/hr, respond to stop signs, yield signs, 4 way stops, school zone sign, uncontrolled intersections, and low traffic flow.

Who gets the evaluation report?

All reports are sent to the **Medical Review Unit** at **SGI** and to your **family doctor**. If you are paying, with your signed consent, the report may be sent to anyone else you like. If a third party is paying for the assessment they determine who gets a copy of the report.

What can I do if I do not agree with the results of the assessment?

We are not the licensing body, SGI is. Assessment results are recommendations only. SGI makes all final licensing decisions. If you want to appeal a licensing decision, you should contact SGI directly and they will provide you with applicable information in regards to how to make an appeal.

I am a good driver and have never had an accident, Does that matter?

This assessment involves looking at your present ability. The focus is not on past performance.

I feel that I am being singled out due to my age.

Age is not the primary limiting factor in determining whether someone should drive or not.

It is acknowledged that age related changes of the visual system and of your physical abilities does impact how you are able to respond while driving. It is also well known, that the brain is slowing down as we age and it takes longer for the brain to tell the body what to do, and then for the body to complete the movement during driving tasks. Furthermore, as we get older we tend to have more medical conditions and more medication use (multiple comorbidities, as well as, potential side effects with multiple medication use) which can also impact overall function from both a “thinking” standpoint and “physical” standpoint during driving activities.

I see people on the road who I do not think should drive, what can I do?

If you have concerns regarding a person's capacity for driving in terms of safety on the roadways and possibility for collisions or injuries to self or others please contact SGI MRU:

- <https://www.sgi.sk.ca/medical-conditions>
- [email: mruinquiries@sgi.sk.ca](mailto:mruinquiries@sgi.sk.ca)
- **Medical Review Unit - 3rd Floor 2260- 11th Ave., Regina, SK S4P 2N7**
- **Toll Free Phone Number: 1-800-667-8015 ext. 6176**
- **Local Phone: 306-775-6176**
- **Toll Free Fax: 1-866-274-4417or 306-347-2577**