

What to do when your driver's licence is suspended

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Having your licence suspended is frustrating and the process of getting it back can be confusing. This pamphlet explains why reports are made to the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) and how you can get your licence back.

This information represents CAMH's best efforts to describe the steps to take when a driver's licence has been suspended for medical reasons. It is current as of 2021.

Why was my licence reported?

The Highway Traffic Act sets out rules for health care providers to report certain medical conditions to the MTO. By law, doctors, nurse practitioners and optometrists must report conditions that can prevent you from driving safely, even if you do not have a driver's licence. There are mandatory and discretionary reasons for reporting.

Mandatory reporting:

- must be done by a doctor, nurse practitioner or optometrist
- occurs when you have a certain medical condition
- results in suspension of your driver's licence.

Discretionary reporting:

- can be done by a doctor, nurse practitioner, optometrist or occupational therapist
- occurs when you have a medical condition that poses a risk to road safety
- does not always lead to a driver's licence suspension.

Medical conditions that are mandatory to report

Cognitive impairment: Medical conditions that affect a person's ability to remember, learn new things, concentrate, react quickly, plan or make decisions, in a way that seriously limits their ability to perform daily activities. Examples include dementia, brain injury and brain tumour.

Sudden incapacitation: Includes medical conditions that carry a risk of suddenly or unexpectedly being unable to drive safely. They are likely to happen more than once. Examples include seizure, fainting and stroke.

Motor or sensory impairment: Includes medical conditions that impair muscle strength and control, movement and feeling. Examples include neurological diseases, spinal cord injuries and loss of limb.

Visual impairment: Involves trouble seeing and other vision problems. Examples include reduced sight even when wearing glasses or contact lenses, and double vision.

Uncontrolled substance use disorder: Involves cravings for a substance and difficulty controlling how much or how often the person uses it despite its risks and side effects. In addition, the person does not follow treatment recommendations (e.g., getting addiction treatment).

Psychiatric illness: Involves acute psychosis or severe abnormalities of perception (e.g., trouble knowing what is real and what is not). It also includes situations where a person has a suicide plan involving a vehicle or intends to use a vehicle to harm others.

How will I know if my licence has been reported?

The health care provider who reports your condition to the MTO does not have to tell you that they made a report. However, regulatory health colleges advise health care providers to tell patients, preferably before they make the report, unless it is not possible or if informing the patient would put the patient or others at risk of harm.

When your licence is reported, the MTO will send you a notice of suspension. It will also send a letter that explains what information you must send to the MTO so it can consider reinstating your licence. The information the MTO needs depends on the medical condition.

The notice of suspension and the letter go to the home address that the MTO has on record. It is the same address that is on your driver's licence. It is your responsibility to update your address if you move. You can update your address for free at a ServiceOntario Centre. You can also update it online at www.ontario.ca (search "Change an address").

Can I get my driver's licence back?

Absolutely! The process of getting your licence back is called licence reinstatement. The following steps explain how to get your licence considered for reinstatement:

1. Read the letter from the MTO.

The letter will tell you why your licence was suspended and what information and forms the MTO needs so it can consider reinstating your licence.

If the letter gets lost, or if you need to contact the MTO to ask about your suspension, contact the MTO's Driver Medical Review Office (see "Key contacts" in this pamphlet).

2. Get medical documentation.

The only way to have your licence considered for reinstatement is by having a health care provider fill out any forms that the MTO sent to you. Make sure they fill out every section of the form.

The health care provider who completes the medical documentation does not need to be the person who reported your medical condition and does not need to be a specialist.

If you do not have an ongoing treatment relationship with the health care provider who reported your condition, they are probably not the most appropriate person to complete the medical documentation. Some private agencies can provide this letter, but they cost money.

It is best to ask your family doctor or nurse practitioner if they can support you with this process. If you do not have a family doctor or a nurse practitioner, see "Key contacts" for how to connect with one through Health Care Connect.

When you have an appointment with the health care provider, bring the notice of suspension, the letter from the MTO and any forms that the MTO sent to you.

3. Send the medical documentation to the MTO.

You can email the documents to drivermedicalreview@ontario.ca. The documentation must be attached to the email as a PDF file, not as a picture that you take.

You can also send the documents to the address below.

Keep a copy for your records.

Ministry of Transportation
Transportation Safety, Driver and Vehicle Services
Driver Medical Review Office
77 Wellesley St. West, Box 589
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1N3

4. The MTO will review your medical documentation.

The review generally happens within 30 business days (six weeks). The MTO will then send you a notice in the mail to let you know whether or not you can legally drive, or whether you need to send them more information.

5. Send more information if the MTO asks for it.

The MTO may send you another letter to ask for more medical information before it can make a decision about your licence. You must submit this information by the date the MTO indicates, otherwise your licence will stay suspended. You may also need to complete a functional assessment at an assessment centre.

A functional assessment includes an in-clinic medical test by an occupational therapist and an on-road driving test with an occupational therapist and a driving instructor. The process takes three to four hours. Approved assessment centres across Ontario can be found online through the MTO's Driver Medical Review Office (see "Key contacts"). The cost ranges from \$400 to \$800 and is not covered by OHIP or the MTO. Sometimes insurance companies cover the cost.

You will get an email letting you know when the MTO has received your documents. You can also check the status of your licence by calling the MTO's Driver Medical Review Office or by checking online (see "Key contacts").

Your licence will be reinstated if two conditions are met:

- The medical documentation from your health care provider shows that you meet the MTO's medical standards to drive, and you also passed the functional assessment if you had to do one.
- You do not have unpaid fees or other requirements on your driving record.

Appealing your licence suspension

If your licence is not reinstated, you can submit an appeal to the Licence Appeal Tribunal. Appealing a licence suspension is the process of asking to get your licence back. Before you begin the process, call the MTO's Driver Medical Review Office to confirm the status of your driver's licence.

The appeal process can take a long time and costs about \$110. The Licence Appeal Tribunal makes decisions about reinstating a licence that has been suspended for medical reasons. Hospitals are not involved in these decisions. Making an appeal does not guarantee that you will get your licence back.

If you choose to appeal a medical suspension, you must complete the Notice of Appeal – Medical Driver's Licence Suspension form. You must then send the form with payment to the Licence Appeal Tribunal. You may also send medical reports related to your medical condition with the form. If your suspension is because of a vision problem, it cannot be appealed.

The Licence Appeal Tribunal will schedule a hearing to take place within 30 days after it receives your completed appeal form, payment and related medical reports. If your appeal is successful, the tribunal will order the MTO to reinstate your licence.

The process to reinstate a licence or appeal a suspension can be time-consuming, expensive and frustrating. If you need support, reach out to your care team or to the key contacts listed here.

Key contacts

Health Care Connect: to find a doctor or nurse who can write you a letter to get your licence reinstated

Toll-free tel.: 1 800 445-1822, press 5

<https://hcc3.hcc.moh.gov.on.ca>

Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) – Driver Medical Review Office

Tel.: 416 235-1773

Toll-free tel.: 1 800 268-1481

Email: drivermedicalreview@ontario.ca

Fax: 416 235-3400 or toll-free: 1 800 304-7889

Online fax: 1 800 268-1481 (to send medical documents)

www.ontario.ca/page/medical-review-ontario-drivers

Licence Appeal Tribunal: to get information about the appeal process

Tel.: 416 327-6500 or toll-free 1 844 242-0608

Email: LATregistrar@ontario.ca

<https://tribunalsontario.ca> (search for "GS: Appeals and applications")

Notice of Appeal – Medical Driver's Licence Suspension form:

<https://tribunalsontario.ca/lat/general-service/forms>

Mental health resources

Access CAMH: to find out about supports at CAMH

Tel.: 416 535-8501, option 2

www.camh.ca/en/your-care/access-camh

ConnexOntario: to find out about community mental health supports

Toll-free tel.: 1 866 531-2600

www.connexontario.ca

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If you have questions, concerns or compliments about services at CAMH, please contact the Client Relations Office:

Tel.: 416 535-8501 ext. 32027

Email: client.relations@camh.ca

Family members can contact the Family Resource Centre in the RBC Patient and Family Learning Space for information and support:

1025 Queen St. West (McCain Complex Care and Recovery Building), ground floor

Tel.: 416 535-8501 ext. 33202

Email: familyengagement@camh.ca

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