



QUEEN STREET  
MEDICAL



# DRIVING **MEDICALS**



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## QUEEN STREET MEDICAL DRIVERS MEDICALS

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency requires renewal of driving licences when we turn 75, 80, and every two years thereafter.

The information below is applicable if you are turning 75 years of age.

Our ability to drive safely decreases over time. Older age in itself is not a contra-indication to driving, however medical conditions may affect how safely we perform this function.

Your doctor/nurse practitioner is legally bound by Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency to ensure you are fit to drive safely. Driving is not a right, and a balance must be struck between the quality of life of you as a driver, and keeping both you and other road users safe.

Renewing your licence includes getting a medical certificate from a doctor/nurse practitioner that knows you best. Please ensure that you book an appointment with your own Doctor at least 4 weeks before your licence is due to expire.



## WHAT IS THE COST OF A DRIVERS MEDICAL?

Unlike a standard doctor/nurse practitioner consultation, the costs in obtaining a driver medical certificate is not funded by any government subsidy. Effective now, the cost is \$90.



## MEDICAL ASSESSMENT APPOINTMENT

When you turn 75, securing a driving medical certificate requires an assessment with your doctor/nurse practitioner who will:

- + Review of your memory/concentration test results;
- + Check your mobility, coordination and reactions;
- + Perform a physical and eyesight examination;
- + Review your current medications and medical history; and
- + Ask any other health related questions that may be needed.

If the doctor/nurse practitioner is concerned about your memory, concentration or ability to think clearly, you will be referred to our nursing team for a Mini-Ace. This assessment takes about 15 minutes and doesn't cost. More information on Mini-Ace can be found on page 7.

If you are under the care of an eye specialist, you will need to bring with you an eye-sight certificate from them (this is important if you sufferer from glaucoma and cataracts, or if you only have vision in one eye).

If you wear glasses for driving but are not under specialist care, we suggest you see your optometrist for a checkup. They can complete a form for us to review and for you to take with you to AA when you are renewing your licence, which will cut out the requirement for an eye-test at AA. Note: this checkup needs to be within 60 days of your birthday to be valid).

Please bring your glasses (both reading and/or driving) to your doctor/nurse practitioner appointment.

*Note that Class 2-5 licenses (Trucks and heavy vehicles) and P (Passenger) and FTWR endorsements have more stringent requirements than Class 1 (Light motor vehicles) Maintaining some of these licenses may require specialist sign-off if you suffer from certain conditions.*



## OUTCOME OF THE ASSESSMENT

You will either be deemed:

1. Completely fit to continue driving; or
2. Completely fit to continue driving with restrictions (eg no night-time driving, or limited to a certain radius, e.g. locally only) or for a limited time duration (eg six or 12 months); or
3. In need of further assessment; or
4. Unfit to continue driving.

If there are any aspects of this medical that we are concerned about, we will discuss your options. We may refer you to an optometrist or for an on-road driving test, either with the AA or with an Occupational Therapist skilled at driving assessment. Please be aware there may be additional costs involved.

**Continuing to drive without a valid license is an offence under the Land Transport Act, and your doctor/nurse practitioner is legally bound to inform Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency if they become aware of this.**



## WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU FAIL THE MEDICAL OR NEED FURTHER ASSESSMENT?

If the examination reveals medical conditions that need further assessment to determine your fitness to drive, your doctor/nurse practitioner will inform you on the next step(s).



## EYE-SIGHT DOES NOT MEET THE MINIMUM WAKA KOTAHI NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY CRITERIA

Your doctor/nurse practitioner will refer you to an eye specialist or optometrist (who have more sophisticated equipment) to review your vision to see if it can be improved. If they can make changes that meet the minimum acceptable eyesight requirements, they will furnish you with a Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency Eyesight Certificate, which can be brought back to your doctor/nurse practitioner, who can then complete your Medical Certificate.



## A MEMORY TEST INDICATING MEMORY LOSS

At 75 years of age, we do not automatically require you to do a memory test, however your doctor/nurse practitioner may refer you for a Mini-Ace should he/she feel it is appropriate. Driving is a very complicated process and requires full engagement of our higher functions (cognition). We are often able to manage the mechanics of driving quite easily, but that does not necessarily make us a safe driver. We must be able to react quickly, safely and effectively to situations that may occur on the road. More information on Mini-Ace can be found on page 6.

- + Minor memory/cognition problems: A borderline screening test will indicate to your doctor that something may be amiss with your memory. It may not be significant enough to stop you from driving. You may be referred to a specialist driving occupational therapist (OT ) for an assessment.
- + More significant memory/cognition problems: Should the OT assessor deem you are not fit to drive, your doctor will not renew your medical certificate. If you have a low score on the screening test, this would indicate a high likelihood of failing the OT driving assessment.

Your doctor/nurse practitioner is legally obliged to inform Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency of failed OT assessments and if you should refuse to undertake the recommended test. You may simply accept that your driver's licence has lapsed, and not seek to renew it at this point.



## OTHER MEDICAL CONDITIONS FOR FAILING THE DRIVING ASSESSMENT AND/OR SPECIALIST CLEARANCE REQUIRED

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency has a list of conditions that are incompatible with the safe operation of motor vehicles on NZ roads. These include certain neurological conditions like Strokes, Recurrent TIAs, Epilepsy, Loss of Consciousness, Neuromuscular disorders, including Parkinson's disease, Dementia and other memory impairment; shortly following heart attack, irregular heartbeat, severe high blood pressure, heart failure and Cardiomyopathy, uncontrolled diabetes and certain mental health conditions, among a number of other conditions. Improving symptoms or impairment could result in a return to/continuation of driving, and in certain conditions a specialist's clearance is required.



## In WHAT OPTIONS DO YOU HAVE IF YOUR DOCTOR/NURSE PRACTITIONER FAILS YOUR MEDICAL CERTIFICATE?

- + You are entitled to a second opinion from another doctor/nurse practitioner in this practice who has access to your health records, or another doctor/nurse practitioner outside of our practice. The usual (non-subsidised) fee would apply. Please note that failing to disclose your pre-existing medical conditions or a failed cognitive screening test to such a doctor/nurse practitioner is an offence under the Land Transport Act, and is punishable by law (Using a document by deceit). As doctors/nurse practitioners we are bound to report such acts to Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency should we become aware of such a failure to disclose.
- + You may seek an opinion from a specialist in the field that affects your ability to meet the standard (E.g. Cardiologist, Psychiatrist or Geriatrician). These assessments may not be provided by the public health sector.
- + There are many transport options available should you be medically unfit to drive, including mobility scooters and power chairs, vehicle modifications and lottery grants, the Total Mobility Taxi scheme, and subsidised off-peak public transport. We are able to advise you on what options may suit you best.

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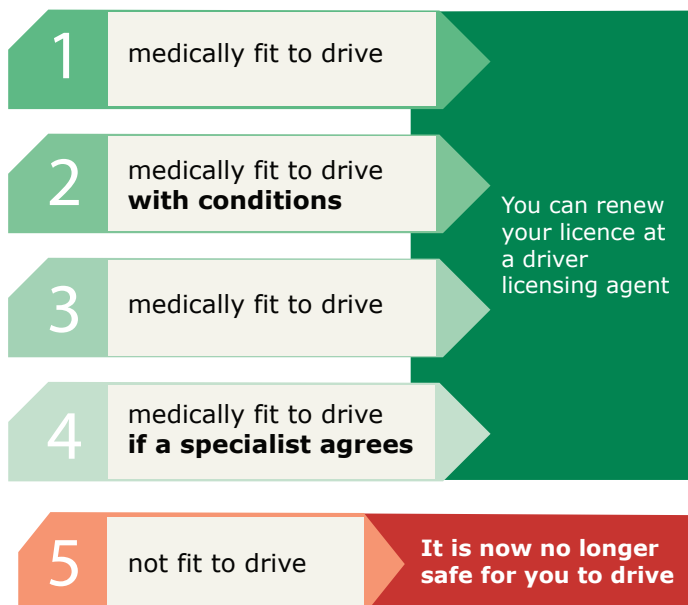
## INFORMATION ON MINI-ACE

The Mini-ACE Cognitive Impairment Screening Tool is a widely used instrument in New Zealand for assessing the cognitive function of older adults. Developed by the New Zealand Dementia Cooperative, the Mini-ACE test consists of 10 questions that assess different cognitive domains such as memory, language, and visuospatial function. It replaces the Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA®).

The tool is easy to administer, takes approximately 10 minutes to complete, and can be used in a variety of settings, including primary care clinics and community-based services. The Mini-ACE test has been validated as an effective screening tool for detecting cognitive impairment, including early-stage dementia. It has been shown to have high sensitivity and specificity, which means it is a reliable and accurate tool for identifying individuals who may require further cognitive assessment.

- Time: it takes around five minutes to complete
- Ease of use: it is straight forward and easy to use
- Ease of transition: it is free and uses familiar testing techniques.

**Your health care professional decides if you are either:**





YOUR APPOINTMENT IS WITH:

Doctor:

Date:

Time:



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