



The Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities  
**Accessibility and Disability Policy Webinar Series**  
January 9, 2025

# **Adaptive Driving: Your Key to Independence**

presented by  
Texas Department of Public Safety  
Texas Workforce Commission  
Community Independence Solutions  
St. David's Adaptive Driving

For more information: [www.gov.texas.gov/disabilities](http://www.gov.texas.gov/disabilities) • [gcpd@gov.texas.gov](mailto:gcpd@gov.texas.gov) • 512-463-5749

# About GCPD

The Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities (GCPD) has a mission to further opportunities for persons with disabilities to enjoy full and equal access to lives of independence, productivity, and self-determination.

GCPD recommends changes in disability policies and programs in the areas of accessibility, communication, criminal justice, education, emergency preparedness, employment, health, housing, transportation, and veterans. The committee also supports a network of committees on people with disabilities, issues awards to promote greater awareness, and promotes compliance with disability related laws.

# General Information

- Chat is disabled in Zoom Webinar Mode. Please use the Q&A tool if you have questions for our presenters. Most questions will be answered near the end of the webinar.
- After the webinar, you will get an automated email from Zoom with a link to our GCPD page to access the webinar recording and other materials. The email will also include a survey where you can give your feedback.

# Panelist Introductions

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# What is Adaptive Driving?

Adapted driving refers to training or equipment that helps people with disabilities drive safely and confidently. Adapted driving includes:

- Adaptive driving training- Personalized instruction and use of adaptive equipment to help people with physical, cognitive, or learning disabilities drive.
- Adaptive driving equipment- Specialized devices and modifications that can make a vehicle more accessible and easier to drive. This equipment can include pedal extensions, left foot accelerator, adapted mirrors, driving hand controls, transfer seat lifts, and more.

# Adaptive Driving Variations

Vehicle modification and adapted driving training is generally person-centered. Success is dependent on the driver and their disability. Many disabilities will have variations in driving capacity with different functional ranges. Modifications and training can be tailored to the individual's needs.



# Right Leg Amputees

These are individuals who have typically undergone amputation due to a major health event or accident. Since most drivers operate the gas and brake pedals with their right leg, this presents a challenge. Many of these individuals return to driving using hand controls or a left-foot accelerator to compensate for their loss of function.



# Bioptic (Low Vision)



Bioptic lenses are the most common aid for individuals with low vision, although they are not the only option. These lenses assist with driving by providing a magnified view of the road. Driving conditions may vary, and restrictions might include daytime-only driving, avoiding peak hours, or no highway driving to ensure safety.



# Hand-Control Drivers

Individuals with physical disabilities that affect their lower extremities, such as those with spinal cord injuries, amputations, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, or muscular dystrophy, often use hand controls. This adaptation allows them to operate the gas and brake pedals with their hands instead of their feet, enabling them to drive despite their physical limitations.



# Hi-Tech Ability

This category includes a variety of advanced adaptations, such as the ability to drive directly from a powerchair, using specialized technology to accommodate the individual's needs.



# Adaptive Driving Training



Some disabilities may not need adapted equipment but still require adapted driving training.

This includes individuals who communicate or process information differently. This may require curriculum that incorporate different tactics to compensate for these differences. The training may also need to be provided in a different format or with reasonable accommodations.

# Texas Law & Adaptive Driving

## **Transportation Code Sec. 521.221 Subchapter K, Restricted Licenses**

- (a) For good cause, the department may impose a restriction or require an endorsement suitable to the driver's license holder's driving ability. The restriction or endorsement may relate to:
- (1) The type of motor vehicle that the holder may operate.
  - (2) A special mechanical control device required on a motor vehicle that the holder may operate.
  - (3) Mechanical attachments, including glasses or an artificial limb, required on the person of the holder.
  - (4) An area, location, road, or highway in this state on which the holder is permitted to drive a motor vehicle.
  - (5) The time of day that the holder is permitted to operate a motor vehicle; and
  - (6) Any other condition the department determines to be appropriate to ensure the safe operation of a motor vehicle by the holder.
- (b) The department may issue a special restricted license or state the applicable restriction on the regular license.

A person commits an offense if the person operates a motor vehicle in violation of a restriction imposed or without the endorsement required on the license issued to that person. An offense under this subsection is a misdemeanor punishable under Section 521.461.

# Driver License Process

- Before your driver license appointment, use the [REAL ID Document Check](#) tool. This quick online tool asks you questions and creates a personalized list of exactly what documents you will need.
- Use resources like the [Texas Driver's Handbook](#) and "[What it takes to Apply for a DL or ID Card](#)" brochure for more information.
- If you already have a Texas ID, you will need to surrender it when you get you apply for a driver license.

# Step 1: Gather Required Documentation

- Proof of [U.S. Citizenship](#) or [Lawful Presence](#) (if not a U.S. Citizen)
- Proof of [Texas Residency](#)
- Proof of [Identity](#)
- Social Security Number
- Evidence of current Texas Vehicle Registration for each vehicle you own. Visit [Texas Vehicle Registration](#) website for more information. Proof of vehicle registration applies to new residents who are surrendering an out-of-state driver license only.
- Proof of Insurance for each vehicle you own or a statement affirming you do not own a vehicle.
- [Impact Texas Driver \(ITD\)](#) certificate, if you will be taking a driving test for the issuance of your driver license. The certificate must be dated within 90 days for your driving skills test.
- A six-hour adult [Driver Education](#) course, if you are 18 through 24 years of age and applying for your first Texas driver license. This requirement is waived for new residents 18 or older who are surrendering a valid, unexpired driver license from another state. (No driver education requirements for ages 25 and older)

# Step 2: Visit a Driver's License Office

- Visit [Driver License Services – Appointments](#) to schedule an appointment at your local driver license office.
- Complete the [application](#), available online or at the office.
- Provide the following documentation to the license and permit specialist:
  - a. Completed driver license [Application](#) form
  - b. Proof of [U.S. Citizenship](#) or [Lawful Presence](#) (if not a U.S. Citizen)
  - c. Proof of [Texas Residency](#), and
  - d. Proof of [Identity](#).
- Provide Biometric Information (signature and thumbprints)
- Have your picture taken.
- Pay the application [fee](#).
- Pass the vision exam.
- Pass the written knowledge and a practical [driving skills test](#) to demonstrate your understanding of traffic laws and safe driving practices. You may complete the testing at the DPS office or with a [Third Party provider](#).



# Step 3: Final Steps

Once your driver license has been issued, you will receive a temporary driver license that allows you to driver legally while you wait for your permanent card.

- Before leaving the driver license office, carefully review the printed information on your temporary driver license for accuracy. If any of the information is incorrect, please notify the license and permit specialist.
- Your official driver license will typically arrive by mail within 2-3 weeks. To check the mailing status of your card, visit our [mailing status](#) web page.

The following applicants may have additional requirements or services available. Select below for more information:

[\*\*New Texas Residents\*\*](#)

[\*\*Teen Drivers Applicants \(Under 18 years old\)\*\*](#)

[\*\*Temporary Visitors and Foreign Students\*\*](#)

[\*\*Motorcycle Applicants\*\*](#)

[\*\*Veteran Services\*\*](#)



# Suspension or Revocation Documents

Below are some of the different types of documents received:

- Investigation closeout
- Voluntary Surrender
- Completed exams
- DL-44 / DL-45
- Examination/Investigation Request (DL-76)
- Law Enforcement Medical Evaluation Request Physician Referral Form
- Crash reports that have been printed from CRIS.
- Driver License that have been sent in from various sources. Any Driver licenses that are sent to the Department not attached to an investigation closeout or Medical Voluntary Surrender are given to Analyst for the “Items Surrendered” to be put on the record.

# Suspension or Revocation



- Any Voluntary Surrender not related to the Medical Advisory Board (MAB) would be forwarded to Analyst processing voluntary surrender.
- Medical Packets sent to the Department in error are forwarded to DSHS. **Additional information that needs to be updated to a driver's file at DSHS is considered "Feedback". This information is placed in the "Feedback" tray and is forwarded to DSHS once a week.**
- Actions that may be taken are as follows:
  - Medical Advisory Board (MAB) referral
  - Medical Information Required
  - Exam Requirement

# Restriction Codes on Driver License

A restriction code may be placed on any type of driver license or commercial driver license. This is not meant to interfere with your driving but to make you a better driver. Should you wish to have a restriction code removed you should visit a driver license office.

Full List of Restrictions:

<https://www.dps.texas.gov/section/driver-license/driver-license-endorsements-and-restrictions>

A	With corrective lenses	Applicant should be wearing corrective lenses
B	LOFS 21 years of age or older	Individual must have a licensed driver, 21 years of age or older in the front seat
C	Daytime Driving Only	Individual is restricted to daytime driving only.
D	Speed not to exceed 45 mph	Individual is restricted to driving under 45 miles per hour
S	Outside rearview mirror or hearing aid	Applicant should be wearing hearing aids or have at least one outside mirror
T	Automatic transmission	Applicant restricted to no manual transmission vehicle
U	Applicable prosthetic devices	Applicant restricted to having prosthetic devices
W	Power steering	Applicant restricted to having a vehicle with power steering
P8	With telescopic lens	Individual is required to wear telescopic lenses
P31	Class C only; no taxi/bus/emergency vehicle	Individual is restricted to class C vehicles only, and is not allowed to drive taxis, buses or emergency vehicles.
P32	Other	This restriction will be listed on the license (ie bus limited on passenger total)
P34	No express or highway driving	Applicant not allowed to drive on expressways or highways

# Requesting Accommodations from DPS

To request accommodations for services, visit:

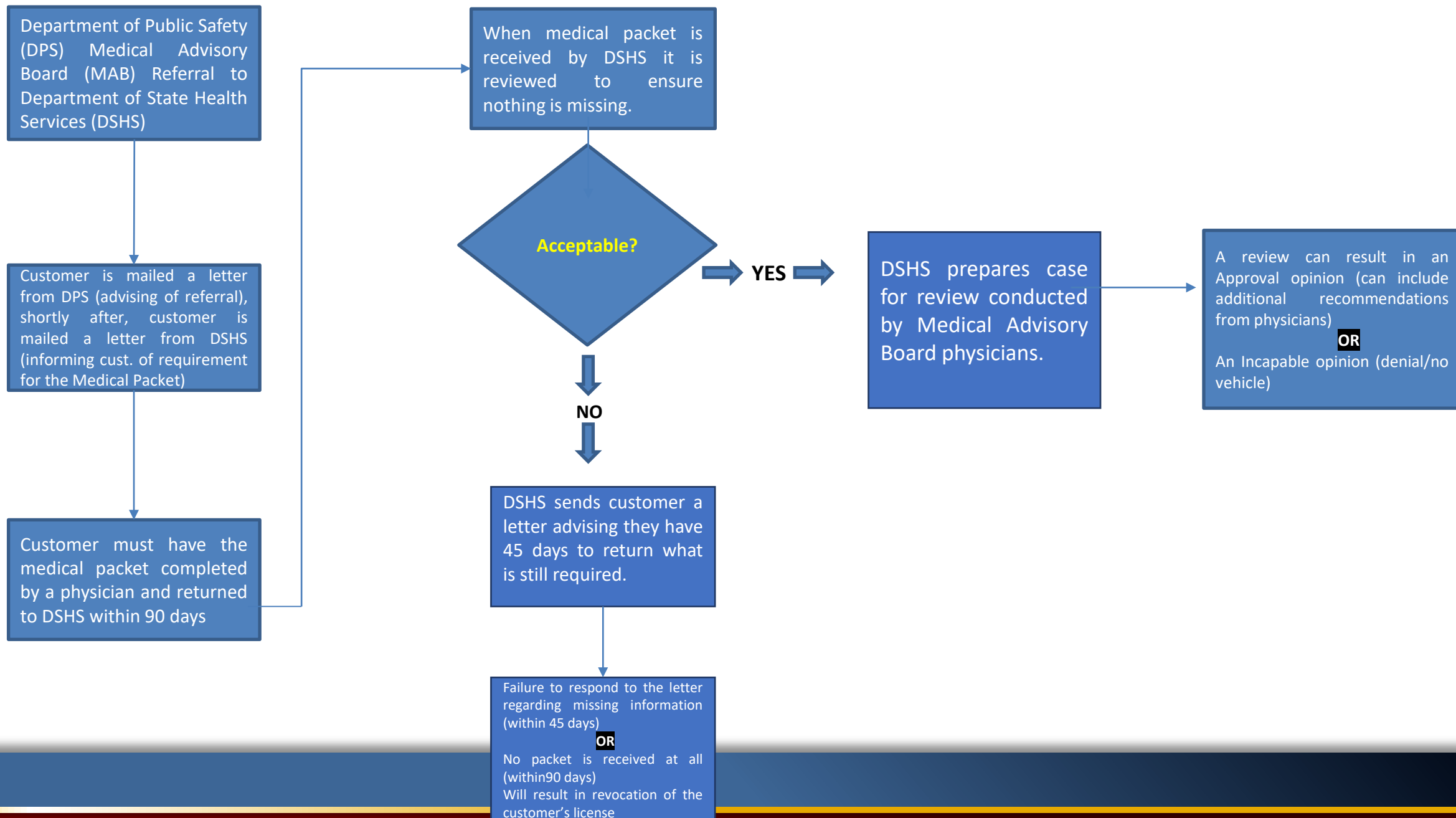
[https://www.dps.texas.gov/apps/DriverLicense/customer\\_service/ADA.aspx](https://www.dps.texas.gov/apps/DriverLicense/customer_service/ADA.aspx)

## Common Accommodation Requests:

- Prioritize elderly and disabled customers
- Help schedule appointments for all customers
- Provide ASL interpreters when appropriate
- Provide extended hours, come in early or stay late when necessary
- Set up homebound appointments; we go to them and process transaction
- Administer comprehensive driving test; might require us to go to them to perform test

# Department of Public Safety (DPS)/Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Medical Advisory Board

- DPS is responsible for maintaining the safety of all individuals who share the roadways in Texas. As a result, it is sometimes necessary to request additional information from license holders regarding certain medical conditions so that we may determine how it may affect their ability to safely operate a motor vehicle.
- Health and Safety code 12.092(b) provides that the Medical Advisory Board shall assist the department in determining whether an applicant for a driver license or a license holder is capable of safely operating a motor vehicle. MAB established a set of guidelines in which to judge cases consistently and fairly. The guidelines were established with the assistance of the American Medical Association's Physician's Guide for Determining Driver Limitation.



**DSHS Opinions sent to DPS**

**No Response/ No Reply Opinion**  
Related enforcement action:  
"REVOKED-MEDICAL ADVISORY BOARD"

**Incapable (Denial/No Vehicle) Opinion**  
Related enforcement action:  
"REVOKED-INCAPABLE"

**Approval Opinion**  
Can include physician recommendations such as:

- Specific license restrictions
- Test required (comprehensive exam)
- Requirement to be reviewed again in 6-12 months

DPS Notice of Revocation is mailed to customer. A hearing can be requested within 20 days from the date of the notice to contest the revocation.

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DPS Approval letter is mailed to the customer. If there are additional recommendations, they will be provided in the letter.

Hearing Requested?

YES

Revocation will not become effective 45 days from the date of the notice. A hearing will be submitted for scheduling.

Hearing Requested?

YES

Revocation will not become effective 45 days from the date of the notice. A hearing will be submitted for scheduling.

NO

NO

Revocation will become effective 45 days from date of notice. Customer must still comply with the Medical Advisory Board.

Revocation will become effective 45 days from date of notice. An approval opinion is required to have the revocation lifted.

## Hearings

Can only be requested to contest No Reply and Incapable revocations.

### Hearing Findings

#### No Reply Revocation

**Affirmative Finding-** A court issues an affirmative finding if it agrees with the Driver License enforcement action.

Revocation will be enforced and will take effect on the 11<sup>th</sup> day after the date the decision was rendered.

DPS Order of Revocation mailed to customer.

To comply an opinion is required from the Medical Advisory Board.

**Negative Finding-** A court issues a negative finding when it does not agree with the DLD enforcement action and agrees with the customer.

Revocation will **not** be enforced, but customer must comply with the Medical Advisory Board.

To comply an opinion is required from the Medical Advisory Board.

Until then a status is placed on the record denying the issuance or renewal of the license.

**Negative Finding Dismissal-** A court issues a dismissal finding when it does not agree with the DLD enforcement action or with the customer.

Revocation will **not** be enforced, but customer must comply with the Medical Advisory Board.

To comply an opinion is required from the Medical Advisory Board.

Until then a status is placed on the record denying the issuance or renewal of the license.

### Hearing Findings

#### Incapable Revocation

**Affirmative Finding-** A court issues an affirmative finding if it agrees with the Driver License enforcement action.

Revocation will be enforced and will take effect on the 11<sup>th</sup> day after the date the decision was rendered.

DPS Order of Revocation mailed to customer.

To comply an approval opinion is required from the Medical Advisory Board.

**Negative Finding-** A court issues a negative finding when it does not agree with the DLD enforcement action and agrees with the customer.

Revocation will **not** be enforced, and customer is no longer required to comply with the Medical Advisory Board.

**Negative Finding Dismissal-** A court issues a dismissal finding when it does not agree with the DLD enforcement action or with the customer.

Revocation will **not** be enforced, but customer must comply and receive an approval opinion from the Medical Advisory Board.

Until then a status is placed on the record denying the issuance or renewal of the license.

#### An Affirmative Finding can be appealed.

To appeal the judge's decision, an appeal petition must be file-marked or file-stamped by a County or District court within 30 days of the start date of the suspension, disqualification or revocation. A certified copy of the petition signed by the clerk of the court where the petition was filed must be mailed to DPS by **certified mail**.



# Legal Basis for Driver License & Medical Standards References

## Statutory References

- [TRC §521.161- EXAMINATION OF LICENSE APPLICANTS STATES IN PART \(b\) \(2\) \(3\)](#)
- [TRC §521.163- REEXAMINATION \(a\)](#)
- [TRC §521.273- RENEWAL EXAMINATIONS \(a\) \(b\)](#)
- [TRC §521.294- DEPARTMENT'S DETERMINATION FOR LICENSE REVOCATION \(1\) \(3\) \(4\)](#)
- [Health and Safety Code, Sections 12.091-12.098, Subchapter H. Medical Advisory Board](#)

## Administrative Rule References

- [§15.57- Restrictions, Physical](#)
- [§15.58- Medical Advisory Board Referrals](#)

# Vehicle Modification Costs

Modifying a vehicle for a driver or passenger with a disability can cost anywhere between \$20,000 to \$80,000. Some resources are available to help Texans with Disability maintain their transportation independence.

- Texas Workforce Solutions – Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Medicaid, Medicare, and Private Health Insurance
- Independent Living Centers

# Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The purpose of Vocational Rehabilitation Services is to help people with disabilities prepare for work, discover new jobs, keep their existing jobs, or advance in their job.

To sign up for VR Services and get assigned to a VR Counselor, you can do one of these options:

- Call: 512-936-6400
- Email: [vr.office.locator@twc.texas.gov](mailto:vr.office.locator@twc.texas.gov)
- Visit: [Start My VR](#) website and fill out your information.



# VR Policy for Vehicle Modifications

Vehicle modification services help TWC-VR customers achieve competitive integrated employment (CIE) outcomes. Through use of a personal vehicle, these services provide equitable transportation opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The goal of vehicle modification is to promote greater independence and access to communities, educational institutions, and other supports necessary to locate jobs, sustain work and living arrangements, and enable career advancement and related travel. The vehicle modification process includes the following five phases:

1. Criteria for assistance review and approval;
2. Evaluation and training;
3. Vehicle selection and [Texas A&M Transportation Institute](#) (TTI) review;
4. Installation and other considerations; and
5. Vehicle delivery and final configuration.

Vehicle modification requires coordination and team effort. Members of the Vehicle Modification team include the customer, VR Counselor, ATS, service providers, and the State Office. The [VR Services Manual](#) (Part C, Chapter 15: Section D) has more in-depth information that your VR Counselor can review with you.

# VR Policy for Driver Evaluation & Training

Not every vehicle modification request necessitates a driver's evaluation and training. Drivers whose disabilities have not significantly changed and are nonprogressive may move immediately to Phase 3 of the vehicle modification process. However, a driver's evaluation and training are needed in most cases.

Driver's Evaluation: The customer must complete a driver's evaluation with appropriate equipment if—

- The customer has never driven;
- The customer has never driven with adaptive equipment;
- The customer's adaptive equipment may change; or
- The customer's condition or disability has significantly changed or is progressive.

The customer may need training or may be determined not ready to drive even with appropriate adaptive equipment.

# Medical Insurance Coverage

## Medicaid:

- There may be limitations on spending for modifications per year.
- The Managed Care Organization (MCO) may approve requests that exceed the maximum limit if the member agrees to pay the difference.
- The MCO is typically responsible for coordination of modifications from start to finish.

## Medicare Part B:

- Must meet requirements for Durable Medical Equipment (DME).
- Must undergo medical evaluation and get a prescription for DME.

## Private Insurance:

- Coverage varies depending on the benefit plan you have.
- Call your insurance to determine coverage and process.



# Centers for Independent Living Services

- Centers for Independent Living Services are available to help individuals with disabilities who need modified vehicles but cannot work.
- These centers can help identify additional financial resources and provide support throughout the process.
- To find your local Center for Independent Living, visit:  
<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/assistive-services-providers/centers-independent-living-cil>

# Is Driving the Right Choice for Me?

Driving is not a decision to take lightly. Even with modifications and training, there are considerations such as the investment of time and money or the physical/emotional stress that driving can create for you. It is important to remember:

- Driving is a privilege, not a right.
- Results of your driving evaluation will impact your decision.
- There are often alternatives to driving that will still allow you to participate in society.



# Texas Driving with Disability

Texas Driving with Disability is a multi-agency program that focuses on improving interactions between law enforcement and drivers with disabilities with unique communication needs. Texans now have the option to disclose “Communication Impediment” directly on the front of their Driver License or State ID or when registering their vehicle through the DMV. This will alert the trained officer of an individual who may be slower to respond or one who is deaf or hard of hearing.

For more information on this program, visit:

<https://gov.texas.gov/organization/disabilities/texas-driving-with-disability>

# Driving Resources

[Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists](#) (Provider listing)

[National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association](#) (Dealer listing)

[American Occupational Therapy Association](#) (Provider listing)

[Disability Parking Placards](#) (TxDMV)

Driver Education Programs

1. [Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation Listings](#)
2. [Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#)
3. [Texas School for the Deaf](#) (school year & summer)

[Rebates for Modifications of New Vehicles](#)

# Q&A

