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LITERATURE SEARCH: Driver's License Testing Requirements

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Summary of Results: Within this preliminary literature search, most studies pertaining to license testing requirements relate to teen and elder drivers. These 12 results were pulled from TRID (Transportation Research International Documentation) and Rosa-P, and arranged by most recent study first. A few other studies not included here go into greater detail on CDL licensing requirements. Further research may not produce many additional, recent results. The first report listed below ("Countermeasures that work") may be the most current and comprehensive examination of driving safety measures to date.

Links and abstracts are listed with the citations. Links open to full-text documents, pages that allow PDF downloads, or abstract pages. Articles and papers not openly available full text can be obtained through interlibrary loans.

Kirley, B. B., Robison, K. L., Goodwin, A. H., Harmon, K. J. O'Brien, N. P., West, A., Harrell, S. S., Thomas, L., & Brookshire, K. (2023, November). *Countermeasures that work: A highway safety countermeasure guide for State Highway Safety Offices, 11th edition, 2023 (Report No. DOT HS 813 490)*. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. <https://rosap.nhtl.bts.gov/view/dot/72947>

The guide is a basic reference to assist State Highway Safety Offices (SHSOs) in selecting effective, evidence-based countermeasures for traffic safety problem areas. These areas include Alcohol-Impaired Driving, Drug-Impaired Driving, Seat Belts and Child Restraints, Speeding and Speed Management, Distracted Driving, Motorcycle Safety, Young Drivers, Older Drivers, Pedestrian Safety, Bicycle Safety, and Drowsy Driving.

The guide describes major countermeasure strategies and specific countermeasures that are relevant to SHSOs; summarizes strategy/countermeasure use, effectiveness, costs, and implementation time; and provides references to the most important research summaries and individual studies.

Ehsani, J. P., Kinnear, N. (2021) Young driver licensing and COVID-19. *Injury Prevention*, 27(6), 574-576. <https://doi.org/10.1136/injuryprev-2020-044053>

Shortly after the first cases of the COVID-19 in the USA, a number of US states, including Georgia, Wisconsin, and Texas, suspended the on-road driving test for teenagers to obtain a driver's license. This commentary article focuses on current driver education and licensing for teenage drivers, with an emphasis on modifications due to COVID. Topics include graduated driver licensing requirements, online driver education, hazard perception training, use of a driving simulator for testing, parent-teen driving agreements, driver monitoring technologies, state policies and regulations, and measures to evaluate the impact of any modifications made during the COVID era.

Koppel, S., Bugeja, L., Stephens, A., Cartwright, A., Osborne, R., Williams, G., Peiris, S., Di Stefano, M., Charlton, J. L. (2020). The Safety Benefits of Older Drivers Attending an In-Person Licence Renewal. *Journal of Transport & Health*, 17(0), 100845. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2020.100845>

This study systematically reviewed the literature on key issues relating to the safety benefits of older drivers attending an in-person license renewal. This included identifying: 1) screening tools that are suitable for inclusion in a population based in-person license renewal process for drivers aged 75 years and older which: a) can be administered by non-health professionals (or via a computer terminal/smart device), and b) are compatible with Australian fitness to drive requirements; 2) the evidence that in-person license renewal policies are associated with safety benefits, as defined by: a) a reduction in motor vehicle crash risk, or b) on-road driving test outcomes. This review was registered with PROSPERO 2019: CRD42019120809. A systematic search of public health, psychology and transport databases was conducted on March 20th 2019. Five studies published between 1986 and 2011 met the inclusion criteria. The review did not identify any suitable screening tools for inclusion in a population-based in-person license renewal process for older drivers. There was inconclusive evidence regarding the safety benefits associated with in-person license renewal policies for older drivers. Two studies reported that these policies were associated with a reduced crash risk. However, two studies reported that these policies were not associated with a reduced crash risk, and a third study provided inconclusive evidence. It is important to note that the included studies were conducted across different licensing jurisdictions, with different in-person license renewal policies “both with and without vision and cognitive testing, which limit the generalizability of the findings. It is recommended that a population-based controlled research study in multiple licensing jurisdictions is conducted to specifically investigate the safety benefits of in-person license renewal policies, as well as the efficacy of different components (including screening by health professionals prior to renewal), as a means to reduce road trauma.

Lococo, K. H., Sifrit, K. J., Stutts, J., Joyce, J. J., Staplin, L. (2017). *Medical Review Practices for Driver Licensing, Volume 2: Case Studies of Medical Referrals and Licensing Outcomes in Six States*. TransAnalytics, LLC; National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/documents/12805_mab_driverlicensingvol2_031317_v3a-tag.pdf

This is the second of three reports examining driver medical review practices in the United States and how they fulfill the basic functions of identifying, assessing, and rendering licensing decisions on medically at-risk drivers. This volume presents the findings of case studies describing the referral sources, medical review requirements, and licensing outcomes for a random sample of 500 passenger vehicle drivers referred for initial medical review/reexamination in six States in 2012: Maine, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin. Results, presented on a State-by-State basis, include (1) sampling methodology, (2) referral sources and proportions of the sample referred by each, (3) the proportions of drivers required to submit medical statements from their treating physicians and/or undergo vision, knowledge, and road testing as a result of medical review, and (4) licensing outcomes by each referral source sampled, including no change in license status; licensed with a periodic review requirement and/or driving restrictions; loss of licensure; or voluntarily license cancellation. Following the State-by-State summaries of referral sources and medical review outcomes, the report compares medical review outcomes organized by referral source, and describes differences in medical review processes and guidelines that may explain observed differences. Conclusions based on observations support recommendations for practices that may: (1) increase appropriate referrals for medical review; (2) improve the medical review process with the goal of maintaining individual and public safety while preserving mobility among those with declining functional abilities; and (3) ensure that licensing agency resources applied to medical review are focused on the subset of drivers most needing to be medically reviewed and tested. Report appendices provide detailed summaries of the medical review process and outcomes for each State's 500-driver sample, including a comparison of case study driver demographics to those of the population of licensed drivers in the State, reasons for referral by referral source, a flow chart showing the medical review process and where

drivers lost licensure at each stage in the process, case disposition times, feedback to reporting source, case cost (where available), proportion of drivers that appealed the licensing agency's decision, and additional analyses where data were provided for unique situations.

Commercial Driver's Licensing: Federal Oversight of State Programs Could Be Improved. U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2015). <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-15-607.pdf>

Commercial motor-vehicle industry stakeholders have raised concerns that prospective drivers may face delays taking the skills test generally needed to obtain a commercial driver's license (CDL). As of July 2015, state CDL programs are subject to revised federal regulations that increase federal safety standards and place new requirements on states' licensing agencies. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) must oversee states' compliance with these rules. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) was asked to review issues related to CDL skills testing. This report examines: (1) how states administer skills tests; (2) what is known about waits for skills tests; and (3) how FMCSA oversees these tests. GAO reviewed FMCSA regulations and oversight policies and documentation; compared FMCSA's policies and practices to federal internal control standards; surveyed licensing agency officials in 50 states and D.C.; interviewed licensing agency officials in 12 states, selected to include states that use a mix of test administration methods and had the largest number of CDL holders, among other factors; and interviewed representatives of industry stakeholders, such as training schools and motor carriers, and FMCSA officials. GAO recommends that FMCSA (1) clarify agency policy on oversight of states' CDL programs and (2) improve or obtain a mechanism to track oversight activities. The Department of Transportation agreed with GAO's recommendations.

Tefft, B.C. (2014). *Driver License Renewal Policies and Fatal Crash Involvement Rates of Older Drivers, United States, 1985-2011*. AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. <https://aaafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/OlderDriverLicenseRenewalReport.pdf>

Previous research has shown that older drivers pose less risk to other people outside of their vehicles than young drivers do; however, risk of crash involvement increases somewhat after approximately age 70–75, and risk of injury or death in the event of a crash increases sharply beyond this age range. Several states attempt to address these risks through laws and policies related to driver license renewal; however, there is little evidence regarding the effectiveness of such policies. Data from 46 U.S. states from years 1985-2011 were examined. Laws and policies investigated were: frequency of license renewal; requirements for drivers to renew their license in person; requirements to pass a vision test, knowledge test, and on-road driving test; and requirements for physicians to report drivers due to specific medical diagnoses and/or concerns about driving ability. Population-averaged negative binomial regression was used to estimate the impact of licensing policies on population-based fatal crash involvement rates of older drivers while adjusting for the effects of other factors that might influence rates of fatal crashes. Requiring license renewal to be conducted in-person was associated with a 9 percent reduction (95% Confidence Interval [CI]: 2% – 14%) in fatal crash involvement rates for drivers ages 55 and older. The reduction appeared to be largest for drivers ages 85 and older (25%, 95% CI: 11% – 37%); however, evidence that the effect varied by age was not statistically significant. Fatal crash involvement rates of drivers ages 85 and older were significantly lower in states that required drivers to pass a vision test when renewing their license than in states that did not; however, changes in vision testing requirements were not associated with changes in rates of fatal crashes, suggesting that the cross-sectional differences between rates of fatal crashes in states with versus without vision testing requirements may be confounded by other factors. Increasing the frequency of license renewals, requiring drivers to pass a knowledge test or an on-road driving test, and

requiring physicians to report patients to the licensing authority were not associated with statistically significant reductions in fatal crash involvement rates.

Dugan, E., Barton, K. N., Coyle, C., Lee, C. M. (2013) U.S. policies to enhance older driver safety: A systematic review of the literature. *Journal of Aging and Social Policy*, 25(4), 335-352.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08959420.2013.816163>

This article features a review of literature regarding state policies about older drivers, examining which policies reduce driver crashes effectively and which areas require further research. The examined policies include those on medical reporting and review, license renewal, and driver testing. Twenty-nine studies were examined, twenty-two of which focused on license renewal and seven on medical reporting. Requirements for in-person license renewal were associated with reduced risk of fatal crashes. License restrictions were connected to fewer miles driven per week. Intensive renewal requirements including a medical report to the licensing authority led to delicensure. Since driving is often essential to mobility and quality of life, the authors recommend that more research is needed.

Thomas III, F. D., Blomberg, R. D., Fisher, D. (2012). *A Fresh Look at Driver Education in America*. Dunlap and Associates, Incorporated; National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. <https://rosap.nhtl.bts.gov/view/dot/1919>

The objectives of this study were to: identify and review current driver education and training programs in use nationally and internationally; identify best teaching practices for teenagers; examine the optimal sequencing for the presentation of safe driving skills in the classroom and behind-the-wheel training; and assess whether a new approach to driver education would be beneficial. These objectives were accomplished using a survey of the driver education rules and practices in the 50 States performed by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) and Driver Education and Training Administrators (DETA); literature reviews of research on teen crashes, the best teaching methodologies for teenagers, and injury prevention strategies for teens; and an expert panel analysis that compared current teaching practices with identified best practices, combining driver training with graduated driver licensing (GDL) systems. Twenty-three states require driver education for all drivers under the age of 18; in 35 states a teen can obtain an unrestricted license before 18 whether or not he/she takes driver education. In 25 states, a teen who takes driver education can get an unrestricted license at a younger age. At least 18 states offer some benefit (waiving practice driving requirements, knowledge tests, road tests, or younger licensure) if a teen takes driver education. Twelve states said they developed specific curriculum guides for their driver education programs to use. Only 13 of 40 responding states were able to indicate how many teen drivers who received their first licenses in 2006 had taken driver education. Most of the states had both high school and commercial programs in operation; a few accept only one type. Six states accepted Internet driver education and 3 states accepted parent-taught driver education. The great majority of driver education programs include 30 hours of classroom instruction although the lowest number is 8 hours and the highest number is 56 hours. Oversight varies widely among states and often involves multiple agencies if more than one form of driver education is acceptable. The key findings were: driver education appears to do a good job in preparing students to pass state licensing examinations; the expectation that driver education by itself will lead to a decreased teen crash rate is unrealistic; GDL has shown evidence of a significant safety benefit and may benefit from greater parental involvement; expanding driver education training beyond the current classroom and behind-the-wheel training by integrating it with graduated driver licensing may have increased traffic safety benefits for young drivers; and an expanded driver education system would start preparing future drivers at an earlier age and encompass more stringent testing than is characteristic of current driver licensing practices.

Ross, J. (2012). *Should Oregon DMV Require a Knowledge Test at Renewal?* Oregon Department of Transportation; Department of Transportation.

<https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Programs/ResearchDocuments/KnowledgeTestAtRenewal.pdf?ga=t>

Persons renewing their Oregon driver license do not need to take a knowledge test. The Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) requested that the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Research Section review the testing practices of other states to determine what alternative approaches are taken to retesting adult drivers for their knowledge of driving practices and laws. A review of state driving laws and policies was completed. No state requires all driver license renewal applicants to take a knowledge test. Fourteen states require a knowledge test or traffic sign recognition test when renewing the driver license if the driver meets certain criteria. States with requirements primarily use criteria that relate to the driving record and license status. Typically it is suspended and/or revoked drivers who must take the knowledge test. In some cases the age of the driver is a consideration. It was also found that few states provide information on new traffic laws and safe driving tips that will be clearly visible to the driver accessing information on the website about driver license renewal.

Molnar, L. J., Eby, D. W. (2005). A Brief Look at Driver License Renewal Policies in the United States. *Public Policy & Aging Report*, 15(2), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ppar/15.2.1>

Driver license renewal policies in the United States vary from state to state in terms of the length of the renewal cycle, requirements for accelerated renewal for older drivers, and other renewal provisions. This article briefly outlines some of these state-to-state differences and comments on the impact of those differences, particularly for senior citizens. The authors note that 17 states have special renewal provisions for older drivers, including requirements for in-person renewal, vision tests, or other testing or certification (e.g., written and road tests). Few states require physician or other professional reporting of unfit drivers to licensing agencies, although many encourage physician reporting or at least do not forbid it. Based on the outcomes of these special renewal provisions for older drivers, as well as other information available to licensing agencies, agency personnel have several choices: allow the driver to keep his or her license, refuse to renew the license or suspend, revoke or restrict the license (e.g., prohibit night driving), or shorten the renewal cycle. The article concludes by commenting on the lack of research data about how well these policies are doing in reducing crash-related injuries and deaths, particularly among older drivers. This lack of data on the effectiveness of specific renewal provisions, coupled with the expenses of additional testing and review, may explain the variations in policies in different states.

Saka, A A; Perrino, C S; Hayes, C N. (1997). *LICENSING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE RISKY DRIVER: A NATIONWIDE SURVEY*. Morgan State University. <https://rosap.nhtl.bts.gov/view/dot/5267>

This report summarizes the results obtained from a survey, which was part of a study on high risk drivers, which was conducted by the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) of the State of Maryland. The objective of the survey was to obtain information on current and proposed licensing and renewal policies of the MVAs within the United States, and their effectiveness in identifying and mitigating high risk driving behavior. The survey was distributed to the various states via mail. Forty-six states and the District of Columbia responded to the survey. The questionnaire consists of fourteen, multiple-choice questions and a fifteenth question which asks for additional information on identifying, testing, and retraining (counseling) suspected impaired drivers.

Peck, R C. (1996). *THE CALIFORNIA DRIVER PERFORMANCE EVALUATION TEST--AN IMPROVED METHOD OF ASSESSING DRIVER COMPETENCY*. New to the Road: Reducing the Risks for Young Motorists. Proceedings of the First Annual

International Symposium of the Youth Enhancement Service, Youth Enhancement Service, 95-101.

<https://trid.trb.org/view/477742>

This paper describes the multi-phase development and validation of an improved method of road testing novice driver license applicants in California. Known as the Driver Performance Evaluation (DPE test), the new test is shown to be more reliable and difficult than the standard DMV road test and also to discriminate between novice and experienced drivers.