



WorkCover SA

# Driver assessment and driver rehabilitation fee schedule and guidelines

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#### Disclaimer

The information produced by WorkCover Corporation of South Australia in this publication is correct at the time of printing and is provided as general information only. In utilising general information about workplace health and safety and injury management, the specific issues relevant to your workplace should always be considered. This publication is not intended as a substitute for the requirements of the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act, 1986 or the Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Act 1986.

## **Driver assessment fee and guidelines**

**Item number:** OT DVA

**Fee:**

The fee chargeable for this service is equivalent to the subsequent consultation and treatment rate as printed in the current WorkCover Occupational Therapy Fee Schedule and Guidelines.

**Service descriptor:**

The occupational therapy driver assessment aims to assist the worker with a functional impairment to commence or return to safe and independent driving through the identification of strengths and limitations, program planning for compensatory and remediation strategies, and the prescription of adaptive driving equipment and/or modifications. This does not automatically include driver rehabilitation services.

**Indicators for service:**

A worker is referred for occupational therapy driver assessment in the following circumstances:

- Where there is a concern regarding a worker's suitability and safety for driving as their primary means of community mobility and/or if driving is a part of work duties. Concerns regarding a worker's suitability include concerns about their functional capacity and medical status.
- Where the activity of driving is aggravating the worker's symptoms or the worker's symptoms are impacting on their ability to drive.
- When a worker is not driving but capacity for return to driving as their primary mode of transport and/or part of work duties has not been explored or established.

**Mandatory requirements prior to service provision:**

- Medical fitness and approval for driver assessment according to Ausroads ('Assessing Fitness to Drive – Commercial and Private Vehicle Drivers', found at [www.ausroads.com.au](http://www.ausroads.com.au)).
- Referral from treating medical practitioner, claims manager or self-insured employer. If a request for this service is made from the claims manager or self-insured employer the referral can only be made via the treating medical practitioner. The practitioner should agree that the assessment is required and appropriate and the worker meets the medical fitness to drive criteria ('Assessing Fitness to Drive – Commercial and Private Vehicle Drivers', found at [www.ausroads.com.au](http://www.ausroads.com.au)).

**Recommended information required by occupational therapist prior to service provision:**

The following information should be collated by the claims manager and issued to the occupational therapist at time of referral for service delivery:

- Medical referral highlighting the medical issues, medical clearance to undertake assessment (including whether medications allow driving) and any other functional issues that the medical practitioner would like to have assessed by the occupational therapist.
- In writing, a stipulation that the worker has been informed of the referral and is expecting contact from the driver-trained occupational therapist to arrange appointment.
- Available medical and health provider reports outlining history and prognosis.
- Goal of referral and worker's goals.
- Claim and worker details.
- Specific community mobility/functional issues, which need to be addressed.
- Current treatment procedures.
- Relevant parties currently involved in the rehabilitation process.

**Major components of service:**

The driver assessment must include all of the following elements, the components of which are a minimum requirement of the driver assessment service:

- Pre on-road driving screen that includes:
  - a review of all available reports, including medical reports (that should address medication issues), previous occupational therapy reports or information from other health providers such as psychologists
  - subjective history-taking that may include previous driving history, current and future driving needs and opinion about the impact of their injury on their driving capacity
  - consideration of the worker's individual body anthropometrics, vehicle ergonomics and purpose, particularly when the vehicle is a part of their work duties
  - identification of functional capabilities and limitations in relation to driving. This includes the use of screening tools to assess the worker's visual, cognitive, perceptual, physical, sensory abilities/limitations associated with their injury and road law knowledge. Screening tools and assessment processes will be used at the discretion of the occupational therapist and may include but not be limited to :
    - vision screen for visual acuity, peripheral fields, motor function of the eyes
    - physical screen including biomechanical and neuro-functional assessment of performance components as demanded in driving for example, active range of movement, strength, pain, sensation proprioception
    - cognitive-perceptual pre-drive tests and cognitive functional evaluation throughout the written and performance-based assessment process.

*(This list is not exhaustive and all tools will not be used for all assessments and will be responsive to change with the benefit of on going research.)*

The pre on-road screening assessment determines the suitability of proceeding to an on-road assessment. The worker is to proceed to undertake an on-road assessment if the driver is deemed functionally capable to, as determined by the results of the pre on-road screening assessment, and if the driver meets the medical fitness to drive criteria ('Assessing Fitness to Drive – Commercial and Private Vehicle Drivers', found at [www.usrroads.com.au](http://www.usrroads.com.au)).

- On-road assessment details:
  - An on-road assessment must be undertaken with a driver trained occupational therapist and qualified motor driving instructor in a dual control vehicle.
  - Following collaboration and consultation with the qualified motor driving instructor verbal feedback is provided to the worker regarding their performance.
- The assessment report includes:
  - a driver assessment executive summary sheet briefly outlining the needs of the worker following assessment (refer to template 'Driver assessment executive summary' on page 13)
  - a written report detailing the outcomes of the assessment including any recommended equipment, modifications and estimated costs
  - a detailed intervention plan, if relevant, that includes goals, strategies, duration, frequency and feedback procedures. This may include lessons designed and monitored by the occupational therapist, which consider prognosis, analysis of the driving task, grading principles, capacity for learning and worker compliance. An estimated costing should be included.
  - sending a copy of the report to the claims manager and treating medical practitioner
  - liaising with the claims manager regarding approval of recommendations, which may include supply of equipment, modifications and/or implementation of driver rehabilitation goals, should take place on submission of the report.

If a worker is found to be functionally unfit to drive, the occupational therapist is to make recommendations regarding alternative transport options to the worker, the claims manager and the treating practitioner.

**Service standards:**

- The worker and the worker's treating practitioner is informed of the details of the assessment to be undertaken and that the outcome of the assessment may alter the status of their licence (final determination on licensing will be determined by Transport SA, refer to *Motor Vehicles Act 1959*).
- An 'Authority to exchange information' form is signed by the worker prior to the exchange of information with third parties at the commencement of the assessment process.

- The services must be undertaken by an occupational therapist that has successfully completed a recognised driver assessment and rehabilitation course as a post-graduate qualification. Current courses offered in Australia as at June 2007 include:
  - La Trobe University - Driver Education and Rehabilitation Course
  - University of South Australia - Professional Certificate in Driver Assessment
  - The University of Sydney - Occupational Therapy Driver Assessment and Training Course
- The occupational therapist should keep detailed and contemporaneous records of the evaluation results and observations obtained in the delivery of the service.
- Assessment reports should be completed within 10 days of delivering the service.
- The average time spent on a driver assessment including report preparation and liaising with relevant health providers is between six and ten hours.

#### **Indicators for cessation**

The driver assessment service should cease when:

- a full report has been forwarded to the claims manager for consideration of the recommendations, AND
- it is recommended that the worker is not suitable to return to driving or commence a driver rehabilitation program, OR
- implementation of the driver assessment recommendations is approved, in which case services are provided according to the 'Driver rehabilitation' service descriptor.

## **Driver rehabilitation fee and guidelines**

**Item number:** OT DVR

**Fee:**

The fee chargeable for this service is equivalent to the subsequent consultation and treatment rate as printed in the current WorkCover Occupational Therapy Fee Schedule and Guidelines.

**Service descriptor:**

The occupational therapy driver rehabilitation service aims to, where safe and legal to do so, assist the worker with a functional impairment to commence, maintain or return to safe and independent driving through the development of an intervention plan which may include compensatory and rehabilitative strategies, and the prescription of adaptive driving equipment and/or modifications.

**Indicators for service:**

- The occupational therapy driver assessment has recommended that driver rehabilitation services would assist to enable the worker to commence, maintain or return to safe and independent driving.

**Mandatory requirements prior to service provision:**

- An occupational therapy driver assessment has occurred and as such medical approval has already been achieved.
- Referral from claims manager or self-insured employer.

**Recommended information required prior to service provision:**

Approval from the claims manager or self-insured employer to proceed with implementation of rehabilitation strategies as detailed in the driver assessment report.

**Major components of service:**

The occupational therapist should be involved in a number of activities as part of driver rehabilitation. These activities are summarised below:

- Where the prescription of adaptive equipment and modifications is required lessons must be arranged which train the worker in the safe operation of the equipment/modifications.
- Lessons should be conducted by a qualified motor driving instructor in liaison with the occupational therapist.
- During the program, the occupational therapist should seek regular feedback from the worker to ensure that the worker understands the instructions given in compensatory strategies and the use of equipment and modifications in the vehicle.
- The program should be monitored on a regular basis and changes made to the program as required, in order to achieve the intervention plan goals, and a final review\* should be

undertaken upon completion of the program. The results of the final review\* should be documented on the worker's clinical records.

- A progress report will be required in the following circumstances:
  - If concerns are raised, or barriers are identified by the occupational therapist which could impact on rehabilitation goals (this includes potential issues identified by the motor driving instructor or injured worker).
  - When a worker is on a multi-stage rehabilitation program whereby specific skills and competencies need to be achieved prior to commencing the next stage of rehabilitation.
  - If requested by the treating medical practitioner, specialist or claims manager.
- The provider of the compensable equipment should take into consideration Australian Standards or reputable engineering standards in collaboration with the occupational therapist.
- The provider should liaise with the claims manager regarding approval of additional recommendations, which may include supply of equipment, modifications and/or implementation of the rehabilitation program.
- A final summary report detailing information on the outcomes of the service, ie, whether or not intervention/rehabilitation goals were achieved, should be sent to the claims manager and treating medical practitioner.
- If a worker is found to be functionally unfit to drive, the occupational therapist is to make recommendations regarding alternative transport options to the worker, the claims manager and the treating medical practitioner.

**Service standards:**

- The worker and the treating medical practitioner are informed of the details of the rehabilitation services to be undertaken.
- An 'Authority to exchange information' form is signed by the worker prior to the exchange of information with third parties at the commencement of the rehabilitation service.
- The services must be undertaken by an occupational therapist that has successfully completed a recognised post-graduate driver assessment and rehabilitation course. Current courses offered in Australia as at February 2006 include:
  - La Trobe University - Driver Education and Rehabilitation Course
  - University of South Australia - Professional Certificate in Driver Assessment
  - The University of Sydney - Occupational Therapy Driver Assessment and Training Course
- The occupational therapist should keep detailed and contemporaneous records of the evaluation results and observations obtained in the delivery of the service.

- The final summary report must be completed after 10 working days of completing the final service as per the intervention plan.

**Indicators for cessation:**

The driver rehabilitation service should cease when:

- all the driver assessment recommendations have been implemented and the occupational therapist has conducted a final driver assessment to confirm cessation is appropriate
- optimum independence, function and safety have been achieved with respect to community mobility
- the worker is deemed not suitable to return to driving
- the worker fails to participate in or complete the rehabilitation program. The occupational therapist will make recommendations to the treating practitioner, claims manager and Transport SA regarding the worker's functional fitness to drive based on the information attained to date (as per Motor Vehicles Act)
- the claims manager requests the cessation of rehabilitation.

**Definitions:**

**\*Monitoring** - Maintaining contact with the parties involved, ie, motor driving instructor, worker or other health professionals, to ensure the program is progressing towards achieving the intervention goals.

**\*Final Review** - A brief interview with the worker, an on-road assessment and a report.