2023

STUDY ON AGE-RELATED DRIVING ABILITIES

Compiled by the
Department of Programs and Policies

SECRETARY *of* STATE
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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

ALEXI GIANNOULIAS • Secretary of State

September 2023

To Governor Pritzker and Members of the Illinois General Assembly,

In December 2022, the Illinois General Assembly tasked the Secretary of State's office to compile a report detailing the effects of increasing the age of required "behind-the-wheel" driving tests from 75 to 79.

The Secretary of State's office is responsible for not only issuing driver's licenses to Illinois residents through a network of Driver and Motor Vehicle facilities (DMVs) statewide, but it also must do so in a manner that balances efficiency and – most importantly – public safety. At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the General Assembly granted an emergency rule to modify drivers' requirements during the unprecedented public health crisis. It became the office's duty to balance public health safety and road safety. This led to the approval of Public Act 102-1103, which took effect 10 months ago and raised the driving test requirement age from 75 to 79 until October 1.

Statistics show that our senior drivers are among the safest drivers in the state. This report indicates that by raising the minimum age requiring drivers to complete a driving test, there is "no immediate threat to public safety" on our roads, which the act instructed. Making the act permanent will only impact drivers ages 75 to 78, and drive tests for all other drivers 79 years and older seeking to renew their licenses will remain in place.

Even with this change, Illinois will remain one of the toughest states in the nation when it comes to driving requirements and license renewal testing and will continue as the only state requiring seniors to complete road tests.

Sincerely,

Alexi Giannoulias
Illinois Secretary of State

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Public Acts 102-1103 and 103-0140

In December 2022, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker signed House Bill 5049 into law. The bill raised the minimum age at which a driver must complete a driving test from 75 to 79. The legislation extended an emergency measure in January 2022 during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide relief to some of Illinois' most vulnerable citizens, allowing seniors in this age group to avoid the driving test at DMVs when renewing their licenses.

The Secretary of State's office has found that raising the age requirement for the senior driving test has benefitted seniors and helped reduce wait times at DMVs. Per Public Acts 102-1103 and 103-0140, the office has also compiled research evaluating the ability of seniors to drive safely and age-related driving changes in seniors to explore if the state should make this change permanent.

PA 102-1103, Sec. 37: According to this public act, if the study shows that there is "no immediate risk to public safety," the Secretary of State may adopt administrative rules to raise or lower the age requirement for actual demonstrations, provided that the required age shall be no lower than the minimum age required under subsection (c) of Section 6-109 of the Illinois Vehicle Code (Appendix A).

PA 103-0140, 6-109(c): This public act further limited any proposed rulemaking to raising the age at which a person must take the driving test, eliminating the Secretary of State's authority to lower the age threshold (Appendix B).

Driver's license renewal requirements governing drivers who are younger than 75 and older than 79 have not been impacted by the legislation and will remain in place.

Illinois Senior Driving Statistics

By 2030, the American Automobile Association estimates that there will be more than 70 million people – ages 65 years and older – and approximately 85 to 90 percent of them will hold driver's licenses.[1]

Those in the 75-78 age range comprise 279,333, or 3% of all drivers. The emergency rule that waived the required driving test applied to this group of drivers.

[1] American Automobile Association, *Senior Driver Safety & Mobility*, 2023-FINAL

Illinois Requirements and Emergency Rule

The act and the emergency rule eliminated the requirement that drivers between the ages of 75 and 78 take a driving test when they renew their licenses.

Under the act, the length of a regular renewal cycle for a driver's license remained the same for all age groups:

- All drivers below the age of 81 must renew their licenses every four years.
- Drivers aged 79 and 80 must take a vision and driving test (if their four-year renewal is up during this time period).
- Drivers aged 81 to 86 must take a vision and driving test every two years .
- Drivers aged 87 and older must take a vision and driving test every year.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, driving tests were not required for drivers who were free of traffic convictions until they reached 75. At age 75, drivers were required to take a driving test at each renewal. The General Assembly granted emergency rule-making authority to delay mandatory in-person driving tests to 79 for the following reasons:

- For two-and-a-half months, DMVs were closed due to the pandemic. This resulted in a significant backlog in the renewal of expired driver's licenses. When DMVs did reopen, COVID safety protocols required operating at a reduced capacity, further aggravating the backlog.
- Reducing the volume of customers at DMVs was pivotal in the statewide effort to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus.
- Senior citizens fell into the high-risk category of hospitalization or intensive care for those contracting the COVID-19 virus. Protecting our most vulnerable citizens by not mandating them to visit DMVs was a priority.

In December of 2021, the General Assembly adopted 15 ILCS 305/30 of the Secretary of State Act (Appendix A), which gave the Secretary the authority to promulgate emergency rules to help prevent any detrimental impact on members of the public as the office navigated the pandemic. This emergency rulemaking authority included "modifying the requirements for the renewal of driver's licenses[.]" 15 ILCS 305/30(a)(2).

This became effective on January 3, 2022, and Illinois lawmakers approved new legislation to continue the new standard until October 1, 2023.

Illinois Driver's License Renewal Requirements by Age

	Frequency		Written Test		Vision Test		In-Person Behind-the-Wheel Test		Online Renewal	
	BEFORE	*AFTER*	*BEFORE*	*AFTER*	*BEFORE*	*AFTER*	*BEFORE*	*AFTER*	*BEFORE*	*AFTER*
75	Every 4 years.	Every 4 years.	***Required only if violation exists on record***		Y	Y	**Y**	**N**	N	N
76	Every 4 years.	Every 4 years.			Y	Y	**Y**	**N**	N	N
77	Every 4 years.	Every 4 years.			Y	Y	**Y**	**N**	N	N
78	Every 4 years.	Every 4 years.			Y	Y	**Y**	**N**	N	N
79*	Every 4 years.	Every 4 years.			Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
80*	Every 4 years.	Every 4 years.			Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
81	Every 2 years.	Every 2 years.			Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
82	Every 2 years.	Every 2 years.			Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
83	Every 2 years.	Every 2 years.			Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
84	Every 2 years.	Every 2 years.			Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
85	Every 2 years.	Every 2 years.			Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
86	Every 2 years.	Every 2 years.			Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
87+	Every year.	Every year.			Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N

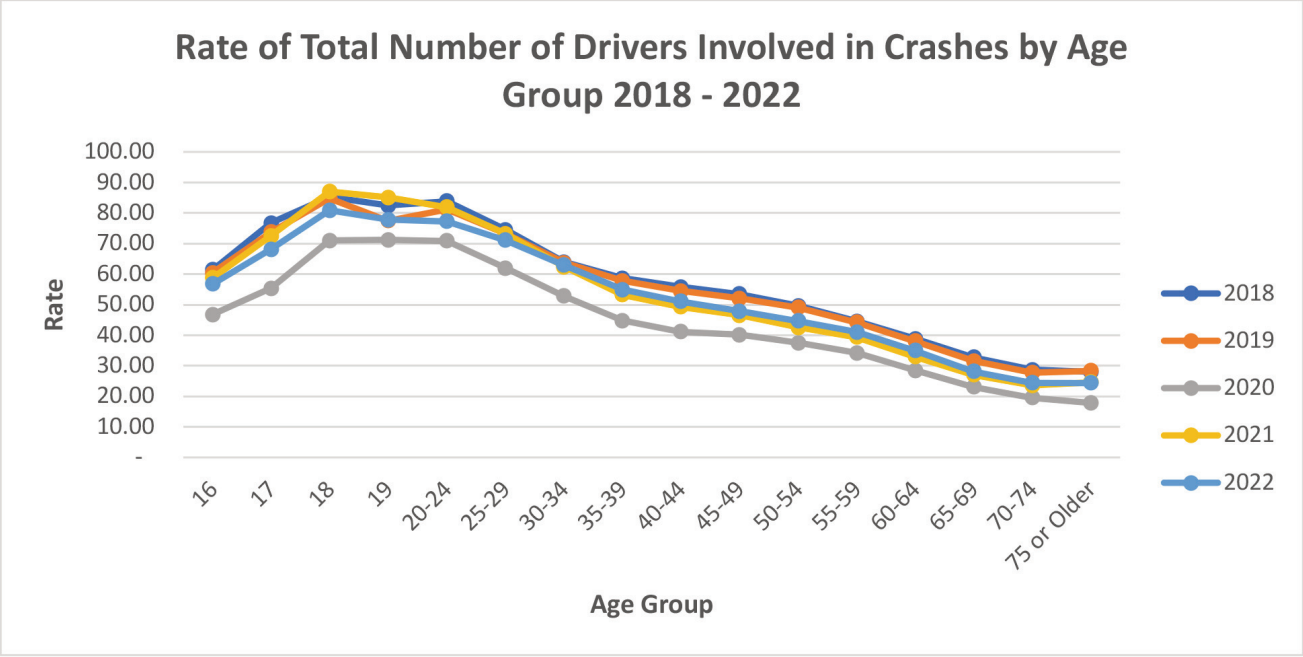
Illinois Department of Transportation Statistics: Seniors Among Safest Drivers

According to the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), statistics on crash rates show that drivers who are 75 and older are among the safest of any drivers on the road.[2]

IDOT figures from 2018 to 2022 reveal that when it comes to total crashes, individuals who are aged 75 and older consistently experienced lower crash rates compared to nearly every other age group (see graphic below), demonstrating that Illinois drivers who are 75 and older are among the safest of any drivers on the road.

The 2022 IDOT statistics, which include a full year of data when the emergency rule was in effect, show virtually no change in crash rates for 75 and older drivers compared to previous years. While the number of fatal crashes increased from 97 to 110, the overall population of licensed drivers increased by approximately 60,000, resulting in an overall rate of fatal crashes remaining the same at .17, equal to or safer than all drivers aged 17-54.

When measuring crashes in 2022, regardless of injury outcome, those aged 75 and older also showed a nearly identical rate as the year before, measuring 24.39, which was the safest for every driver aged 16-69. (See IDOT crash facts for 2018-2022 beginning on P. 6.)



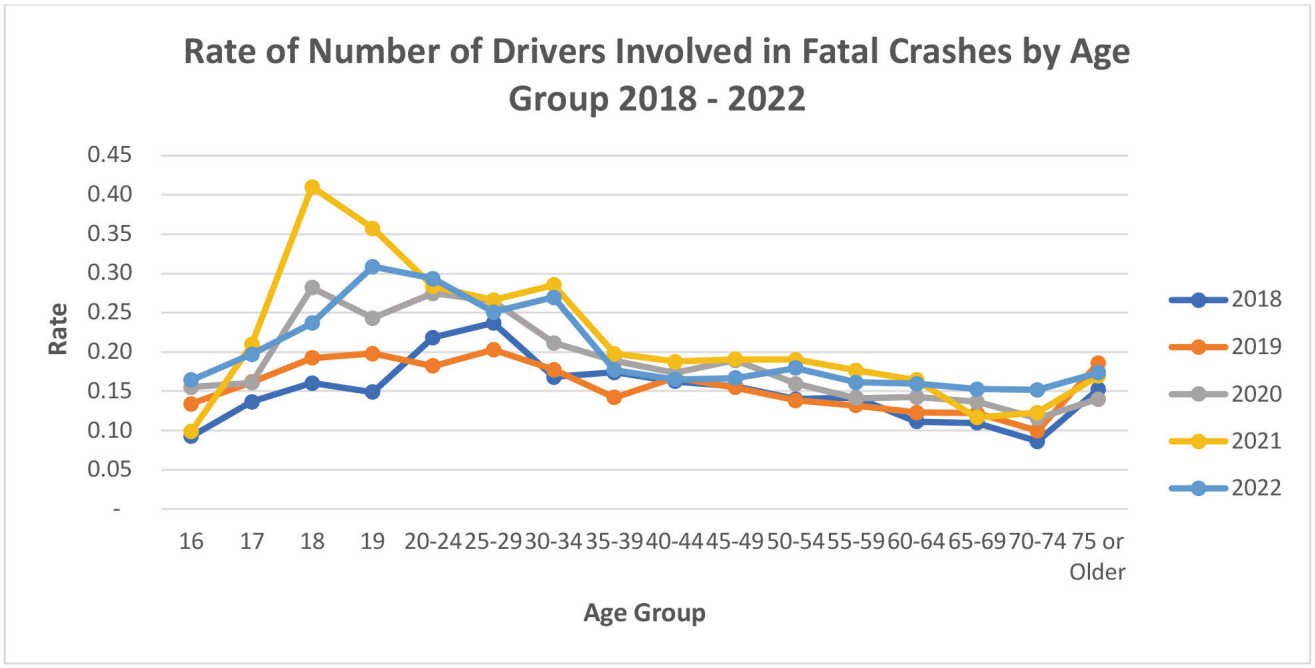
*Rates are expressed as the number of drivers involved in a particular type of crash per 1,000 licensed drivers.

[2] Illinois Department of Transportation, *Crash Facts and Statistics*, 2021

Fatal Crashes

Before the January 2022 emergency rule, IDOT's 2021 Illinois Crash Facts & Statistics noted that there were 97 fatal crashes for drivers aged 75 and older. This represents a crash rate of .17 per 1,000 licensed drivers in this age group. Every age range of drivers between 17 and 59 reported a higher rate of fatal crashes.

Between 2018 and 2020, fatal crash rates for drivers 75 and older have been .15, .19 and .14, respectively. Furthermore, in 2022, this age group maintained a fatal crash rate of .17 for the second year in a row, which outperformed or equaled all drivers between 17 and 54. (See IDOT crash facts for 2018-2022 beginning on P. 6.)



*Rates are expressed as the number of drivers involved in a particular type of crash per 1,000 licensed drivers.

2018 Crash Facts and Statistics - Illinois Department of Transportation

Age	Total Licensed Drivers	TOTAL Number of Drivers Involved In Crashes	Rate*	Number of Drivers Involved in FATAL Crashes	Rate*
15 or Younger	66,796	500	7.49	4	0.06
16	118,969	7,309	61.44	11	0.09
17	132,123	10,134	76.70	18	0.14
18	137,268	11,708	85.29	22	0.16
19	141,099	11,636	82.47	21	0.15
20-24	746,936	62,633	83.85	163	0.22
25-29	831,173	61,901	74.47	197	0.24
30-34	804,094	51,417	63.94	135	0.17
35-39	804,976	47,247	58.69	140	0.17
40-44	737,887	41,186	55.82	120	0.16
45-49	754,885	40,384	53.50	118	0.16
50-54	749,708	37,196	49.61	105	0.14
55-59	791,567	35,310	44.61	112	0.14
60-64	735,684	28,542	38.80	82	0.11
65-69	603,218	19,743	32.73	66	0.11
70-74	452,161	12,967	28.68	39	0.09
75 or Older	578,097	16,202	28.03	88	0.15
Unknown		64,759		36	
TOTAL	9,186,641	560,774	61.04	1,477	0.16

*Rates are expressed as the number of drivers involved in a particular type of crash per 1,000 licensed drivers.

2019 Crash Facts and Statistics - Illinois Department of Transportation

Age	Total Licensed Drivers	TOTAL Number of Drivers Involved In Crashes	Rate*	Number of Drivers Involved in FATAL Crashes	Rate*
15 or Younger	66,999	525	7.84	2	0.03
16	119,492	7,215	60.38	16	0.13
17	130,019	9,587	73.74	21	0.16
18	135,301	11,472	84.79	26	0.19
19	141,541	10,966	77.48	28	0.20
20-24	735,376	59,741	81.24	134	0.18
25-29	818,580	59,935	73.22	166	0.20
30-34	800,525	51,010	63.72	142	0.18
35-39	803,899	46,422	57.75	114	0.14
40-44	747,251	40,704	54.47	125	0.17
45-49	742,868	38,629	52.00	115	0.15
50-54	737,317	36,151	49.03	102	0.14
55-59	781,401	34,519	44.18	103	0.13
60-64	740,376	28,143	38.01	91	0.12
65-69	615,353	19,451	31.61	75	0.12
70-74	471,954	13,096	27.75	47	0.10
75 or Older	582,052	16,504	28.35	108	0.19
Unknown		63,717		43	
TOTAL	9,170,304	547,787	59.73	1,458	0.16

*Rates are expressed as the number of drivers involved in a particular type of crash per 1,000 licensed drivers.

2020 Crash Facts and Statistics - Illinois Department of Transportation

Age	Total Licensed Drivers	TOTAL Number of Drivers Involved In Crashes	Rate*	Number of Drivers Involved in FATAL Crashes	Rate*
15 or Younger	54,008	496	9.18	5	0.09
16	109,510	5,120	46.75	17	0.16
17	124,248	6,876	55.34	20	0.16
18	127,785	9,076	71.03	36	0.28
19	135,710	9,667	71.23	33	0.24
20-24	684,754	48,558	70.91	188	0.27
25-29	751,894	46,615	62.00	199	0.26
30-34	733,058	38,709	52.80	155	0.21
35-39	753,852	33,746	44.76	142	0.19
40-44	722,141	29,676	41.09	125	0.17
45-49	692,344	27,796	40.15	131	0.19
50-54	695,677	26,089	37.50	111	0.16
55-59	736,188	25,186	34.21	104	0.14
60-64	722,617	20,606	28.52	103	0.14
65-69	615,495	14,175	23.03	84	0.14
70-74	485,529	9,486	19.54	56	0.12
75 or Older	649,674	11,600	17.86	91	0.14
Unknown		56,873		67	
TOTAL	8,794,484	420,350	47.80	1,667	0.19

*Rates are expressed as the number of drivers involved in a particular type of crash per 1,000 licensed drivers.

2021 Crash Facts and Statistics - Illinois Department of Transportation

Age	Total Licensed Drivers	TOTAL Number of Drivers Involved In Crashes	Rate*	Number of Drivers Involved in FATAL Crashes	Rate*
15 or Younger	63,791	534	8.37	3	0.05
16	111,558	6,552	58.73	11	0.10
17	124,197	9,004	72.50	26	0.21
18	129,125	11,236	87.02	53	0.41
19	134,226	11,428	85.14	48	0.36
20-24	705,128	57,788	81.95	200	0.28
25-29	755,609	55,330	73.23	201	0.27
30-34	767,261	47,893	62.42	219	0.29
35-39	768,140	40,897	53.24	152	0.20
40-44	751,615	37,036	49.28	141	0.19
45-49	697,232	32,442	46.53	133	0.19
50-54	720,852	30,726	42.62	137	0.19
55-59	729,980	28,709	39.33	129	0.18
60-64	736,396	24,316	33.02	121	0.16
65-69	634,630	17,137	27.00	74	0.12
70-74	505,605	11,942	23.62	62	0.12
75 or Older	573,057	14,090	24.59	97	0.17
Unknown		73,714		96	
TOTAL	8,908,402	510,774	57.34	1,903	0.21

*Rates are expressed as the number of drivers involved in a particular type of crash per 1,000 licensed drivers.

2022 Crash Facts and Statistics - Illinois Department of Transportation					
Age	Total Licensed Drivers	TOTAL Number of Drivers Involved In Crashes	Rate*	Number of Drivers Involved in FATAL Crashes	Rate*
15 or Younger	65,871	532	8.08	10	0.15
16	115,617	6,559	56.73	19	0.16
17	126,922	8,646	68.12	25	0.20
18	131,060	10,604	80.91	31	0.24
19	136,045	10,588	77.83	42	0.31
20-24	712,549	55,075	77.29	209	0.29
25-29	761,462	54,138	71.10	191	0.25
30-34	786,164	49,451	62.90	212	0.27
35-39	779,054	42,788	54.92	138	0.18
40-44	769,289	39,282	51.06	127	0.17
45-49	707,291	33,850	47.86	118	0.17
50-54	724,925	32,389	44.68	130	0.18
55-59	720,117	29,539	41.02	116	0.16
60-64	734,357	25,697	34.99	117	0.16
65-69	648,707	18,279	28.18	99	0.15
70-74	513,963	12,529	24.38	78	0.15
75 or Older	634,148	15,468	24.39	110	0.17
Unknown		73,653		76	
TOTAL	9,067,541	519,067	57.24	1,848	0.20
*Rates are expressed as the number of drivers involved in a particular type of crash per 1,000 licensed drivers.					

Illinois Driving Standards Compared to Other States

Illinois has the most stringent driving standards in the nation. Some other states have age-related requirements, including vision and written testing, requiring in-person renewal; however, no other states require behind-the-wheel testing of seniors. The last states to eliminate driving tests for seniors did so more than a dozen years ago. New Hampshire eliminated its requirement in 2011, and Indiana did the same in 2005.

In total, 27 states and the District of Columbia do not adjust the renewal cycle based on age. Of the remaining 23 states, Illinois is the only state that requires a driving test based on age.

Moving the age at which driving tests must be taken for a driver's license renewal from 75 to 79 has enhanced the efficiency of operations at DMVs and made renewals more convenient for our senior citizens within this age group.

License renewal procedures

IIHS HLDI

July 2023

	LICENSE RENEWAL CYCLE		PROOF OF ADEQUATE VISION REQUIRED AT RENEWAL		MAIL OR ONLINE RENEWAL PERMITTED	
State	General population	Older population	General population	Older population	General population	Older population
AL	4 years	4 years	no	no	online, every other renewal	online, every other renewal
AK	5 years	5 years	when renewing in person	69 and older, every renewal	both, every other renewal	not permitted 69 and older
AZ	12 years	5 years for people 65 and older	every renewal	every renewal	no	no
AR	8 years	4 or 8 years for people 70 and older, personal option	every other renewal	every other renewal	no	no
CA	5 years	5 years	when renewing in person	70 and older, every renewal	both, limited to 2 consecutive renewals	not permitted 70 and older
CO	5 years	5 years	every renewal	every renewal	both, if photograph is newer than 16 years	both, if photograph is newer than 16 years
CT	8 or 6 years, phasing from a 6 year to 8 year cycle	2 years permitted for people 65 and older, personal option	no	no	both, every other renewal	both, every other renewal
DE	8 years	8 years	every renewal	every renewal	no	no
DC	8 years	8 years	every renewal	every renewal	both, every other renewal	not permitted 70 and older
FL	8 years	6 years for people 80 and older	when renewing in person	80 and older, every renewal	both, every other renewal	both, every other renewal
GA	8 years	8 years	every renewal	every renewal	both, every other renewal	both, every other renewal
HI	8 years	2 years for people 72 and older	every renewal	every renewal	by mail, limited to 2 consecutive renewals, but must appear in person at least every 16 years	by mail, limited to 2 consecutive renewals, but must appear in person at least every 16 years

	LICENSE RENEWAL CYCLE		PROOF OF ADEQUATE VISION REQUIRED AT RENEWAL		MAIL OR ONLINE RENEWAL PERMITTED	
State	General population	Older population	General population	Older population	General population	Older population
ID	4 or 8 years, personal option	4 years for people 63 and older	every renewal	every renewal	by mail, every other renewal; must choose 4-year license	not permitted 70 and older
IL	4 years	2 years for people 81 - 86; 1 year for people 87 and older	when renewing in person	75 and older, every renewal	both, every other renewal	not permitted 75 and older
IN	6 years	3 years for people 75-84: 2 years for people 85 and older	when renewing in person	75 and older, every renewal	both, every other renewal	both, every other renewal
IA	8 years or 80th birthday, whichever occurs first	2 years for people 78 and older	when renewing in person	70 and older, every renewal	online, every other renewal	not permitted 70 and older
KS	6 years	4 years for people 65 and older	every renewal	every renewal	online, every other renewal	not permitted 65 and older
KY	4 or 8 years, personal option	4 or 8 years, personal option	every renewal	every renewal	both, if photograph is newer than 16 years	both, if photograph is newer than 16 years
LA	6 years	6 years	when renewing in person	70 and older, every renewal	both, every other renewal	not permitted 70 and older[1]
ME	6 years	4 years for people 65 and older	first renewal after 40 and every other renewal until 62	62 and older, every renewal	both, unless proof of vision required	not permitted 62 and older
MD	8 years	8 years	when renewing in person	40 and older, every renewal	both, if photograph is newer than 16 years	both, if photograph is newer than 16 years
MA	5 years	5 years	when renewing in person	75 and older, every renewal	online, every other renewal	not permitted 75 and older
MI	4 years	4 years	when renewing in person	when renewing in person	both, every other renewal	both, every other renewal
MN	4 years	4 years	every renewal	every renewal	no	no
MS	4 or 8 years, personal option	4 or 8 years, personal option	no	no	online, every other renewal	online, every other renewal
MO	6 years	3 years for people 70 and older	every renewal	every renewal	no	no

	LICENSE RENEWAL CYCLE		PROOF OF ADEQUATE VISION REQUIRED AT RENEWAL		MAIL OR ONLINE RENEWAL PERMITTED	
State	General population	Older population	General population	Older population	General population	Older population
MT	12 years or 75th birthday, whichever occurs first	4 years for people 75 and older	every renewal	every renewal	both, every other renewal	both, every other renewal
NE	5 years	5 years	when renewing in person	72 and older, every renewal	online, every other renewal	not permitted 72 and older
NV	4 years (odd number birth years); 8 years (even number birth years); 8 years all licenses starting in 2018	4 years for people 65 and older	when renewing in person	71 and older, every renewal	both, every other renewal; available only for holders of a 4-year license	both, every other renewal for people 65 and older
NH	5 years	5 years	every renewal	every renewal	online, every other renewal	online, every other renewal
NJ	4 years	2 or 4 years for people 70 and older, personal option	every 10 years[2]	every 10 years[2]	both, unless new photo required[3]	both[3]
NM	4 or 8 years, personal option	4 years for people 71-78; 1 year for people 79 and older	when renewing in person	75 and older, every renewal	online, every other renewal; by mail, unless new photo required	not permitted 75 and older
NY	8 years	8 years	every renewal	every renewal	both	both
NC	8 years	5 years for people 66 and older	every renewal	every renewal	online, every other renewal	online, every other renewal
ND	6 years	4 years for people 78 and older	every renewal	every renewal	both, every other renewal	not permitted 70 and older
OH	4 or 8 years, personal option	4 years for people 65 and older	when renewing in person	65 and older, every renewal	online, every other renewal if applying for a 4 year license	not permitted 65 and older
OK	4 or 8 years, personal option	4 or 8 years, personal option	no	no	both, every other renewal	both, every other renewal
OR	8 years	8 years	no	50 and older if renewing in person	online, every other renewal	online, every other renewal
PA	4 years	2 years or 4 years for people 65 and older, personal option	no	no	both	both
RI	5 years	2 years for people 75 and older	every renewal	every renewal	online, every other renewal	online, every other renewal

	LICENSE RENEWAL CYCLE		PROOF OF ADEQUATE VISION REQUIRED AT RENEWAL		MAIL OR ONLINE RENEWAL PERMITTED	
State	General population	Older population	General population	Older population	General population	Older population
SC	8 years	8 years	every renewal	every renewal	both	both
SD	5 years	5 years	when renewing in person	65 and older, every renewal	both, every other renewal	both, every other renewal
TN	8 years[4]	8 years[4]	no	no	both	both
TX	8 years	2 years for people 85 and older	when renewing in person	79 and older, every renewal	both, every other renewal	not permitted 79 and older
UT	8 years	8 years	when renewing in person	65 and older, every renewal	online, every other renewal	online, every other renewal
VT	2 or 4 years	2 or 4 years	no	no	by mail, unless new photo required[5]	by mail, unless new photo required[5]
VA	8 years	5 years for people 75 and older	when renewing in person	75 and older, every renewal	both, every other renewal	not permitted 75 and older
WA	6 or 8 years, personal option	6 or 8 years, personal option	every renewal	every renewal	both, every other renewal	not permitted 70 and older
WV	8 years	8 years	every renewal	every renewal	online, every other renewal	online, every other renewal
WI	8 years	8 years	every renewal	every renewal	no	no
WY	5 years	5 years	every renewal	every renewal	by mail, every other renewal	by mail, every other renewal

[1] In Louisiana, a person age 70 and older can renew by mail or online if he or she is medically diagnosed with a disability that precludes that driver from renewing in person and he or she submits a sworn affidavit by a physician certifying that the person possesses all cognitive functions reasonably necessary to be a prudent driver.

[2] N.J. Stat. § 39:3-10c states, "The division shall require every licensed driver to take and successfully pass a screening of his vision at least once every 10 years as a condition for the renewal of his driver's license and of any endorsement thereon."

[3] N.J. Stat. § 39:3-10f states that, for drivers age 64 and younger, a stored picture can be used to renew a license for two consecutive four-year renewal periods, but the same picture cannot be used for more than 12 years. Drivers 65 and older with a standard basic driver's license can use a stored photograph for each renewal indefinitely.

[4] In Tennessee, the commissioner may issue an initial license or renew a license that shall remain valid for 3 to 8 years in order to transition from the five-year to the eight-year license.

[5] 23 V.S.A. § 610 states that a driver is required to update a driver's license that has a photo or "imaged likeness" in person "no less often than once every eight years".

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration & National Safety Council Statistics

The National Safety Council (NSC) compiles information on preventable deaths and injuries in the workplace and roadways, including motor vehicle accidents. Its findings note that after age 34, the number of drivers involved in fatal crashes decreases as the age of the driver increases.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) defines "older drivers" as those who are aged 65 and older. When analyzing fatal crash data for 2021, drivers in this age group maintained a lower involvement rate per 100,000 licensed drivers (16.20) than any other age group. There were 7,489 older drivers who were killed in traffic crashes throughout the U.S., representing 17% of all traffic fatalities throughout the country.

In 2021, 13,200 drivers between the ages of 25 and 34 were involved in fatal crashes nationwide. This number drops to 4,768 for drivers between the ages of 65 and 74 and continues to reduce further to 3,263 among drivers who are 75 and older.[3]

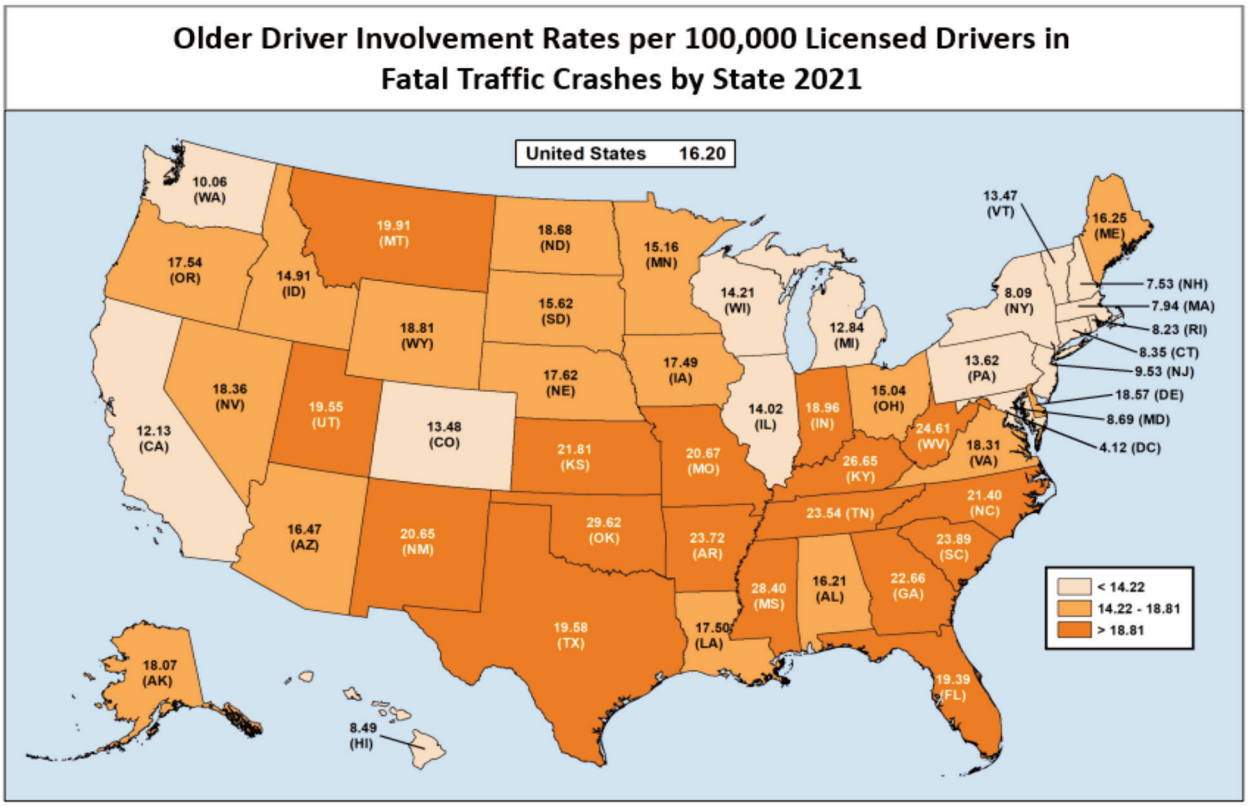
When comparing Illinois to neighboring states, the crash rate of older drivers involved in fatal traffic crashes is lower than many of our neighbors. With a rate of 14.02, Illinois was ranked in the top 15 states.[4]

In neighboring Wisconsin, drivers are required to successfully complete eye exams upon renewal every eight years, and the state only requires drivers to take a driving test when the applicant holds an expired instruction permit, an expired out-of-state license, or if they are seeking reinstatement of driving privileges. Wisconsin does not tie its testing requirements to age.

	2021 Fatal Crash Rate*	
Age	**Illinois**	**Wisconsin**
15-24	0.27	0.30
25-34	0.28	0.24
35-44	0.19	0.21
45-54	0.19	0.18
55-64	0.17	0.18
65-74	0.12	0.14
75+	0.17	0.15

*Rates are expressed as the number of drivers involved in a fatal crash per 1,000 licensed drivers.

[3] National Safety Council, *NSC Injury Facts, Older Drivers*, 2021
[4] National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, *Traffic Safety Facts: Older Population*, 2021



Age-Related Issues

Aging affects reaction times, cognition and mental awareness in people at different rates, which can diminish driving abilities. Driving is a “regulated” privilege that demands safeguards are in place to ensure that individual rights and public safety are protected. A standard policy barring individuals over a specific age is not workable or fair to deny them a privilege simply based on age.

The Secretary of State’s office administers vision tests for license renewals at all its DMVs, and they are mandatory for all age groups in an effort to help recognize and remediate problems as they develop. An individual experiencing changes in vision, hearing or other physical or mental issues should consult their doctor for best practices.

Conclusion

Issuing a driver's license is one of the most important responsibilities of the Secretary of State's office. It requires a vast network of DMVs, timely verification of credentials, reliable and dedicated staff, and a modern and efficient process. Moreover, ensuring proper safeguards to protect the public is the most crucial consideration.

The Secretary of State's office maintains firm and strict guidelines for our driver's license renewal process, including our procedures for senior driver's licenses, which are among the most rigorous in the nation. When considering our guidelines and the COVID-19 pandemic, the office agreed that adjusting driving test requirements from age 75 to 79 was necessary.

After carefully reviewing available crash results and other significant and relevant data, the office found no significant increases in crashes per licensed driver in each affected age range, including drivers older than 75 years old who are amongst our safest drivers on the road. For this reason, the office believes that Illinois should continue with driving test requirements beginning at the age of 79.

Even with making this change permanent, Illinois will remain the only state in the nation that requires seniors older than 79 to complete a driving test to renew their driver's licenses.

The Secretary of State's office will continue diligently monitoring annual crash statistics for any significant deviations in this trend.

APPENDIX A

Public Act 102-1103

HB5049 Enrolled LRB102 22605 KTG 31748 b

AN ACT concerning State government.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:

Section 10. The Secretary of State Act is amended by changing Section 30 and by adding Section 37 as follows:

(15 ILCS 305/37 new)

Sec. 37. Study on age-related changes that affect driving abilities. By October 1, 2023 the Secretary of State shall conduct a study on age-related changes in vision, physical functioning, and the ability to reason and remember, as well as any other diseases and medications that might affect safe driving abilities. When conducting the study, the Secretary of State may utilize data or academic studies conducted by other sources, including, but not limited to, other states, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Geriatrics Society, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Upon completion of the study, if the study shows that there is no immediate risk to public safety, the Secretary of State may adopt administrative rules to raise or lower the age requirement for actual demonstrations, provided that the required age shall be no lower than the minimum age required under subsection (c) of Section 6-109 of the Illinois Vehicle Code.

(15 ILCS 305/30)

(Section scheduled to be repealed on January 1, 2023)

Sec. 30. Emergency powers.

(a) In response to the interruption of services available to the public as a result of the public health disaster caused by Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), a novel severe acute respiratory illness that spreads rapidly through respiratory transmissions, the extended closure of State government offices and private sector businesses caused by COVID-19, and the need to ameliorate any detrimental impact on members of the public caused by that interruption of services, the Secretary of State is hereby given the authority to adopt emergency rulemakings, and to adopt permanent administrative rules:

(1) extending until not later than December 31, 2022, the expiration dates of driver's licenses, driving permits, monitoring device driving permits, restricted driving permits, and identification cards which were issued with expiration dates on or after January 1, 2020. During the period of any extensions implemented pursuant to this subsection, all driver's licenses, driving permits, monitoring device driving permits, restricted driving permits, and identification cards, shall be subject to any terms and conditions under which the original document was issued; and

(2) modifying the requirements for the renewal of driver's licenses, driving permits, monitoring device driving permits, restricted driving permits, and identification cards. No such modification shall apply for more than one renewal cycle after the effective date of the rulemaking.

(b) When the renewal of any driver's license, driving permit, monitoring device driving permit, restricted driving permit, or identification card has been extended pursuant to this Section, it shall be renewed during the period of an extension. Any such renewals shall be from the original expiration date and shall be subject to the full fee which would have been due had the renewals been issued based on the original expiration date, except that no late filing fees or penalties shall be imposed.

(c) All law enforcement agencies in the State of Illinois and all State and local governmental entities shall recognize the validity of, and give full legal force to, extensions granted pursuant to this Section.

(d) Upon the request of any person whose driver's license, driving permit, monitoring device driving permit, restricted driving permit, or identification card has been subject to an extension under this Section, the Secretary shall issue a statement verifying the extension was issued pursuant to Illinois law, and requesting any foreign jurisdiction to honor the extension.

(e) This Section is repealed on October ~~January~~ 1, 2023.

(Source: P.A. 101-640, eff. 6-12-20; 102-39, eff. 6-25-21; 102-678, eff. 12-10-21.)

APPENDIX B

Public Act 103-0140

HB2091 Enrolled LRB103 26323 DTM 52684 b

AN ACT concerning State Government.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:

Section 5. The Secretary of State Act is amended by changing Section 37 as follows:

(15 ILCS 305/37)

Sec. 37. Study on age-related changes that affect driving abilities. By October 1, 2023, the Secretary of State shall conduct a study on age-related changes in vision, physical functioning, and the ability to reason and remember, as well as any other diseases and medications that might affect safe driving abilities. When conducting the study, the Secretary of State may utilize data or academic studies conducted by other sources, including, but not limited to, other states, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Geriatrics Society, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Upon completion of the study, if the study shows that there is no immediate risk to public safety, the Secretary of State may adopt administrative rules to raise ~~or lower~~ the age requirement for actual demonstrations, provided that the required age shall be no lower than the minimum age required under subsection (c) of Section 6-109 of the Illinois Vehicle Code.

(Source: P.A. 102-1103, eff. 12-6-22.)

Section 10. The Illinois Vehicle Code is amended by changing Section 6-109 as follows:

(625 ILCS 5/6-109)

Sec. 6-109. Examination of applicants.

(a) The Secretary of State shall examine every applicant for a driver's license or permit who has not been previously licensed as a driver under the laws of this State or any other state or country, or any applicant for renewal of such driver's license or permit when such license or permit has been expired for more than one year. The Secretary of State shall, subject to the provisions of paragraph (c), examine every licensed driver at least every 8 years, and may examine or re-examine any other applicant or licensed driver, provided that during the years 1984 through 1991 those drivers issued a license for 3 years may be re-examined not less than every 7 years or more than every 10 years.

The Secretary of State shall require the testing of the eyesight of any driver's license or permit applicant who has not been previously licensed as a driver under the laws of this State and shall promulgate rules and regulations to provide for the orderly administration of all the provisions of this Section.

The Secretary of State shall include at least one test question that concerns the provisions of the Pedestrians with Disabilities Safety Act in the question pool used for the written portion of the driver's license examination within one year after July 22, 2010 (the effective date of Public Act 96-1167).

The Secretary of State shall include, in the question pool used for the written portion of the driver's license examination, test questions concerning safe driving in the presence of bicycles, of which one may be concerning the Dutch Reach method as described in Section 2-112.

The Secretary of State shall include, in the question pool used for the written portion of the driver's license examination, at least one test question concerning driver responsibilities when approaching a stationary emergency vehicle as described in Section 11-907.

(b) Except as provided for those applicants in paragraph (c), such examination shall include a test of the applicant's eyesight, his or her ability to read and understand official traffic control devices, his or her knowledge of safe driving practices and the traffic laws of this State, and may include an actual demonstration of the applicant's ability to exercise ordinary and reasonable control of the operation of a motor vehicle, and such further physical and mental examination as the Secretary of State finds necessary to determine the applicant's fitness to operate a motor vehicle safely on the highways, except the examination of an applicant 75 years of age or older or, if the Secretary adopts rules under Section 37 of the Secretary of State Act to raise the age requirement for actual demonstrations, the examination of an applicant who has attained that increased age or is older shall include an actual demonstration of the applicant's ability to exercise ordinary and reasonable control of the operation of a motor vehicle. All portions of written and verbal examinations under this Section, excepting where the English language appears on facsimiles of road signs, may be given in the Spanish language and, at the discretion of the Secretary of State, in any other language as well as in English upon request of the examinee. Deaf persons who are otherwise qualified are not prohibited from being issued a license, other than a commercial driver's license, under this Code.

(c) Re-examination for those applicants who at the time of renewing their driver's license possess a driving record devoid of any convictions of traffic violations or evidence of committing an offense for which mandatory revocation would be required upon conviction pursuant to Section 6-205 at the time of renewal shall be in a manner prescribed by the Secretary in order to determine an applicant's ability to safely operate a motor vehicle, except that every applicant for the renewal of a driver's license who is 75 years of age or older or, if the Secretary adopts rules under Section 37 of the Secretary of State Act to raise the age requirement for actual demonstrations, every applicant for the renewal of a driver's license who has attained that increased age or is older must prove, by an actual demonstration, the applicant's ability to exercise reasonable care in the safe operation of a motor vehicle.

(d) In the event the applicant is not ineligible under the provisions of Section 6-103 to receive a driver's license, the Secretary of State shall make provision for giving an examination, either in the county where the applicant resides or at a place adjacent thereto reasonably convenient to the applicant, within not more than 30 days from the date said application is received.

(e) The Secretary of State may adopt rules regarding the use of foreign language interpreters during the application and examination process.

(Source: P.A. 100-770, eff. 1-1-19; 100-962, eff. 1-1-19; 101-81, eff. 7-12-19; 101-174, eff. 1-1-20.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.

Effective Date: 6/30/2023