

Class G Vision Waiver Program

Medical Reporting by Healthcare Practitioners

The *Highway Traffic Act* requires physicians, optometrists and nurse practitioners in Ontario to report to the ministry patients age 16 or over who have certain medical or visual conditions that may make it dangerous to drive. In addition, physicians, nurse practitioners, optometrists and occupational therapists have the discretion to also report patients who, in their opinion, have a condition that may make it dangerous to drive.

What are the vision standards for drivers?

Vision standards for a Class G (G1 & G2) are

- Visual acuity (i.e. how far you can see) of no less than 20/50 with both eyes open and examined together with or without the aid of corrective lenses
- Horizontal visual field (i.e. how wide you can see around you) of at least 120 continuous degrees along the horizontal meridian and at least 15 continuous degrees above and below fixation, with both eyes open and examined together. The visual field must be distributed equally – 60 degrees on either side of the vertical midline.

What is the Vision Waiver Program?

The vision waiver program is for Class G drivers whose vision does not meet the 120 degree **horizontal visual field requirement**. To qualify for this program, drivers must have

- No more than six demerit points
- No licence suspension within the last five years for a *Criminal Code* conviction
- No licence suspension within the last five years for certain *Highway Traffic Act* (HTA) convictions
- No collision within the last five years and within the time of vision loss, with an associated conviction under the HTA for certain offences
- No medical or visual condition or disability that, alone or combined with a reduced visual field, may significantly impair driving ability

Drivers must also meet all other qualifications for a Class G driver's licence.

If you meet all the eligibility requirements, you will be asked to submit a detailed vision report, a medical report and undergo a functional assessment.

What is a Functional Assessment?

A functional assessment, also called a Driving Evaluation, is an assessment by an occupational therapist and a driving instructor. It includes an in-clinic medical assessment and an on-road driving evaluation. It takes 3-4 hours to complete the entire assessment and must be completed at one of the ministry's approved functional assessment centres.

Components of a Functional Assessment

The functional assessment for a vision waiver consists of a standardized in-clinic assessment and a standardized on-road test.

All centres that conduct vision waiver assessments follow the same protocol.

The **in-clinic assessment** includes

- A standard group of tests to determine if your driving performance will be affected by your condition
- A brief medical history and a review of all medical reports provided
- A driver's habit questionnaire which will give your assessor some insight into your driving experience and when you last drove

The **on-road portion** of the evaluation includes

- Standardized manoeuvres aimed at assessing visual function and your ability to compensate for your vision loss

The occupational therapist will also assess any physical and/or cognitive deficits that may be present that could affect your fitness to drive. Physical issues unrelated to vision may be listed in the final report.

Details of the vision waiver program can be found in section 21.2 of Ontario Regulation 340/94.

For more information on the medical review process and national medical standards, please visit us at <http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/medical-review.shtml>