Red Flags of Medically At-Risk Drivers

Before the traffic stop:
Has the driver committed any of the following traffic violations?
- Driving the wrong way on a one-way street or on the wrong side of a two-way street
- Failing to stop or yield to other traffic
- Making unsafe turns, especially a left turn
- Turning from the wrong lane
- Straddling dividing lines
- Driving off the road
- Unusual driving violations that are difficult to explain

Look for the following red flags after the driver has been pulled over:

**Physical clues**
- Is the driver taking too long to pull over
- Examine the car: Are there numerous dents on the vehicle the driver cannot explain
- Does the driver have difficulty communicating
- Is the driver experiencing difficulty producing identification
- Slow reflexes, poor coordination, difficulty walking

**Psychological clues**
- Admission of being unaware of other vehicles, traffic, or his or her action leading to the violation
- Lack of recall (not knowing the current time, week, month, or year)
- Inability to comprehend
- Unaware of traffic rules
- Driver is confused, lost, fatigued, disoriented, or drowsy

Less obvious red flags may include medical conditions and medications that may impair driving:

**Partial list of medical conditions**
- Memory loss
- Alzheimer’s or dementia
- Neurological conditions, such as seizure or blackout disorders
- Sleep disorders, such as sleep apnea
- Visual impairment

**Partial list of medications**
- Sedatives
- Pain relievers
- Antihistamines
- Antitussive (cough suppressants)
- Blood pressure drugs
- Sleeping pills
- Antiarrhythmics
- Stimulants

If you are concerned with the driver’s ability to drive safely, ask yourself the following questions:
(The following are red flags if you answer “No”)
- Does the driver know where he/she is coming from?
- Does the driver know his/her destination?
- Can you comprehend what the driver is saying?
- Does the driver recall the time of day, day of the week, month, and year?

Look for the following:
- Is the driver wearing an identification bracelet or necklace indicating dementia?
- Is the driver’s clothing non-matching, inappropriate, or incomplete?
- Is the driver far from their residence and unaware of it?

If you are concerned about the driver’s ability to drive, submit a Medical Review Request form to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to conduct a medical review of the licensed driver. Reports must be submitted in writing or using the Medical Review Request (MED 3), which can be found at:
- Go to www.dmvNOW.com
- Select “Medical Information”
- Select “Medical Forms”
- Select “MED 3 Form”

The following must be included with the report:
- Information that will help DMV identify the impaired driver (name, address, date of birth, etc.).
- Name, address, and phone number of the person reporting the driver.
- Specific information about your concerns and why the driver should be reviewed.

**DMV contact information:**
DMV Medical Review Services
Post Office Box 27412
Richmond, Virginia 23269-0001
Phone: (804) 367-6203
Fax: (804) 367-1604
www.dmvNOW.com/drivers/#medical/spec_restrict.asp

**GrandDriver**
GrandDriver is an educational resource designed to provide Virginians as they age with information and resources about staying safe and mobile on the road. Visit www.GrandDriver.net.

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