

RCW 46.20.041 Persons with physical or mental disabilities or diseases. (1) If the department has reason to believe that a person is suffering from a physical or mental disability or disease that may affect that person's ability to drive a motor vehicle, the department must evaluate whether the person is able to safely drive a motor vehicle. As part of the evaluation:

(a) The department shall permit the person to demonstrate personally that notwithstanding the disability or disease he or she is able to safely drive a motor vehicle.

(b) The department may require the person to obtain a statement signed by a licensed physician or other proper authority designated by the department certifying the person's condition.

(i) The statement is for the confidential use of the director and the chief of the Washington state patrol and for other public officials designated by law. It is exempt from public inspection and copying notwithstanding chapter 42.56 RCW.

(ii) The statement may not be offered as evidence in any court except when appeal is taken from the order of the director canceling or withholding a person's driving privilege. However, the department may make the statement available to the director of the department of retirement systems for use in determining eligibility for or continuance of disability benefits and it may be offered and admitted as evidence in any administrative proceeding or court action concerning the disability benefits.

(2) On the basis of the evaluation the department may:

(a) Issue or renew a driver's license to the person without restrictions;

(b) Cancel or withhold the driving privilege from the person; or

(c) Issue a restricted driver's license to the person. The restrictions must be suitable to the licensee's driving ability. The restrictions may include:

(i) Special mechanical control devices on the motor vehicle operated by the licensee;

(ii) Limitations on the type of motor vehicle that the licensee may operate; or

(iii) Other restrictions determined by the department to be appropriate to assure the licensee's safe operation of a motor vehicle.

(3) The department may either issue a special restricted license or may set forth the restrictions upon the usual license form.

(4) The department may suspend or revoke a restricted license upon receiving satisfactory evidence of any violation of the restrictions. In that event the licensee is entitled to a driver improvement interview and a hearing as provided by RCW 46.20.322 or 46.20.328.

(5) Operating a motor vehicle in violation of the restrictions imposed in a restricted license is a traffic infraction. [2005 c 274 § 306; 1999 c 274 § 12; 1999 c 6 § 9; 1986 c 176 § 1; 1979 ex.s. c 136 § 54; 1979 c 61 § 2; 1965 ex.s. c 121 § 5.]

Intent—1999 c 6: See note following RCW 46.04.168.

Effective date—Severability—1979 ex.s. c 136: See notes following RCW 46.63.010.