TEXAS DRIVING WITH DISABILITY

Texas Education Agency

A Guide for Families

Established by the 86th Texas Legislature, the Texas Driving with Disability initiative focuses on improving the interaction between law enforcement and drivers with disabilities who have unique communication needs.

This guide helps families and students consider the options available through Texas Driving with Disability.



TEXAS DRIVING WITH DISABILITY IS NOT AN ADAPTED DRIVER EDUCATION COURSE

Known as the Samuel Allen Law, this initiative allows an individual to voluntarily request information about their communication needs to be added to:



- **Driver license or State ID.** Available through the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), this indicator will alert law enforcement of a challenge with communication.
- **Vehicle registration.** Available through the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV), this indicator will alert an officer before approaching a vehicle in a pullover.

These optional indicators alert law enforcement officers to challenges the driver might face in spoken communication or understanding directions.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOLS IN TEXAS?

Effective September 1, 2023, Texas public schools must provide information about Texas Driving with Disability to students who:

- have a health condition or disability that may impede effective communication; and
- receive special education services; or
- are covered by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

These requirements are outlined in Texas Education Code §29.0113.

This information must be provided annually to students who are 16 years of age or older until graduation or until their 21st birthday. The information about Texas Driving with Disability must also be provided to the parents or guardians of eligible students. It may be provided with any transition planning materials that the school provides.

While information about Texas Driving with Disability is **not required** to be shared by the ARD committee or the 504 committee, it **may be beneficial** for these committees to discuss the options as appropriate for each student. Your child's district or charter school will determine how this information is shared with students and their families.



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UNDERSTANDING THE OPTIONS

First, it's important to understand that most common challenges with communication fall into one of two categories: processing speed or using a different communication method. For law enforcement coding and training purposes, the term "communication impediment" is divided into two groups:

1 Slower processing speed.

Individuals may need time to respond or may need information to be repeated more slowly.

For example, diagnoses such as autism, brain injury, or Parkinson's disease may affect processing speed.

2 Using a different method to communicate.

Individuals may use American Sign Language (ASL) or an augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) device.

For example, diagnoses such as deaf or hard of hearing may affect communication method.

Individuals with disabilities that affect communication are not required to disclose their disability to either the DPS or the TxDMV.

Driver license or State ID.
Available through the DPS, this option will alert law enforcement of a challenge with communication.



Vehicle registration.
Available through the TxDMV, this option will alert an officer before approaching a vehicle in a pullover.



Forms are available to allow an individual to ask a medical professional, such as their doctor, to authorize the requested indicator.

To request the optional indicator on a driver license or state ID, an individual would present the completed DL-101 form at the driver license office.

To include disability information with vehicle registration, an individual would submit one of the following forms when they register or update their vehicle with the TxDMV:

- VTR-215 for Deaf Driver Awareness
- VTR-216 for communication impediment

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WHERE TO START IF YOU ARE A STUDENT

LEARN ABOUT YOUR OPTIONS



Review the information in this guide to understand the optional indicators for your driver license, State ID, or vehicle registration.

- Talk to a trusted teacher or family member if you have questions.
- Visit TexasDrivingWithDisability.com to learn more.

APPLY FOR THE INDICATOR(S)

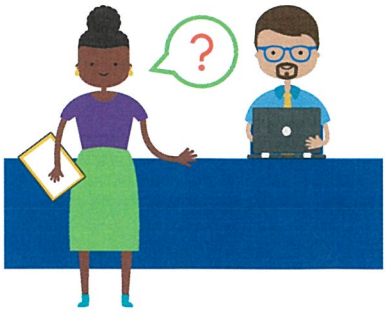


Did you decide to request one of the indicators? First, you will need to ask a medical professional to fill out a form. Ask someone familiar with your disability, such as your doctor.

- Take the signed form to request adding one of the indicators.
  - To add the indicator to your driver license or state ID, take the form to the driver license office.
  - To add the indicator to your motor vehicle record, take the form to your local county tax assessor-collector's office or mail it to the address listed on the form.

ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF

When you speak with someone from the DPS or the TxDMV about requesting one of the indicators, you may want to ask the following questions.



- Who can complete the application forms?
- Where will the designation be located on my driver license or vehicle registration?
- Who will be able to see the information I share about my disability?
- Who can I talk to if I have questions after submitting the application?



You may have other questions about Texas Driving with Disability. Use this space to write your own questions. You may want to use this space to write notes from conversations you have with your teachers, your family, or staff from the DPS or the TxDMV.