Improving Safety and Transportation for Aging Road Users in Tennessee

Tennessee’s senior adult population is 14 percent of the total state’s population, and it is growing. By the year 2030, it is possible that one out of every four drivers in Tennessee will be age 65 and over. To meet the transportation safety challenges of an aging population, the Tennessee Governor’s Highway Safety Office is collaborating with state and national partners to improve the safety, access, and mobility of Tennessee’s aging population. The Tennessee Coalition for Aging Driver Safety (TN-CADS) will develop Tennessee’s Aging Road User Strategic Plan to ensure that initiatives aimed to reduce crash, injury and fatality rates for senior drivers, ages 65 and over, are implemented throughout the state.

### Percentage of Population Age 65 and Older, Projections 2010-2030, Tennessee vs. United States

Source: U.S Census Bureau

![Graph showing percentage of population age 65 and older projections for 2010 to 2030 for Tennessee and the United States.](image)

#### Tennessee Coalition for Aging Driver Safety

Many organizations have responsibilities and shared interests in aging road user safety and desire to improve and maintain the quality of life for older Tennesseans. The Coalition for Aging Driver Safety will include professionals that focus efforts on the four “E”s: engineering, education, EMS, and enforcement. Recommended membership includes the following:

- AAA Auto Club South
- AARP
- Area Agencies on Aging and Disability
- Tennessee Technological University
- Belmont University
- Governor’s Highway Safety Office
- Tennessee Department of Transportation
- Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security
- Tennessee Department of Health
- Tennessee Highway Safety Patrol
- Tennessee Senior Centers
- Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability
- Tennessee Department of Motor Vehicles
- Greater Nashville Regional Council
- Hospital Corporation of America
- Add your name here (you can be one of our newest partners)

### Governor’s Highway Safety Office’s Goals and Objectives for 2014-2015

**Goal**: Reduce fatalities, hospitalizations and emergency visits related to motor vehicle and traffic crashes by 10% (based on TN 5 year averages for 2008-2012)

**Objectives Focus: Education and EMS**

1. Create awareness about challenges associated with the aging process
2. Provide education, training and support for current statewide initiatives (CarFit, Yellow Dot)

### Graph: Population Age 65 and Older, Projections 2005-2030

Source: U.S Census Bureau

![Graph showing population age 65 and older projections from 2005 to 2030 for Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, and Kentucky.](image)
Transportation Safety and Mobility Resources

Resources are currently under development and include the following:

1. Rack Display Card: Senior Driver Safety Tips
   * Distribution to 42 DMV locations
2. Posters for distribution to physician offices
3. Tennessee’s Guide for Aging Drivers in English and Spanish
4. Talking points document similar to this document

Training Opportunities in Tennessee: Dates—TBD

CarFit Training Sites:
- Cookeville
- Dickson
- Knoxville
- Nashville

Engineering Roadway Improvements to Meet the Needs of Aging Drivers

“The recommended strategies identify needs regarding signage, intersection design, traffic control and operations (especially in work zones), and roadway delineation. For example, States are encouraged to increase the size and letter height of roadway signs, and to provide protected left-turn signal phases at high-volume intersections. In many cases the point is made that the needed changes can be accomplished at relatively low cost if States begin now to incorporate them into new projects and scheduled maintenance and reconstruction. "The most important thing," says Tom Welch, Iowa’s State transportation safety engineer and a contributor to the guide, "is that engineers realize that the 'design driver' for the 21st century is no longer a 45-year-old male. It's someone in the 65-plus age group, and it may just be their mom."


Current Tennessee Initiatives

CarFit is an educational program that offers older adults the opportunity to check how well their personal vehicles "fit" them. The CarFit program also provides information and materials on community-specific resources that could enhance their safety as drivers, and/or increase their mobility in the community.

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The Tennessee Yellow DOT Program is designed to provide first responders with an individual’s medical information in the event of an emergency on Tennessee’s roadways. The information can mean the difference between “life and death” in the “Golden Hour” immediately following a serious incident.

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