

Introduction to the AARP Driver Safety Program

One of the most significant demographic facts affecting our nation's future is the aging of the population. The number of people age 50 and older has grown significantly in the past decade; this segment will continue to increase more rapidly than other age groups in the United States. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that by the year 2030, one in four drivers will be 65 or older. This means there will be more than 30 million older drivers on our roads at that time.

Traffic statistics indicate that older adults overall are safe drivers with good driving records. However, medical conditions, certain medications, and age-related changes in physical and mental function can increase the risk of crashes and injury among older drivers. It is critically important that older drivers make safety a personal priority. The AARP Driver Safety Program is committed to helping Americans 50 and older sustain mobility as they age.

Trained volunteers instruct the AARP Driver Safety Program classroom course. The course enables drivers to refresh their driving skills and understand how to adjust to age-related challenges. The course is usually presented to a group of 15 to 35 participants in a four-hour, six-hour, or eight-hour classroom format, over one or two days.

All that is needed to host a Driver Safety Program course in your community is a room with tables or desks that will accommodate the participants and a VCR or DVD player with a TV monitor. There is no direct charge for organizations such as yours to host the course.

This packet contains helpful information about the AARP Driver Safety Program and some of the benefits of being a host.

We hope you will join us in promoting driver safety and helping older drivers maintain their mobility and independence in your community. Your local instructor can answer questions you might have after reviewing this information.

Thank you for your interest.

AARP Driver Safety Program Contact Person: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Date: _____

About the AARP Driver Safety Program

The AARP Driver Safety Program is the nation's first and largest driver safety course designed especially for drivers age 50 and older. The course is intended to help drivers live more independently as they age and remain safe on today's roads. Since the program's inception in 1979, more than 13 million participants have completed the course.

The Driver Safety Program is one of the best examples of AARP at the local level. A wide variety of host organizations -- corporations, hospitals, banks, houses of worship, senior centers, libraries, community service centers -- find that hosting and helping to promote the course is a great way to give back to the community.

Depending on requirements in your state, the AARP Driver Safety Program classroom course lasts four, six or eight hours. The course can be conducted in one or two days. Weekend and Spanish courses are available at some locations. Participants of the classroom course are charged a minimal fee of \$12 for AARP members and \$14 for non-members. Although the course is geared toward drivers 50 and older, it can be taken by licensed drivers of all ages, and there are no tests. In most states and the District of Columbia, course participants may be eligible to receive a state-mandated, multi-year discount on their auto insurance premiums. Voluntary discounts are offered in many other states. Participants should contact their insurance company or agent for more details.

AARP Driver Safety Program Course Objectives

The AARP Driver Safety Program course covers defensive driving techniques and the normal changes in vision, hearing, and reaction time associated with aging. The course also provides practical techniques for adjusting to these changes to ensure the driver's own safety and that of others on the road. During the course, participants learn about current rules of the road and how to operate their vehicles more safely in today's increasingly challenging driving environment. Topics include:

- Maintaining proper following distance.
- Methods of changing lanes and turning at intersections.
- Effects of medications on driving.
- Minimizing the effect of dangerous blind spots.
- Limiting driver distractions such as eating, smoking, and cell phone use.
- Properly using safety belts, air bags, and anti-lock brakes.
- Maintaining physical flexibility.
- Monitoring the driving skills and capabilities of yourself and others.

Why Become a Host?

As a host of the Driver Safety Program course, you can promote safe driving and thereby help older drivers maintain their mobility and independence in your community.

Serving as a host is also a great way for your organization to give back to the community.

Your participation as a host:

- Brings community members and participants to your facility.
- Creates community goodwill.

With little or no direct cost to your organization, you can become part of this nationally recognized program, which attracts over half a million participants annually.

How You Can Help

Classroom space: Providing or arranging for an easily accessible, free room in which to hold the course is the greatest contribution a host can make. The course size averages about 20 people, with a range of 15 to 35 participants. Classes can be held over one or two days, and may be scheduled on weekdays, evenings, or weekends.

Equipment: The course includes an audio-visual component. A VCR or DVD player and TV monitor are required.

Promotion: Local instructors promote the course in their area to recruit participants. As a host, you can provide valuable promotional assistance by:

- Displaying posters and brochures for the Driver Safety Program in visible areas.
- Including articles about the course in your newsletters and mailings, or on your website.
- Providing a link from your website to the AARP Driver Safety Program website at www.aarp.org/drive.
- Developing and distributing press releases.
- Mentioning the course in presentations to community groups and your internal organizations.

Other contributions: You can also help by:

- Pre-registering participants through phone or mail reservations, creating a roster, and collecting course fees.
- Providing light refreshments such as coffee and cookies.
- Encouraging your employees to serve as instructors or volunteers for the Driver Safety Program in your community.

What AARP Provides

Trained instructors: More than 7,000 volunteer instructors teach the AARP Driver Safety Program course in communities throughout the country. Instructors receive initial training from highly qualified AARP trainers and participate annually in local workshops to maintain and improve their skills.

Course materials: All course materials, including participant workbooks, are provided. Participants who complete the course receive a certificate that may entitle them to a reduction in their auto insurance premiums in most states. Voluntary discounts are offered in select states.

Promotional materials: The AARP National Office produces materials such as posters, brochures, and bookmarks that are available to help you promote the Driver Safety Program.

What Participants Receive

The course: Participants receive a comprehensive course workbook, which provides a thorough review of the “rules of the road” with an emphasis on safety strategies for older drivers. The course also covers normal changes in vision, hearing, and reaction time associated with aging, and provides practical techniques to adjust for these changes. The participation fee is \$12 for AARP members and \$14 for non-members.

Auto insurance discounts: Legislation in most states and the District of Columbia require all automobile insurance companies conducting business in those states to offer a premium discount to people who have completed a state-approved driver improvement course. In states where premium discounts are not mandated, several insurance companies voluntarily provide discounts to participants completing the AARP Driver Safety Program course. Participants should contact their insurance company or agent for more details.

How Do I Become a Host?

To host the AARP Driver Safety Program course, call 1-888-227-7669 and leave a message, or email drive@aarp.org. You can also fill out an online host interest form at www.aarp.org/driversafetyhost.

To learn more about the AARP Driver Safety Program course, visit www.aarp.org/drive.

Attachments

Participant Brochure (D17286)

AARP Driver Safety Program Fact Sheet (D12607)

Host Brochure (D740)