



# ADED

The Association for Driver  
Rehabilitation Specialists

## **What is ADED ?**

ADED: The Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists, is established to support professionals working in the field of driver evaluation, habilitation, rehabilitation, and transportation equipment modifications. The multi-disciplinary ADED network is dynamic and committed to identifying evidence-based innovation and practice in an evolving specialty profession. ADED's members work with persons with disabilities and the aging to ensure driving independence and, when necessary, a graceful retirement from driving. ADED promotes the professional development of those working in the field of driver rehabilitation by offering training, professional credentials, continuing education, networking, and is the only organization in North America to offer the Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialist (CDRS®) certification.

## **What is a Driver Rehabilitation Specialist?**

Driver rehabilitation specialists work with people of all ages and abilities, exploring transportation solutions for drivers with special needs and the aging.

Driver Rehabilitation Specialists:

1. Conduct a thorough evaluation of abilities and limitations
2. Provide driver remediation and training
3. Assist with navigating the state driver licensing process
4. Work closely with mobility equipment dealers to achieve optimum vehicle fit

Driver rehabilitation specialists are professionals with backgrounds in healthcare and/or driver education who have completed additional training and education in the field of driver rehabilitation. The most knowledgeable of the specialists are Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialists (CDRS).

The CDRS certificate is the accepted benchmark for quality in driver rehabilitation services. ADED provides practitioners with high quality training and is the only organization to offer the driver rehabilitation specialty certification designation. Candidates who have successfully passed the certification examination will earn credentials designating them as a CDRS and are required to maintain continuing education and update their knowledge in the profession to retain this important designation.

## **What type of professional background does a Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialist have?**

Drawing from a wealth of caregiving fields, ADED members include occupational, physical, kinesiotherapy and speech-language therapists, driver education specialists, and equipment manufacturers/dealers, as well as rehabilitation and vocational professionals. With backgrounds in healthcare and/or driver education, driver rehabilitation specialists are professionals who have completed additional training and education in the field of driver rehabilitation. These are smart, caring

people with excellent interpersonal skills and a creative, "can-do" attitude – people who can make a real difference for older drivers and those with special needs.

### **I just need training for driving with equipment, why do I need to first have a driver evaluation?**

Because a comprehensive driver evaluation can save you time and money in the long run. Driver training for a person with a disability is frequently provided after a thorough driver evaluation, and should ideally be conducted by a CDRS® or a qualified DRS. A driver evaluation generally consists of a clinical assessment and a behind-the-wheel assessment. The evaluation process generally includes tests of physical function, vision, perception, attention, motor function, and reaction time, in addition to actual driving performance tests. Based on the evaluation results, the CDRS® or qualified DRS will determine if any adaptive driving equipment is needed, whether the individual can drive independently or at all, and whether they require driver rehabilitation or behind the wheel training. This process is vital to ensuring that you are prescribed the precise equipment to fit your unique needs. The evaluation can average three to eight hours, and training is customized to the unique needs of each individual.

### **What types of driving equipment does a Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialist recommend?**

Some of the recommended vehicle adaptations could include lifts; ramps; custom seating; steering devices, such as spinner knobs and other specially-designed handles for the steering wheel; hand controls; foot pedal extensions; special mirrors; extenders and extensions for dash controls; and other adaptive tools. It is important to note that before you purchase or install any adaptive driving equipment, training by a specialist is highly recommended to ensure that you are getting the right equipment for your unique needs and that you are prepared to pass the state's driver licensing exam.

### **How can I get an appointment with a Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialist?**

Referrals to a driver rehabilitation program or CDRS® for those with disabilities or the aging can be made by physicians, specialists, eye doctors, occupational therapists, driving schools, gerontologists, parents or spouses, the individuals themselves, and other sources. A "disability" is classified as a condition impeding completion of daily tasks using traditional methods. Disability types include: physical impairments affecting movement, such as amputation, cerebral palsy, Parkinson's disease, spinal cord injury, and stroke; sensory impairments, such as poor vision or hearing loss/deafness; cognitive impairments, such as dementia, autism, Down syndrome, and traumatic brain injury; and psychiatric conditions, such as schizophrenia and anxiety disorders.

### **How do I find a local Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialist?**

Only ADED can grant the CDRS® certification degree. ADED is the only organization solely dedicated to the professional educational needs of the driver rehabilitation specialist. They maintain the most current list of driver rehabilitation specialist including Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialists on their site: [www.aded.net](http://www.aded.net) Direct link to search page: <https://www.aded.net/search/custom.asp?id=1984>

### **What if there isn't a Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialist in my area?**

In the absence of a CDRS®, the recommended professional should:

- Be eligible for taking the CDRS examination with the goal of obtaining the credential within one-year **OR**
- Actively working toward CDRS eligibility, under the mentorship of an active CDRS **OR**

- Possess a medically licensed degree (i.e., occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech language pathologist, etc.)

**And:** Possess additional licenses as required by the state agencies (i.e., certified driving instructor, licensed driving instructor, etc.).

It is recommended that you seek professionals with the following experience:

- At least one-year experience in driver rehabilitation.
- For clinical assessments of clients where cognition is a concern, the medically licensed provider should have experience evaluating and treating cognitive medical conditions.
- For evaluations in which mobility equipment is indicated, the CDRS/DRS must be proficient in the application and operation of mobility equipment. CDRS/DRS's should be selected based on their proficiency with the specific type(s) of equipment as defined in the *Spectrum of Driver Services* (basic, low tech, high tech).
- Professional development is expected through appropriate continuing education as well as adherence to the code of ethics of their professional organization and *Best Practice Guidelines for the Delivery of Driver Rehabilitation Services* (Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists, 2016).

### **How much does a driver evaluation cost?**

Costs range and vary depending on the provider, type of driver rehabilitation program, and length of time required to complete the evaluation. Some providers accept medical insurance while others charge a fee-for-service. It is important to ask about costs, billing, and financial support when contacting your local driver rehabilitation specialist.

### **What is the path I should follow when looking to outfit my vehicle or obtain a wheelchair accessible vehicle?**

For drivers in need of new adaptive driving equipment, or driving with a disability for the first time, and for those with progressive disabilities, having a conversation with your physician about driving is recommended.

Following a visit to your physician, a comprehensive driver evaluation is recommended as the next, and important step, in the journey towards driving independence.

Following the evaluation and any training (if necessary), you may be required to pass a state driver licensing exam for any restrictions that are indicated. Your driver rehabilitation specialist will help you navigate this step.

Next, you will be provided with a prescription for the specific modifications and equipment that best suits your unique needs. That prescription can then be delivered to a qualified mobility equipment dealer who will install the equipment or modify your vehicle as indicated. Working together, the driver rehabilitation specialist and the mobility equipment dealer will ensure that your vehicle is outfitted to your specifications and that you are comfortable with the installation.

### **There are a lot of different types of programs out there. Which one is right for me?**

We recommend finding a program that will best suit your unique needs. Not everyone will need to go to a program that has high tech and advanced driving systems and not everyone can be serviced by a traditional driving school. Here are a few types of driver rehabilitation programs and their level of service:

Basic: Provider is a driver rehabilitation specialist (DRS) with professional background in occupational therapy, other allied health field, driver education, or a professional team of CDRS or Specialty Certification in Driving and Community Mobility with a licensed driving instructor. The basic level program offers comprehensive driving evaluation, training and education. Services may include use of adaptive driving aids that do not affect operation of primary or secondary controls (e.g. seat cushions or additional mirrors). The program may also include transportation planning (transition and options), cessation planning, and recommendations for clients as passengers.

Low Tech: Provider is a Driver Rehabilitation Specialist, Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialist, Occupational Therapist with Specialty Certification in Driving and Community Mobility, or in combination with a licensed driving instructor. *Certification in Driver Rehabilitation (CDRS) is recommended as the provider for comprehensive driving evaluation and training.* This type of program offers comprehensive driving evaluation, training and education, with or without adaptive driving aids that affect the operation of primary or secondary controls, vehicle ingress/egress, and mobility device storage/securement. A low-tech program may include use of adaptive driving aids such as seat cushions or additional mirrors. At the low-tech level, adaptive equipment for primary control is typically mechanical. Secondary controls may include wireless or remote access. Services in a low-tech program may include transportation planning (transition and options), cessation planning, and recommendations for clients as passengers.

High Tech: Provider is a Driver Rehabilitation Specialist, Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialist, Occupational Therapist with Specialty Certification in Driving and Community Mobility. *Certification in Driver Rehabilitation (CDRS) is recommended as the provider for comprehensive driving evaluation and training with advanced skills and expertise to complete complex client and vehicle evaluation and training.* A high-tech program offers a wide variety of adaptive equipment and vehicle options for comprehensive driving evaluation, training and education, including all services available in low-tech and Basic programs. At this level, providers can alter positioning of primary and secondary controls based on client's need or ability level. High tech adaptive equipment for primary and secondary controls includes devices that meet the following conditions: 1) capable of controlling vehicle functions or driving controls, and 2) consists of a programmable computerized system that interfaces/integrates with an electronic system in the vehicle.