

## CAN A PERSON WITH EPILEPSY OBTAIN A DRIVER'S LICENSE IN MINNESOTA?

**Yes.** Thousands of Minnesotans with epilepsy drive safely and accident-free. But under state law, the Department of Public Safety requires those applying for a driver's license or permit to report any condition that can, even occasionally, cause loss of consciousness or voluntary control. This is defined as the inability to assume and retain an upright posture without support, or the inability to respond rationally to external stimuli. Not all seizures fit into this category.

## WHAT IS THE LEGAL PROCEDURE FOR A DRIVER TO REPORT A SEIZURE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY?

A driver is required to report a seizure, and the date it occurred, to the Department within thirty (30) days of the episode, using a form available on the DPS website or from the Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota. This form must be completed and signed by the driver and a physician. Failure to report or misrepresentation by the driver could result in a loss of driving privileges for six (6) months following the discovery.

Visit [dps.mn.gov](https://dps.mn.gov) to learn more.

The Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota (EFMN) receives numerous inquiries about driving regulations for individuals with epilepsy. This information has been developed to help people with epilepsy, their families and others to gain a better understanding of some of the rights, responsibilities and restrictions for someone with seizures who wishes to maintain a Minnesota driver's license.



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EPILEPSY AND SEIZURES:  
**DRIVING IN  
MINNESOTA**

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A SEIZURE IS REPORTED?

The driver's license will be canceled, and driving privileges are lost until the individual has been seizure-free for three (3) months. At that time the driver submits the reporting form, with a favorable prognosis from their physician, and the driver's license is reinstated. Follow-up using the same form is required at six months, annually until seizure-free for four years, and then every four years (or more frequently if the doctor recommends).

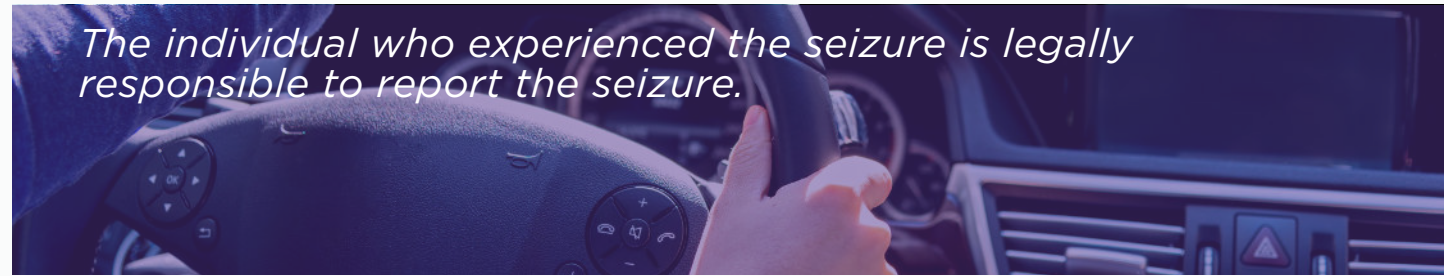
## ARE EXCEPTIONS ALLOWED FOR THE THREE MONTH CANCELLATION PERIOD?

**Yes.** Exceptions are allowed in the following circumstances:

1. The seizure occurs under a physician's orders to change or withdraw medication, and the physician does not recommend cancellation of driving privileges.
2. The physician states that the episode was the first one experienced by the driver, and does not recommend cancellation of driving privileges.
3. It was the first seizure experienced by the driver in four (4) or more years, AND the episode was related to a temporary illness or an isolated incident of forgetting to take medication, AND the physician indicates a favorable short- and long-term prognosis.

## CAN THE LICENSE BE CANCELED FOR LONGER THAN THREE MONTHS?

**Yes.** If the seizure is caused by alcohol or controlled substance abuse, the loss of driving privileges following the episode is for one (1) year.



## IF AN INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCES "NOCTURNAL" SEIZURES, MUST THEY ALSO BE REPORTED?

**Yes.** The nature of an individual's epilepsy can change. A person who has never had a seizure while awake can suddenly start having them. Also, if an individual with nocturnal epilepsy were to fall asleep at the wheel or become very drowsy, a seizure could occur.

## IS IT THE DOCTOR'S RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT A SEIZURE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY?

**No.** The individual who experienced the seizure is legally responsible to report it. Failure to report could result in a loss of driving privileges for six (6) months following the discovery. Doctors are not legally required to report a patient's seizure, although they may choose to do so if they believe the patient may still be driving.


## CAN AN INDIVIDUAL APPEAL THE CANCELLATION OF DRIVING PRIVILEGES IF THEY BELIEVE THEY CAN SAFELY DRIVE?

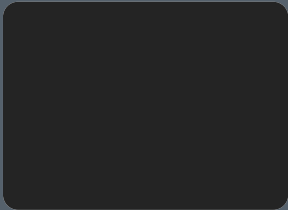
**Yes.** A driver has the right to appeal the loss of driving privileges by writing a

letter to the Department of Public Safety, Motor Vehicles Division. The driver's treating physician is required to submit a complete medical history related to their condition (including medications used, type and severity of seizures, etc.) and the medical reasons why the appeal should be granted. This is examined by the Medical Review Board along with the state's records, and each physician on the board makes their recommendation. However, the physicians do not have the final say; the Department of Public Safety does. Decisions are to be made within 60 days of the request.

Additional information about Minnesota driving laws can be found at the state's Department of Public Safety website, [dps.mn.gov](https://dps.mn.gov), or by contacting the Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota's Information Services at [efmn.org/infoservices](https://efmn.org/infoservices).



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