

**State of Connecticut  
Department of Motor Vehicles  
Drivers License Division**

***SUBJECT:***     **PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATING THE BEHIND-THE WHEEL PERFORMANCE OF NEW DRIVERS**

***PURPOSE:***    To establish uniform procedures for evaluating the driving skills of new drivers and use of Form R-229 (Road Test Evaluation Report) (Rev. 4/87)

***SCOPE:***        These procedures apply to the conduct of behind-the wheel testing of individuals, regardless of age or nationality, who have not previously held a valid driver's license issued by any other licensing authority.

***I. GENERAL INFORMATION:***

1. A behind-the-Wheel evaluation cannot be conducted until the applicant has successfully completed all required documentation, automated driver's test and a vision test.
2. Each branch office and testing location will develop a minimum of three road test routes. The routes shall be used randomly throughout the testing day. Each route will provide the applicant with the opportunity to demonstrate his/her driving ability. Tests performed will last approximately 10 to 15 minutes and consist of:
  - a. Left and right turns
  - b. Response to traffic control devices
  - c. Interaction with other motorists
  - d. Backing/parking

***II. PRIOR TO BEGINNING THE BEHIND-THE-WHEEL EVALUATION:***

1. Verify that the test vehicle is the vehicle on which documentation has been previously presented.
2. Have the applicant enter the vehicle, but not insert the key in the ignition.
3. Evaluate the condition of the vehicle, using a walk around, beginning at the driver's side. Evaluate the following areas:
  - a. Tires
  - b. Brakes
  - c. Lights
  - d. Other – seat belt systems on vehicles constructed after 1964.
  - e. (Note: If more than one applicant is to use the test vehicle, a re-evaluation of the vehicles is not required for each test).

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4. While outside the vehicle assess the condition of the tires, looking for under-inflation, bald or tires with exposed cord. Have the applicant apply the turn signals, check the front and rear. With the turn signals off, check the brake lights for operation.
5. **Checking Brakes:** *Service Brakes:* Instruct the applicant to press on the brake pedal, (parking brake off, engine running Transmission in Park) note brake pedal reserve. This is the space between the brake pedal and the floorboard. There should be no contact of the brake pedal with the floor, there should be no Brake Warning Light illuminated. *Parking brake:* Have the applicant apply the parking brake. With the engine running, safely place the vehicle in “drive”, or 1<sup>st</sup> gear if manual transmission. Note (some vehicle models automatically release parking brake. If this is encountered have the applicant hold parking brake with his/her left foot. Have the applicant “pull” gently against the parking brake to determine its effectiveness. DO NOT require or permit the applicant to apply more power than would be achieved by a high engine idle, since most cars with rear disc brakes will overcome the parking brake. Return the transmission to Park (P), or neutral, if equipped with a manual transmission.
6. If the vehicle is found to be in an unsafe operating condition, issue the applicant a no fee card for a re-test at a future date.
7. Road tests may be conducted if minor defects are found and a warning ticket may be issued.
8. Enter the vehicle and return the vehicles registration and No-Fault insurance card to the applicant. (note where they place them).
9. Direct the applicant to activate the directional signal indicators.

### III. BEHIND –THE-WHEEL EVALUATION PROCEDURE AND REFERENCE FORM R-229 REV 01/06.

1. Getting Ready to Drive: (ALL areas must be evaluated)
  - a. Adjustment of seat
  - b. Adjustment of mirrors
  - c. Fastening and adjustment of seat belts
  - d. Other related areas, (e.g., release of parking brake)
2. Basic Driving Skills (5 of 9 areas must be evaluated)
  - a. Follows instructions (Route & maneuver direction)
  - b. Acceleration and shifting of manual transmission-equipped vehicles
  - c. Following distance
  - d. Braking
  - e. Signaling
  - f. Turning maneuvers
  - g. Pedestrians
  - h. Judgment and/or alertness
  - i. Other related areas (e.g. response to weather and road conditions)

3. Critical Driving Areas (all Areas will be evaluated)

- a. Speed
- b. Proper lane selection

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- a. Right of way
- b. Traffic controls
- c. Backing
- d. Parking
- a. Attitude and/or emotions. Other related areas (e.g. Response to approaching emergency vehicles, lane changes, distracted drivers)

*PASS-FAIL CRITERIA*

1. A satisfactory test is one in which the applicant receives less than three unsatisfactory ratings (indicated by an “√”) in the combined areas of “Getting Ready to Drive” and “Basic Driving Skills.” Or no “X’s “ in the “Critical Driving Skills” area.
2. An unsatisfactory test is one in which the applicant has received a combination of three or more “X” evaluations in the “Getting Ready to Drive” and “Basic Driving Skills” areas, or one or more X’s in the “Critical Driving Skills” area.

*COMPLETION OF FORM R-279 (Rev. 12/94)*

1. The applicant’s last name, first name, middle initial, will be printed on the form.
2. The applicant’s birth date will be recorded, using the numerical system, month-date-year.
3. The date of the test will be numerically recorded.
4. The time the test began and ended will be recorded.
5. Test results will be recorded, utilizing an “X” in the appropriate block.
6. The appropriate block will be “Xed” in road condition, traffic conditions, and weather conditions sections.
7. Check marks noted in the “score column” will indicate an observed skill, which was performed in a satisfactory manner.
8. An “X” indicates an observed unsatisfactory skill.
9. More than one operation may be listed in each skill, at the discretion of the inspector. Regardless of how many observations are made in each skill, and overall evaluation should be evident and noted in the “Comment Sections” on the form: i.e., Following distance: four satisfactory observations, and one unsatisfactory observation might be noted a ”satisfactory”.
10. Any “X” noted must be briefly explained in the “Comments Section.”

11. Any additional comments may be noted in the “Application Comment” section, e.g., had difficulty in communication with applicant because of ..... Applicant has a minor physical disability, etc.

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*FOLLOWING THE TEST:*

1. Present the applicant with a copy of the Form R-279 and discuss briefly any positive and negative observations, where possible, the critiques should be conducted in the presence of the applicant’s sponsor.
2. The original copy of the R-279 (Road Test Evaluation Report) will be attached to the yellow copy of the R-229 (Application for Connecticut Driver’s License) for further processing.