

# Cardiomyopathy and driving (group 2)

Driving standards for vocational driving licences (LGVs, PCV and horseboxes)

- The DVLA sets the medical standards that drivers need to meet in order to hold a driving licence.
- There are specific medical standards for people with cardiomyopathy, those with particular symptoms, and those with particular medical devices.
- This factsheet covers the standards for group 2 licences (vocational driving licence).

## The DVLA and driving standards

The DVLA (driver and vehicle licensing agency) is the body that licenses cars and drivers in Great Britain, and sets the medical standards for drivers. If you are a driver the law says that you must tell the DVLA about any medical condition that may affect your ability to drive. This is a requirement of holding a driving licence.

The DVLA has specific standards for people with heart conditions which depend on what driving licence you hold, your condition, the symptoms you have and whether you have certain treatment.

♥ Visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search for 'Car or motorcycle drivers with heart conditions'.

Some cardiomyopathies have their own specific driving standards. There are additional standards to meet if you experience particular symptoms (such as those related to arrhythmia or heart failure, for example palpitations, dizziness, loss of consciousness or other symptoms which affect safe driving) or if you have devices (such as a pacemaker or ICD).

With all of the standards below, where you can carry on driving, this is *as long as there is no other reason* why you cannot drive (such as any other medical conditions that have their own driving standards to meet and where you may have to tell the DVLA).

The following is a summary of the driving standards, from the GOV website and the DVLA guidelines for medical professionals ('Assessing fitness to drive – a guide for medical professionals').

♥ Visit [www.gov.uk/driving-medical-conditions](http://www.gov.uk/driving-medical-conditions) for more information.

The standards will either mean:

- you do not need to stop driving or tell the DVLA;
- you need to stop driving and tell the DVLA; or
- you do not need to notify the DVLA although you need to stop driving for a specified length of time.

In some cases, you will not be able to hold a vocational driving licence (where a condition is a bar to having a vocational licence).

If you are unsure about what standards apply to you, you can talk to your GP or cardiologist.

## Types of licence

**Group 1 licence:** also known as an 'ordinary driving licence', this is for cars, motorcycles and mopeds.

**Group 2 licence:** also known as a 'vocational licence', this is for large goods vehicles (lorries), passenger carrying vehicles (buses) and horse boxes.

This factsheet covers the driving standards for group 2 licences. See page two for the standards.

♥ For group 1, see our factsheet *Cardiomyopathy and driving (group 1)*.

## Form VOCH1

This is the form to use to notify the DVLA about any heart condition. It is also used to notify them if you have a pacemaker or ICD, arrhythmias or palpitations, heart failure, dilated or hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, left bundle branch block, or a left ventricular ejection fraction of less than 40%.

♥ For a full list of conditions and to see the form see [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search 'confidential medical information VOCH1'.

## Further information or queries

If you have any queries about the driving standards and how they apply to you, you might like to talk to your GP or cardiologist about whether your condition affects your ability to drive.

♥ For more information, copies of documents, and driving guidelines for all conditions and symptoms visit [www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving](http://www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving)

**Important note:** where you can continue to drive but must tell the DVLA, you should only drive if your doctor (GP or cardiologist) advises that you can, while the DVLA assess your case. The DVLA will make the final licensing decision based on this assessment.

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## Group 2 licence standards

### Standards depending on type of cardiomyopathy

- Arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy – you must stop driving and tell the DVLA. If you have no symptoms you may be able to start driving again after medical assessment. If you have symptoms you may **only** be able to start driving after your symptoms have been treated and controlled for a satisfactory period, and you have had an assessment by a electrophysiologist. If you get your licence back it may be a review licence which lasts for one to three years (before being reviewed).

You can notify the DVLA online or on form VOCH1.

- Dilated cardiomyopathy – you must tell the DVLA, (whether you have symptoms or not). If you have no symptoms you may be able to continue to drive under your doctors advice while the DVLA is assessing your situation. If you have symptoms you must stop driving, but may be able to start driving if the DVLA say you can (after they review your situation) as long as you meet the standards for your symptoms.

You can notify the DVLA online or on form VOCH1.

♥ [www.gov.uk/dilated-cardiomyopathy-and-driving](http://www.gov.uk/dilated-cardiomyopathy-and-driving)

- Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy – you must stop driving and tell the DVLA. If you don't have any symptoms you may be able to start driving under your doctors advice while the DVLA is assessing your situation, and if you meet certain requirements (depending on how your heart is affected). The DVLA may arrange for you to have an exercise test to check that you meet the criteria to drive. If you have symptoms you will not be able to hold a vocational driving licence.

You can notify the DVLA online or on form VOCH1.

♥ [www.gov.uk/hypertrophic-cardiomyopathy-and-driving](http://www.gov.uk/hypertrophic-cardiomyopathy-and-driving)

### Standards depending on other conditions or symptoms

- Arrhythmia – you must stop driving and tell the DVLA. You may be able to start driving again once your symptoms have been controlled for at least three months and you have a left ventricular ejection fraction of at least 40%.

You can notify the DVLA online or on form VOCH1.

♥ [www.gov.uk/arrhythmia-and-driving](http://www.gov.uk/arrhythmia-and-driving)

- Heart failure – you must tell the DVLA. If you don't have any symptoms you can continue to drive. If you have symptoms you must stop driving and tell the DVLA. You may be able to start driving again depending on how severe your symptoms are, and you must have a left ventricular ejection

fraction of at least 40%. However, the DVLA will assess your situation and may determine that you are not able to hold a vocational driving licence. You can notify the DVLA online or on form VOCH1.

♥ [www.gov.uk/heart-failure-and-driving](http://www.gov.uk/heart-failure-and-driving)

- Left bundle branch block – you must tell the DVLA. You can continue to drive once you meet the DVLA's medical requirements. The DVLA may arrange for you to have heart function tests to assess this. You can notify the DVLA online or on form VOCH1.

♥ [www.gov.uk/left-bundle-branch-block-and-driving](http://www.gov.uk/left-bundle-branch-block-and-driving)

### Standards depending on devices

- Atrial defibrillator – you must stop driving and tell the DVLA. If your ICD is automatic you will not be able to hold a vocational licence. If you have an ICD that you, or your doctor, activates, you may be able to drive again as long as you meet the standards for arrhythmia. You can notify the DVLA online or on form VOCH1.

♥ [www.gov.uk/defibrillators-and-driving](http://www.gov.uk/defibrillators-and-driving)

- Cardiac resynchronisation therapy (CRT) with pacemaker – you must stop driving and tell the DVLA. You may start driving again after six weeks from implantation if you meet the standards for heart failure and arrhythmia. You can notify the DVLA online or on form VOCH1. You will have to sign the form to show you agree to comply with the terms of the pacemaker declaration.
- Cardiac resynchronisation therapy (CRT) with defibrillator – you must stop driving and tell the DVLA. You will not be able to hold a vocational licence. You can notify the DVLA online or on form VOCH1.
- ICDs (for ventricular arrhythmia) – you must stop driving and tell the DVLA. You will not be able to hold a vocational driving licence. You can notify the DVLA online or on form VOCH1.

♥ [www.gov.uk/defibrillators-and-driving](http://www.gov.uk/defibrillators-and-driving)

- Left ventricular assist device (LVAD) – you must stop driving and tell the DVLA. You will not be able to hold a vocational driving licence. You can notify the DVLA online or on form VOCH1.
- Pacemaker – you must tell the DVLA you have a pacemaker. When your pacemaker is first implanted (or the battery is replaced) you will need to stop driving for six weeks from the date of implantation. You should be able to drive again after this, as long as you have no other condition that would prevent you driving. You can notify the DVLA online or on form VOCH1. You will have to sign the form to show you agree to comply with the terms of the pacemaker declaration.

♥ [www.gov.uk/pacemakers-and-driving](http://www.gov.uk/pacemakers-and-driving)

## Cardiomyopathy<sup>UK</sup>

the heart muscle charity

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