

Law Enforcement Considerations when Encountering Elder Drivers



Is the driver wearing their safety belt? If not, ask why. Be sensitive. If they have a medical reason, refer them to their doctor.



Does the driver know that safety belts must be used in conjunction with airbags? Failing to use a safety belt can cause greater injury from an activated airbag.

Is the driver wearing their safety belt correctly?

Driver's chest or torso should be at least 10 inches away from the steering wheel to reduce injuries if airbag is activated.



The steering wheel should be adjusted so its center (which contains the airbag) is aimed toward the driver's chest or torso.

Can the driver see over the steering wheel? The driver's sightline should be at least 3 inches above the top of the steering wheel.



The head restraint is used to prevent whiplash and resulting neck injuries. The driver's head should be no more than 2 ½ inches away from the head restraint. The back of the head touching the head restraint is OK.

Some driver mobility issues, such as not being able to reach for the safety belt, may be remedied with a simple product available at a local retailer or online.

Resources

A great resource for senior drivers can be found at www.seniordriving.aaa.com

For a quick and comprehensive check of an elder driver's safe fit in a vehicle, drivers can check out CarFit at: www.car-fit.org

The Florida Occupant Protection Coalition (FOPC)

was formed to identify and prioritize Florida's most pressing occupant protection issues.

www.floccupantprotection.com



Driver's chest or torso should be at least 10 inches away from the steering wheel to reduce injuries if airbag is activated.

Clearance between steering wheel and driver's chest or torso

11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1

≥ 10 inches

Driver's sightline should be at least 3 inches above the steering wheel.

Sightline above steering wheel

1 2 3
≥ 3 inches