



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Motor Vehicles  
2300 West Broad Street

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Commissioner

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## **Policy Title:**

DMV Seizure/Blackout Policy

## **Policy Detail:**

It is the policy of the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) based upon guidance and recommendations from the Medical Advisory Board that:

### **Seizures**

DMV requires individuals to be free of seizures for at least 6 months in order to establish that medication for the seizure or underlying cause of the seizure is effective and/or that none of the medical conditions that may have caused the seizure have reoccurred.

If an individual has a history of seizures, the individual and his/her medical provider must complete a medical report before a Virginia driver's license may be issued. Once the medical report is received by DMV, it is reviewed to determine if the individual may be licensed to operate a motor vehicle. DMV reserves the right to request additional information in order to assess the person's ability to safely operate a motor vehicle.

Once the individual is licensed to operate a motor vehicle, the individual will be placed on periodic medical review with DMV based on the medical information the agency has received and will be required to furnish medical reports every 3, 6, 12, or 24 months to DMV. DMV may impose additional requirements on the individual depending on the information DMV has received.

If an individual is currently licensed and DMV is notified that this individual has experienced a seizure, his/her driving privileges will be suspended for a period of 6 months from the date of the last episode. At the end of the 6 months, a DMV Customer Medical Report (Parts A, F and the Customer Information Sections) is required to be submitted to DMV in order to determine if the individual's driving privilege may be reinstated. DMV may impose additional requirements on the individual depending on the information DMV has received.

### **Unexplained blackout/loss of consciousness/alteration of awareness**

If an individual suffers an unexplained blackout, alteration of awareness or loss of consciousness (negative medical work-up with no defined cause), DMV will suspend the individual's driving privileges for a period of 6 months from the date of the unexplained blackout, alteration of awareness or loss of consciousness. At the end of the 6-month suspension period, the driver is required to furnish a medical report to indicate that the driver was examined exactly 6 months from the date of his/her last blackout or loss of consciousness and has not suffered a subsequent blackout or loss of consciousness since that date. DMV may impose additional requirements on the individual depending on the information DMV has

received.

### **Breakthrough seizures**

If an individual suffers a breakthrough seizure, which is defined as a seizure due to non-compliance (missed medication), physician manipulation of the drug regimen/dosage due to side effects, pregnancy, sleep deprivation, or concomitant illnesses, the individual may resume driving 3 months after the seizure. Proof of compliance may be requested.

### **Isolated (single-event) seizures**

If an individual has an isolated (single-event) seizure with a clearly identified cause for which treatment has been completed and there is no risk of reoccurrence, the suspension period may be reduced to three months provided that there is documentation from the individual's neurologist that the individual is now stable and no unfavorable conditions were noted. Unfavorable conditions include, but are not limited to:

- A positive family history of seizures
- The seizure was focal in origin
- The EEG showed focal or generalized spikes
- Neurological deficits were noted before the seizure

Documentation is required from the individual's neurologist on Parts A, F and the Customer Information Section of the Customer Medical Report. DMV may impose additional requirements on the individual depending on the information DMV has received.

If an isolated seizure or loss of consciousness event is due to withdraw from alcohol or other substance, the individual will remain suspended for 6 months and the DMV Substance Abuse Policy will be applied.

### **Periodic Review:**

If a driver is on anti-seizure medication and has been seizure-free for a period of 10 years, DMV may cease to require periodic medical reports from these drivers.

**Established:** 1986

**Effective Date:** 04/29/2023

**Review Date:** 04/29/2025

**Supersedes:** 08/28/2021

**Content Oversight:** Medical Advisory Board and Compliance Officer