

DRIVING ASSESSMENTS

What are Occupational Therapy (OT) driving assessments?

Driving is a complex task which aligns with a high level of cognitive, physical and psychological abilities being essential. An Occupational Therapist has a clinical background and typically becomes aligned to complete an OT driving assessment when there is a medical/disability history which has the potential to impact on driving.

There are two parts to an OT driving assessment:

1) Off-road assessment – An off-road assessment will typically be completed in your home environment and will take between 45 – 60 minutes in duration.

The off-road assessment assists the OT in understanding the functional impacts of your condition and typically includes questions and observations surrounding eyesight, physical capacity, cognitive capacity e.g. road law questions, balance assessment. There is no preparation required for this component.

2) On-road assessment – An on-road assessment is typically completed directly after the off-road assessment with Aidaway OT.

The on-road assessment will include a driving instructor alongside the Occupational Therapist involved, and will occur in a driving instructor's car which has dual controls. We are not allowed to use a client's car for driving assessments.

The on-road assessment will take 60 minutes in duration and will typically align with commencement occurring at your home (unless stated otherwise before the day of your assessment).

The on-road assessment will be focused on ascertaining information about you, which includes your fundamental driving skills alongside checking that your function aligns with safety for yourself and others while driving.

Generally, there will be some variation towards what we test, however we will typically either target an open license test route (which aims to return you to a full capacity to drive anywhere in Australia without supervision) or a local license test route (which aligns with a continued ability to drive locally/no more than a 20kms radius maximum from your home typically). Pending on how you drive and your condition, there are the potential for conditions to be placed such as 'no freeway driving', however this is dependent on your presentation and clinical condition. We will always strive to make outcomes as functional as possible for you.

Conclusions following a driving assessment

You will be notified, as will Vicroads and possibly your GP (pending your preferences) of driving assessment outcomes – a Vicroads report will be completed by us. We will discuss findings with you on the day.

Following the driving assessment, you will either pass, have an opportunity for driving lessons to occur, or license cancellation will be recommended. Vicroads will read our report and will send out a letter via mail following their review/thoughts on the matter.

Cost of the driving assessment

The following are current prices at Aidaway OT:

a) Private funding/home care packages - \$370 (total OT price of on-road and off-road assessment). If there is a repeat on-road assessment, this will cost \$210.

b) NDIS/other schemes – our prices are guided by scheme codes and set prices. Typically with NDIS, we will align 3-4 hours of the OT rate (as per the price guide) plus travel. With NDIS, as there are often additional reports and communication required such as throughout the skill acquisition process, we thereafter bill as per time spent and are happy to communicate this along the way with relevant stakeholders. Our NDIS registration has lapsed at the current time hence only self and plan managed funding will be relevant.

It is important to note with costs above, that it is mandatory to incorporate a driving instructor in the on-road assessment. Their fees are external to OT and will typically cost between \$130-170 for an assessment. Cash payment (OT and driving instructor) will typically be requested for the day of assessment for those privately funded, as it aligns primarily with practicality. Some instructors will take card payments on the day this noted.

Cancellation fees will typically align with driving instructors and at times, through Aidaway OT also.

About Alana (OT driving assessor from Aidaway OT)

Alana graduated from Occupational Therapy (Bachelor of Occupational Therapy) in 2008 and has been working in various settings in this role since. She has been completing OT driving assessments since 2017/2018.

Clinically, she runs Aidaway OT with a team; Aidaway OT undertakes an array of community-based services which align to complex injury management for those with physical, psychological and cognitive conditions residing in Melbourne VIC. As our office is in Ringwood VIC, significant travel from here may need to incorporate additional travel costs, however we are happy to liaise with you on the matter beforehand.



NDIS/vehicle modification engagement

For those aligning to learners permits (e.g. NDIS support for driving funding) and other matters such as learning how to use vehicle modifications, the process will be different on road and primarily centre observations from the OT and less formality.

For those clients who may require NDIS support for lessons, vehicle modifications to their car etc, Aidaway OT is able to complete relevant services such as AT applications (NDIS) and trials with various suppliers.

Referral process & queries

To complete a referral/initiate the process of completing a driving assessment, or for general queries, please contact our admin team on 03 9069 2106 or email admin@aidawayot.com.au. Details that are essential to initiate the process are noted on our referral form and otherwise will incorporate your name, address, date of birth, license/learners permit number and an emergency contact number.