

For Immediate Release  
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## **The Right Time to Take the Keys From an Older Driver**

*Tougher Laws on Seniors Transform the Nation's Roadways; Elder and Special Needs Law Attorneys Offer Guidance*

Washington, DC — Older driver safety has become a hot topic in recent months, as the number of older drivers on the road increases and states begin to consider ways to tighten driving laws for seniors. Typical concerns over senior drivers include impaired vision, car features that they are unfamiliar with, slower reflexes, and possible adverse side effects from the use of multiple medications.

Senior drivers may not be willing to give up their keys so easily. The [National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys](#) (NAELA) can serve as an invaluable resource on how to answer the difficult question faced by many families: “When is it time to take the keys away from an older driver?” The consequences of a serious accident can be devastating. The legal and financial liabilities need to be considered.

“All of us depend on everyone staying safe behind the wheel – not just seniors, but also all others on the road. NAELA members are experienced in offering advice to families on how to approach an older driver about this sensitive subject and can offer suggestions on ways for the older person to maintain his or her mobility and independence,” said NAELA President Gregory French, CELA, CAP.

And for many older Americans, that’s often the issue, as having the ability to drive can be closely tied to an individual’s self-esteem and feeling of independence.

“Losing the ability to drive is likely to make people with dementia feel as though they are no longer able to be independent. It is important to reassure them that, with the help of family, friends, and other modes of transportation, they will still be able to get around town and do the things they want to do. Also the person with dementia may respond better to an authority figure. His or her doctor can request an evaluation by the Department of Motor Vehicles, or you can ask the doctor to write a letter stating that the person must not drive,” said NAELA member Rhoda Faller of Louisville, Kentucky.

“One method we use is just a straightforward approach. Assuming the loss of cognitive or physical ability is gradual and there is enough cognitive function to have a meaningful conversation...we realize that as a professional office, we can address the driving issue free of the emotional factors often presented to family members,” said NAELA member Sidney C. Summey of Birmingham, Alabama.

Members of the media: If you would like to speak with an Elder or Special Needs Law attorney about this topic for an upcoming article, please [email](#) Communications Specialist Abby Matienzo.

Consumers: To receive a free NAELA brochure, “Questions and Answers When Looking For An Elder and Special Needs Law Attorney,” contact Communications Specialist Abby Matienzo by [email](#) or phone at 703-942-5711 #230.

Find an Elder and Special Needs Law attorney in your area using NAELA’s [Member Directory](#).

### **About NAELA**

Members of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) are attorneys who are experienced and trained in working with the legal problems of aging Americans and individuals of all ages with disabilities. Established in 1987, NAELA

is a non-profit association that assists lawyers, bar organizations, and others. The mission of NAELA is to establish NAELA members as the premier providers of legal advocacy, guidance, and services to enhance the lives of people with special needs and people as they age. NAELA currently has members across the United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. For more information, visit [NAELA.org](http://NAELA.org).

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