



Legislative Report

Exam scheduling

March 1, 2025

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Exam scheduling

Executive summary

Minnesotans sometimes struggle to find available time slots when scheduling their class D road test. The limited number of appointments are often filled. Some state residents may end up travelling outside their county to find an available appointment. At the same time, appointment slots often go unfilled, and applicants are not showing up for scheduled appointments, which leaves appointment availability unused.

Each year by March 1 and Sept. 1 the Department of Public Safety (DPS) must submit reports on class D road test examination scheduling. The reports are submitted to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over transportation policy and finance.

The March 1 report includes information on the previous calendar year. The report must identify performance measures and metrics related to scheduling availability and passage of road tests. The report should include the number of tests and delays individuals experience.

The Sept. 1 report includes information on the previous fiscal year (July 1 to June 30).

This report examines Minnesota's class D road test availability and factors that may have caused scheduling delays from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2024.

Performance measures established by the commissioner

DPS adheres to performance measures established by the Legislature.

Minnesota Statute 171.13, subdivision. 1 (5)(c-e), states applicants may take exams in their own county or an adjacent one, be able to obtain an appointment within 14 days of their request, and access real-time information about the availability and location of exam appointments on the DPS website

DPS has consistently met the requirement of having real-time appointment information on the website.

The ability to test within the county or adjacent county was impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic when DPS closed all but 14 of the 93 driver's license exam stations in Minnesota. This was necessary to ensure the health and safety of customers and employees and was a result of the stay-at-home executive order. The county requirement was again satisfied when exam stations reopened, which was completed by Jan. 31, 2022.

The performance measure stating applicants should be able to schedule exam appointments within 14 days is sometimes not met, as measured by anecdotal evidence. Driver and Vehicle Service (DVS) does not track when or where individuals access the DPS website. Due to this,

there is no data to indicate if someone is actively searching for open appointments, the time frame in which they are looking, or if they are checking multiple locations for appointment availability.

Each applicant may have a preferred exam date. DVS has no way to track whether the date chosen is the preferred date or a date chosen due to a delay.

The term “delay” refers to when a road test examination is scheduled between 15 and 20 days after an applicant’s preferred date for a road test, however an applicant may prefer an appointment 30 days out rather than within two weeks. The scheduling system does not have functionality to determine when an applicant wants a test versus when they schedule it. By this definition, we cannot track delays as applicants select an available appointment and are guaranteed that time slot. Additionally, with 93 different exam stations, each with their own staffing availability and hours of operation, securing an appointment within 14 days will vary by location.

Number of administered road tests

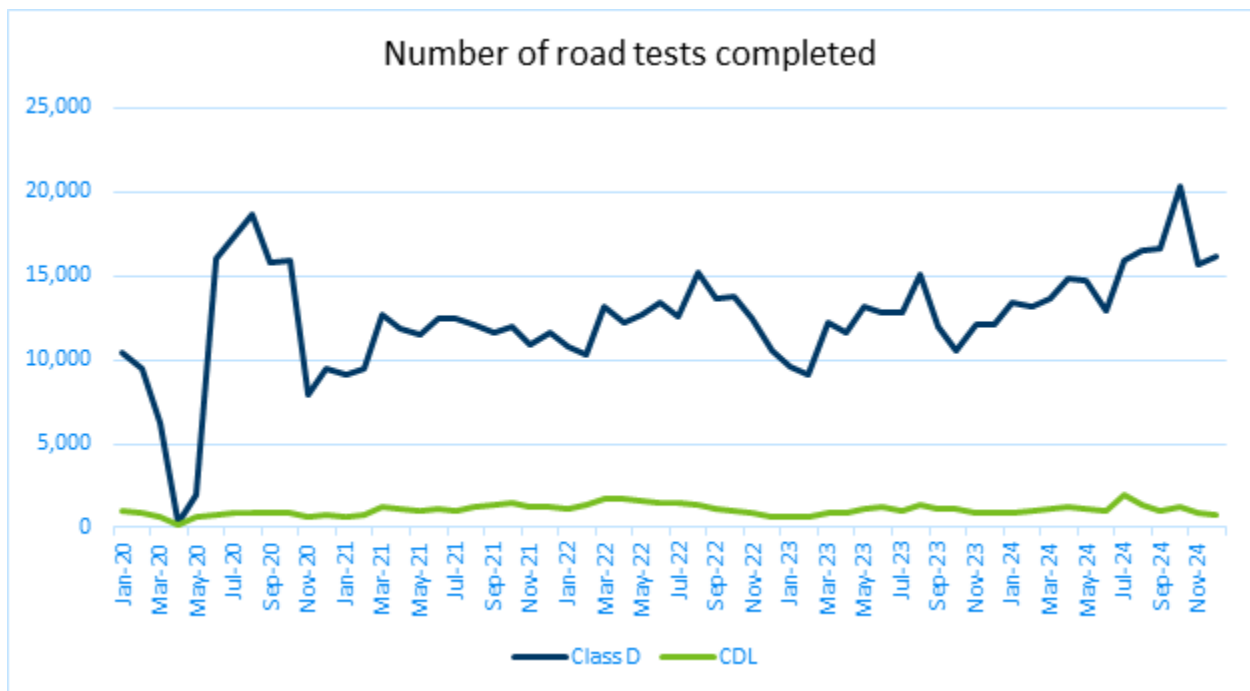
This report details the number of Class D and commercial driver’s license (CDL) road tests by month for the previous five calendar years (CY20-CY24). There were 176,858 class D and CDL road tests conducted in 2024.

Figure 1. All road tests conducted from CY20 through CY24

	CY20		CY21		CY22		CY23		CY24	
	Class D	CDL	Class D	CDL	Class D	CDL	Class D	CDL	Class D	CDL
Jan.	10,418	964	9,119	702	10,779	1,164	9,637	661	13,461	944
Feb.	9,429	906	9,509	824	10,336	1,332	9,115	683	13,180	957
March	6,297	681	12,670	1,190	13,135	1,682	12,225	947	13,643	1,140
April	310	150	11,827	1,152	12,278	1,743	11,580	877	14,904	1,279
May	1,932	612	11,457	1,033	12,760	1,641	13,224	1,177	14,772	1,173
June	16,021	751	12,486	1,070	13,405	1,539	12,770	1,246	12,983	1,045

July	17,402	868	12,506	1,053	12,615	1,427	12,862	1,040	15,969	2,000
Aug.	18,674	927	12,162	1,223	15,168	1,315	15,122	1,333	16,532	1,329
Sept.	15,833	947	11,621	1,397	13,696	1,121	11,939	1,151	16,700	1,054
Oct.	15,872	935	11,942	1,433	13,769	1,039	10,538	1,090	20,378	1,256
Nov.	7,941	708	10,953	1,269	12,466	887	12,144	929	15,706	911
Dec.	9,430	764	11,607	1,299	10,601	681	12,087	928	16,112	774

Figure 2. A graph of road tests over time



Factors impacting road test exam appointment availability

DVS has a base budget that covers the cost of employing 179 driver license examiners. Staffing levels fluctuate as examiners leave for various reasons and new ones are hired. Overtime is sometimes necessary to cover examiner sick days or unforeseen absences. At the end of 2024 154 examiners were employed and DVS recorded 2,682 overtime hours for the year. This was mostly for examiners serving commercial driving applicants on the weekends.

In 2024, there were:

- 249,609 appointments available to the public
- 229,573 appointments reserved
- 176,858 road tests taken
- 52,715 appointments where someone did not show up (23 percent no-show rate)
- 3,307 no-shows were for CDL
- 17,036 appointments never reserved and went unfilled
- 709 were for CDL
- 69,751 appointment slots available for CY24 that were not used

DVS instituted a \$20 no-show fee for applicants who do not show up or cancel within 24 hours of the appointment. This has been a slight deterrent and reduced the number of no-shows. In the six months since the last legislative report, the percentage of no-shows has gone up 1 percent.

Figure 3. Unclaimed appointments by region

Region	Unclaimed appointments
1	1,068
2	916
3	1,082
4	1,368
5	1,762
6	2,346
7	3,966
8	393
9	2,745
10	1,390
Total	17,036

Limited public awareness of DVS online features and the impact of no-shows and late cancellations are factors that contribute to unfilled appointments. Increased education on using website features, including MyDVS and the Appointment Subscription service, could potentially reduce no-shows. Additionally, promoting the usage of the online service during low demand hours, before 8 a.m. and after 9 p.m. can improve the customer experience.

Rate of individuals travelling for exams

Every Minnesotan can take a class D road test in the county they live in or an adjacent county.

DVS had residential information for 127,733 applicants in CY24. As indicated in figure 3, 33,331 tests were conducted in the county of residence, 49,477 were adjacent to the county of residence and 44,925 travelled beyond their adjacent county. This means 27 percent remained in their home county to take a road test, up 4 percent from fiscal year 2024 (FY24).

Figure 4. Individuals traveling out of county for a road test

	FY24		CY24	
	Exams	Percentage	Exams	Percentage
Exam county matches resident county	33,788	23%	33,331	27%
Exam county does not match resident county	110,195	77%	94,402	73%

Figure 5. A map of exam regions

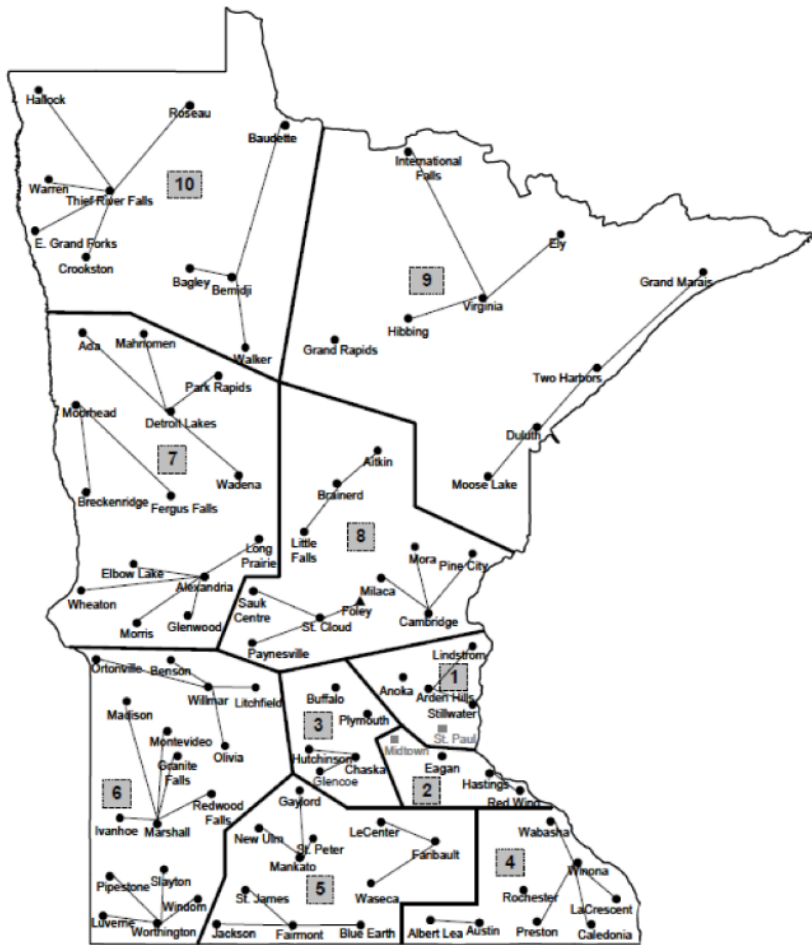


Figure 6. Number of individuals who took a road test in their county, traveled to adjacent county or traveled farther than adjacent county

Resident county	Stayed in county	Adjacent county	Beyond adjacent county
AITKIN	21	114	278
ANOKA	904	2,274	549
BECKER	625	1,576	2,235
BENTON	8	38	82

BIG STONE	10	12	27
BLUE EARTH	917	857	1,969
BROWN	74	62	252
CARLTON	27	45	183
CARVER	575	1,961	835
CASS	55	184	104
CHIPPEWA	31	49	100
CHISAGO	7	64	199
CLAY	1,035	334	420
CLEARWATER	12	33	20
COOK	39	2	10
COTTONWOOD	45	66	229
DAKOTA	3,288	8,698	1,313
DOUGLAS	405	929	1,499
FARIBAULT	10	19	66
FILLMORE	52	160	89
FREEBORN	127	160	586
GOODHUE	49	76	81

GRANT	6	41	55
HENNEPIN	7,435	5,513	1,078
HOUSTON	108	68	113
HUBBARD	17	47	84
ISANTI	308	1,576	1,425
ITASCA	754	556	1,798
JACKSON	3	24	54
KANABEC	31	63	374
KANDIYOHI	1,169	1,331	2,641
KITTSOON	17	11	8
KOOCHICHING	78	13	7
LAC QUI PARLE	6	24	30
LAKE	24	31	57
LAKE OF THE WOODS	6	17	3
LE SUEUR	7	19	69
LINCOLN	8	38	25
LYON	411	368	1,222

MAHNOMEN	15	44	29
MARSHALL	17	25	14
MARTIN	307	669	2,285
MCLEOD	100	233	554
MEEKER	39	133	192
MILLE LACS	35	106	315
MORRISON	277	1,188	1,520
MOWER	634	1,138	1,364
MURRAY	28	118	217
NICOLLET	5	14	87
NOBLES	614	269	738
NORMAN	9	29	25
OLMSTED	1,559	636	830
OTTER TAIL	190	121	239
PENNINGTON	245	497	390
PINE	20	34	402
PIPESTONE	75	64	163
POLK	338	48	124

POPE	5	36	28
RAMSEY	2,825	7,877	1,736
REDWOOD	41	54	223
RENVILLE	26	129	270
RICE	962	1,927	1,887
ROCK	71	150	172
ROSEAU	157	32	26
SHERBURNE	0	1	54
SIBLEY	9	29	4,815
ST. LOUIS	2,767	883	2,352
STEARNS	1,186	1,269	1
STEVENS	25	39	72
SWIFT	5	27	54
TODD	22	101	78
TRAVERSE	15	51	67
WABASHA	18	93	169
WADENA	31	108	171
WASECA	2	31	78

WASHINGTON	538	495	209
WATONWAN	22	40	99
WILKIN	6	21	24
WINONA	500	754	884
WRIGHT	875	2,454	1,677
YELLOW MEDICINE	12	57	122
Total	33,331	49,477	44,925

During 2024, 51,953 individuals had to retake their road test one or more times. Twenty-four percent of those remained in their county to do so, up 2 percent from the last reporting period.

Figure 7. Percent of individuals traveling out of county for a retake road test.

Total individuals retaking a road test	CY24 41,443		FY24 51,953	
Exam county matches resident county	9,075	22%	12,670	24%
Exam county does not match resident county	32,368	78%	39,283	76%

Figure 8. Counties with percents of individuals who traveled outside of their county to retake a road test

Resident county	Stayed in county	Adjacent county	Beyond adjacent county
AITKIN	0	12	19

ANOKA	658	1,832	591
BECKER	163	459	749
BENTON	1	1	9
BIG STONE	1	1	1
BLUE EARTH	282	210	877
BROWN	2	9	22
CARLTON	4	4	23
CARVER	75	799	544
CASS	22	38	19
CHIPPEWA	8	10	15
CHISAGO	17	68	155
CLAY	286	79	142
CLEARWATER	5	9	4
COOK	2	0	0
COTTONWOOD	6	11	36
CROW WING	0	0	1
DAKOTA	1,444	3,927	722
DOUGLAS	86	438	840

FARIBAULT	2	2	7
FILLMORE	20	38	18
FREEBORN	21	19	57
GOODHUE	3	5	10
GRANT	1	4	15
HENNEPIN	3,673	3,010	537
HOUSTON	28	27	35
HUBBARD	3	8	8
ISANTI	23	110	167
ITASCA	124	207	459
JACKSON	0	4	5
KANABEC	3	10	40
KANDIYOHI	279	455	1,027
KITTSOON	8	5	3
KOOCHICHING	15	0	4
LAC QUI PARLE	0	5	6
LAKE	3	3	11
LAKE OF THE WOODS	4	8	1

LE SUEUR	2	3	9
LINCOLN	0	7	12
LYON	145	118	409
MAHNOMEN	1	8	5
MARSHALL	5	7	2
MARTIN	89	285	1,007
MCLEOD	19	53	209
MEEKER	5	16	36
MILLE LACS	3	13	29
MORRISON	43	218	238
MOWER	258	622	570
MURRAY	5	20	29
NICOLLET	2	1	10
NOBLES	148	95	274
NORMAN	0	7	0
OLMSTED	688	206	329
OTTER TAIL	12	6	20
PENNINGTON	98	286	163

PINE	7	5	37
PIPESTONE	22	7	22
POLK	125	19	28
POPE	1,941	3	5
RAMSEY	4	6,639	941
REDWOOD	3	10	58
RENVILLE	0	11	27
RICE	353	887	1,174
ROCK	12	13	24
ROSEAU	70	14	14
SIBLEY	1	3	8
ST. LOUIS	597	226	1,341
STEARNS	290	214	515
STEVENS	2	4	18
SWIFT	0	1	4
TODD	1	5	7
TRAVERSE	1	2	1
WABASHA	10	27	32

WADENA	2	8	15
WASECA	1	3	11
WASHINGTON	28	39	40
WATONWAN	5	3	19
WILKIN	1	5	5
WINONA	193	391	285
WRIGHT	204	1,001	763
YELLOW MEDICINE	2	6	15
Totals	12,670	23,344	15,939

Appendix

Sources of data

Number of administered road tests:

MNDRIVE report Exam Cube, Jan. 1, 2020 – Dec. 31, 2024

Class D passing rate:

MNDRIVE report NCL Skill Exam Eligibility Summary, Jan. 1, 2024 – Dec. 31, 2024

