

COMMON AND DANGEROUS CRASH SCENARIOS FOR SENIOR DRIVERS

INTRODUCTION

Although senior drivers (drivers 65 years old or older) have only slightly elevated rates of crash involvement per mile driven relative to middle-aged drivers, they are significantly more likely to be injured or killed in the event of a crash. Previous research by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration identified specific scenarios in which senior drivers face elevated risk of crash involvement. However, that study was based on data that are now more than 20 years old. Given how much has changed within the past 20+ years in terms of traffic safety, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety will analyze different crash scenarios involving older drivers using the most up-to-date data.

PROJECT GOAL AND PLAN

The purpose of this research is to identify risky maneuvers and circumstances for senior drivers. It will also extend previous research by taking into account specific driving environments (e.g., urban/suburban/rural). First, the project will review existing literature to identify specific high-risk crash scenarios for senior drivers, including literature relevant to older drivers causing a crash or being injured in a crash. Then, crash data from multiple states will be analyzed to quantify risks for senior drivers in a wide array of driving scenarios, overall and relative to middle-aged drivers. National data sources will be used to estimate the overall scale of injuries and deaths in these specific risky scenarios for senior drivers. Findings will guide outreach to motorists about risky driving situations for older drivers and may help inform related training programs.

Project Team

[AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety](#)

Jordan Blenner, Ph.D., J.D.
(Principal Investigator)

Brian Tefft
(Co-Principal Investigator)

Period of Performance

Q3 2026 – Q2 2027