

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Alabama Department of Public Safety

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### **AUTOMATED DRIVER LICENSE TESTING EXPANDS TO 16 SITES** *Tests offered in American Sign Language and 12 Foreign Languages*

TALLADEGA — The Department of Public Safety announced Wednesday the expansion of automated driver license testing to four additional sites in Alabama. The expansion was made possible by a grant from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

In addition to Talladega, where DPS personnel demonstrated the system, examining sites in Hamilton, Gadsden and Evergreen are the latest to offer computerized driver license testing. That brings to 16 the number of examining offices equipped with the AutoTest system.

The AutoTest system initially was installed at eight locations throughout the state in January 2003, to automate the driver knowledge examination for commercial driver license applicants, Class D operator license applicants and motorcycle license applicants. The FMCSA provided funding for the initial installation, as well as the automated testing expansion.

“The driver license system is a critical component of highway safety, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration is pleased to be able to aid in the implementation of this system,” said Judy Van Luchene, FMCSA division administrator for Alabama. “We believe automated testing will enhance security and result in a positive impact on highway safety.”

Applicants for a commercial license may test in English or Spanish using AutoTest. Applicants for a regular operator’s license may test in 12 foreign languages and in American Sign Language.

Earlier this year, Alabama became the first state to offer automated driver license testing in American Sign Language, as a result of a collaborative effort by the Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS), DPS and the Birmingham-based Openshaw Media Group.

“Expanding this service sends a strong message of inclusion to Alabamians who are deaf or hearing impaired,” said ADRS Commissioner Steve Shivers. “We are proud to be part of an innovative project that enables our fellow citizens with disabilities to fully participate in all aspects of community life through minor accommodations.”

Public Safety Director Col. Mike Coppage said DPS was pleased to offer the automated test to more applicants. “The touch-screen system is user friendly and helps applicants test more quickly,” said Coppage. “More importantly, it helps insure the security of the testing process, since questions are randomly selected from a database of more than 800 entries, and no two tests are ever alike.”

Locations that offer automated testing are Birmingham, Dothan, Evergreen, Gadsden, Hamilton, Hartselle, Huntsville, Jacksonville, Mobile, Montgomery, Opelika, Selma, Sheffield, Sumiton, Talladega and Tuscaloosa. Examining office locations and days and hours of operation may be found on the Department of Public Safety’s Web site, [www.dps.state.al.us](http://www.dps.state.al.us), under the Driver License Division link.

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