

National Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Program Glossary and Acronym Guide



This document provides an overview of key terms, definitions, and acronyms used within the National Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Program. The information is updated as of August 2022. [Click here](#) to view a list of relevant acronyms.

A

AAMVA Code Dictionary (ACD): A set of codes used nationwide to standardize communication among States. The uniform codes serve to identify the types of driver convictions and reasons for driver disqualifications used in CDLIS.

AAMVA's Driver Standing Committee: AAMVA's Driver Standing Committee improves and promotes safety, security, and service within driver programs through education, leadership, communication, and the development of uniform practices. Committee members work across disciplines to provide guidance on products, services, and programs that benefit AAMVA members and address specific driver needs.

AAMVA's Test Maintenance Subcommittee (TMS): A subcommittee of AAMVA's Driver Standing Committee. The TMS is responsible for the development and maintenance of all AAMVA model licensing test systems, including both commercial and non-commercial systems.

Administrative Per Se (Admin Per Se): Refers to convictions and disqualifications determined solely through administrative action (rather than a criminal conviction) based entirely on the results of a breath, blood, or urine test above a determined legal threshold.

Administrative Procedure Act (APA) of 1946: Governs the process by which Federal agencies develop and issue regulations. The APA includes requirements for publishing notices of proposed and final rulemaking in the Federal Register, and provides opportunities for the public to comment on notices of proposed rulemaking.

American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA): Founded in 1933, AAMVA is a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization that develops and maintains programs for motor vehicle administration, law enforcement, and highway safety. AAMVA partners with FMCSA to support the shared mission of improving highway safety. AAMVA represents the State, provincial, and territorial officials in the United States and Canada who administer and enforce motor vehicle laws. Its membership includes associations, organizations, and businesses that support motor vehicle administration.

Annual Program Review (APR): Conducted annually by FMCSA in each State to confirm compliance with Federal CDL regulations. States determined to be noncompliant are required to submit a corrective action plan (CAP) to achieve compliance.

B

Behind-the-Wheel (BTW) Public Road Training: As defined in 49 CFR § [380.605](#), training provided by a BTW instructor when an entry-level driver has actual control of the power unit during a driving lesson conducted on a public road. BTW public road training does not include the time that an entry-level driver spends observing the operation of a CMV when he or she is not in control of the vehicle.

Behind-the-Wheel (BTW) Range Training: As defined in 49 CFR § [380.605](#), training provided by a BTW instructor when an entry-level driver has actual control of the power unit during a driving lesson conducted on a range (an area that must be free of obstructions, enables the driver to maneuver safely and free from interference from other vehicles and hazards, and has adequate sight lines). BTW range training does not include time an entry-level driver spends observing the operation of a CMV when he or she is not in control of the vehicle.

Broken Pointer: A situation in which a Master Pointer Record (MPR) doesn't have a matching Driver History Record (DHR). In other words, the pointer exists on the CDLIS Central Site but does not point to the applicable record on the SOR site.

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C

Cancellation: The termination of driving privileges due to administrative or testing errors, or fraud committed by someone other than the driver.

CDL Class: Indicates which group of CMVs the driver is allowed to operate with that CDL (A, B, or C). In common usage “class” may refer to the vehicle or the license.

CDLIS Central Site (CS): An online database that maintains the CDLIS Master Pointer Records, processes a number of transactions between jurisdictions, and reports CDLIS activity to FMCSA.

CDLIS Specifications: The technical requirements published by AAMVA that States must follow when sending messages via the AAMVA network (AAMVANet). While States are not required to maintain information on their database according to CDLIS specifications, all information exchanged across the AAMVA network, or provided in response to a request for a driver history record, must be formatted according to CDLIS specifications.

CMV Group: Vehicles with certain operating characteristics are organized into CMV groups (A, B, or C). The CMV group determines the driver’s CDL class (A, B, or C).

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR): Codification of the general and permanent rules and regulations (sometimes called administrative law) published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the Federal government of the United States. All regulations applicable to transportation-related issues and questions are contained in 49 CFR.

Combination Vehicle – Group A: Any combination of vehicles with a GVWR of 26,001 pounds or more provided the GVWR of the vehicle(s) being towed is in excess of 10,000 pounds.

Commercial Driver’s License (CDL): A type of driver’s license required to operate most large or heavy vehicles. Obtaining a CDL requires a higher level of knowledge, experience, skills, and physical abilities than what is required for a non-commercial license. Thus, CDL holders are held to a higher standard when operating any type of vehicle on public roads.

Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) Holder: An individual whose last jurisdiction-issued license was a CDL. This applies even if the driver is disqualified from the use of his or her commercial driving privileges. It also applies if the CDL has expired and no other license has been issued.

Commercial Driver’s License Information System (CDLIS): Developed pursuant to section 12007 of the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986, CDLIS enables each State to ensure that each CMV driver has only one driver’s license and one complete Driver History Record. States use CDLIS to complete various procedures, including:

- Transmitting out-of-State convictions and disqualifications;
- Transferring the driver record when a CDL holder moves to another State; and
- Responding to requests for driver status and history.

CDLIS is currently operated by AAMVA.

Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) Judiciary Outreach Program: A program primarily funded by FMCSA grants that involves multiple partner organizations and provides specialized training and information for judges, prosecutors, court clerks, and court administrators on the importance of commercial motor vehicle enforcement and the adjudication of cases involving CDL holders.

Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) Program: Established in 1986, a United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) program that seeks to reduce the number and severity of commercial motor vehicle (CMV) crashes in the United States by ensuring that only qualified drivers are eligible to receive and retain a CDL. For every one CDL driver, there should be one record and one licensing document. In this training, the CDL Program is referred to as the National CDL Program.

Commercial Driver’s License Program Implementation (CDLPI) Grant: An FMCSA discretionary grant that provides financial assistance to States to achieve compliance with the requirements of 49 CFR Parts 383 and 384 and otherwise improve the National CDL Program. Additionally, the CDLPI Grant program provides financial assistance for any entity capable of executing National projects that aid States in compliance efforts and will improve the National CDL Program.

Commercial Learner’s Permit (CLP): A permit issued to an individual by a State or other jurisdiction of domicile. When carried with a valid driver’s license issued by the same State or jurisdiction, a CLP authorizes the individual to operate a CMV when accompanied by a holder of a valid CDL for purposes of behind-the-wheel training. When issued to an existing CDL holder, a CLP serves as authorization for accompanied behind-the-wheel training in a configuration of CMV for which the holder’s current CDL is not valid.

Commercial Learner’s Permit (CLP) Holder: An individual who held a valid (unexpired) CLP at the time of the citation.

Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV): *As defined in 49 CFR Part 383.5 (applies only to regulations in 49 CFR Part 383):*

A motor vehicle or combination of motor vehicles used in commerce to transport passengers or property if the motor vehicle is a:

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- Combination Vehicle (Group A)—having a gross combination weight rating or gross combination weight of 11,794 kilograms or more (26,001 pounds or more), whichever is greater, inclusive of a towed unit(s) with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 4,536 kilograms (10,000 pounds), whichever is greater; or
- Heavy Straight Vehicle (Group B)—having a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 11,794 or more kilograms (26,001 pounds or more), whichever is greater; or
- Small Vehicle (Group C) that does not meet Group A or B requirements but that either—
 - a. Is designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver; or
 - b. Is of any size and is used in the transportation of hazardous materials as defined in this section.

As defined in 49 CFR Part 390.5:

Any self-propelled or towed motor vehicle used on a highway in interstate commerce to transport passengers or property when the vehicle:

- Has a gross vehicle weight rating or gross combination weight rating, or gross vehicle weight or gross combination weight, of 4,536 kg (10,001 pounds) or more, whichever is greater; or
- Is designed or used to transport more than eight (8) passengers (including the driver) for compensation; or
- Is designed or used to transport more than 15 passengers, including the driver, and is not used to transport passengers for compensation; or
- Is used in transporting material found by the Secretary of Transportation to be hazardous under 49 U.S.C. 5103 and transported in a quantity requiring placarding under regulations prescribed by the Secretary under 49 CFR, subtitle B, chapter I, subchapter C.

Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act (CMVSA) of 1986: Established the National CDL Program and implemented minimum CDL standards. Prohibits any person who operates a CMV from having more than one driver's license, establishing the backbone of the CDL Program: One Driver, One License, One Record.

Commercial Skills Test Information Management System (CSTIMS): The Commercial Skills Test Information Management System (CSTIMS) is an internet-based tool that provides jurisdictions and third-party examiners a consistent way to track the scheduling and entry of test results for commercial driving skills tests.

Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA): A Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA), Form FS-240 is evidence of United States citizenship, issued to a child born abroad to a U.S. citizen parent or parents who meet the requirements for transmitting citizenship under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA).

Conviction:
As defined in 49 CFR Part 383.5:

- An unvacated adjudication of guilt;
- A determination that a person has violated or failed to comply with the law in a court of original jurisdiction or by an authorized administrative tribunal;
- An unvacated forfeiture of bail or collateral deposited to secure the person's appearance in court;
- A plea of guilty or nolo contendere ("no contest") accepted by the court;
- The payment of a fine or court cost; or
- A violation of a condition of release without bail, regardless of whether or not the penalty is rebated, suspended, or probated.

Corrective Action Plan (CAP): A plan provided by a State to FMCSA through the State Compliance Records Enterprise (SCORE) in response to a compliance finding. The plan will provide the actions and timeline the State will take to correct the deficiencies. In SCORE, this is referred to as an "action plan."

Covert Monitoring: An observation and evaluation of a CDL skills test conducted without the knowledge of the applicant or examiner.

D

Deferral: A form of masking in which a court allows a driver (before an adjudication of guilt) to perform or abstain from certain actions that result in the charge being dismissed. Deferral might also be known as Probation Before Judgement (PBJ), Adjudgment Pending Dismissal, or classifying a charge as Held in Abeyance.

Disqualification:
As defined in 49 CFR Part 383:

- The suspension, revocation, or cancellation of a Commercial Learner's Permit (CLP) or Commercial Driver's License (CDL) by the State or jurisdiction of issuance;
- Any withdrawal of a person's privileges to drive a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) by a State or other jurisdiction as the result of a violation of State or local law relating to motor vehicle traffic control; or
- A determination by the FMCSA that a person is not qualified to operate a CMV under 49 CFR Part 391.

Disqualification Effective Date: The date a license is disqualified. There may be a delay between when the State of Record (SOR) is notified of a conviction and when it imposes a disqualification, so that it may give mandated notification to the driver and the driver has had an opportunity to request an administrative hearing.

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Disqualification Eligibility Date: The earliest date the driver may satisfy any conditions to end the disqualification, such as paying any fees.

Disqualification Reinstatement Date: The actual date the driver's driving privileges are reinstated; this date is typically blank when the disqualification is first posted and must never be a future date.

Diversion: A form of masking in which a State allows a driver (after an adjudication of guilt) to perform actions that result in the conviction being reduced or erased and thus not appearing correctly (or at all) on the Driver History Record (DHR).

Division Administrator (DA): A position in each State that leads the FMCSA Division Office, supported by a multi-disciplinary team. The DA is responsible for the development and administration of a multifaceted transportation safety program, and represents FMCSA in dealings with Federal and State government and local business officials on transportation safety and commercial program issues.

Driver: Every individual who operates certain CMVs in interstate foreign, or intrastate commerce, including CDL holders, CLP holders, and drivers operating a vehicle that requires a CDL.

Driver History Record (DHR): The electronic record of an individual CDL driver's status and history stored by the State of Record (SOR) as part of the Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS). A DHR includes driver identification information, license information (including information about any permits, endorsements, and restrictions), and a history of accidents, convictions, and disqualifications.

Driving Under the Influence (DUI): The FMCSA has established 0.04% as the blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level at or above which a CDL driver who is required to have a CDL, and is operating a commercial motor vehicle, is deemed to be driving under the influence of alcohol and subject to the disqualification sanctions under the Federal regulations. Most States have established a BAC level of 0.08% as the level at or above which a person operating a non-commercial motor vehicle is deemed to be driving under the influence of alcohol. Sanctions for alcohol-related driving violations may affect the driver's qualification and eligibility for both commercial and non-commercial licenses.

E

Electronic Code of Federal Regulations (eCFR): An online version of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) that is updated daily to better reflect its current status. The eCFR is an editorial compilation of CFR material and amendments published in the daily Federal Register.

Employers: All employers of drivers who operate certain CMVs in interstate, foreign, or intrastate commerce.

Employment Authorization Document (EAD): An Employment Authorization Document (Form I-766/EAD) is one way for an individual to prove that he or she is allowed to work in the United States, regardless of citizenship or national origin.

Endorsement: As defined in 49 CFR § 383.5, an endorsement means an authorization to an individual's CLP or CDL required to permit the individual to operate certain types of commercial motor vehicles (CMVs). This authorization indicates a driver has passed additional tests that give the driver privileges to operate a specific type or configuration of CMV beyond what is granted with a CDL. The following endorsements can be obtained:

- T – double/triple trailers
- P – passenger
- N – tank vehicle
- H – hazardous materials
- X – combination of tank vehicle and hazardous materials endorsements
- S – school bus

Entry-Level Driver: An individual who must complete the CDL skills test requirements under 49 CFR § 383.71 prior to receiving a CDL for the first time; upgrading to a Class A or Class B CDL; or obtaining a hazardous materials, passenger, or school bus endorsement for the first time. This definition does not include individuals for whom States waive the CDL skills test under 49 CFR § 383.77 or individuals seeking to remove a restriction in accordance with 49 CFR § 383.135(b)(7).

Entry-Level Driver Training (ELDT): As defined in 49 CFR § 380.605, entry-level driver training (ELDT) refers to required training an entry-level driver receives from a provider listed on FMCSA's Training Provider Registry (TPR) prior to:

- Taking the CDL skills test required to obtain a Class A or Class B CDL for the first time;
- Taking the CDL skills test required to upgrade an existing Class B CDL to a Class A CDL;
- Taking the CDL skills test required to obtain a school bus (S) or passenger (P) endorsement for the first time; or
- Taking the CDL knowledge test required to obtain a hazardous materials (H) endorsement for the first time.

ELDT consists of theory instruction and behind-the-wheel (BTW) training. Requirements vary depending on the type of CDL or endorsement the applicant wishes to obtain.

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Excepted Interstate (EI) Commerce:

A CLP or CDL holder operates in excepted interstate commerce if he or she drives a CMV in interstate commerce only for certain excepted activities, as described in 49 CFR §§ 390.3(f), 391.2, 391.68, and 398.3, which does not require a Federal Medical Examiner's Certificate.

Excepted Intrastate (EA) Commerce:

A CLP or CDL holder operates in excepted intrastate commerce when he or she drives a CMV only in intrastate commerce activities for which his or her State of licensure has determined do not require the CLP or CDL holder to meet the State's medical certification requirements.

F

Failure to Appear, Failure to Pay, Failure to Comply (FTA/FTP/FTC):

In most States, when a driver receives a citation from an officer, the driver technically offers up his or her driving privileges as collateral to appear in court and comply with subsequent requirements rather than being taken into custody and forced to post bond as is customary in a criminal process. Under the Failure to Appear/Pay/Comply (FTA/FTP/FTC) Program, an SDLA may deny the renewal of a CDL if the driver has failed to appear for a citation or pay a fine. Depending on the State, a CDL may be disqualified or denied renewal until the reported citations or violations are cleared and reported by the court(s) to the SDLA.

Federal Motor Carrier Safety

Administration (FMCSA): An Operating Administration of the USDOT charged with regulation of the motor carrier industry. The primary mission of FMCSA is to reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving large trucks and buses.

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations

(FMCSR): Minimum standards for those involved with the operation of commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) in

interstate commerce, intended to cover all people and entities involved in the interstate operation of these trucks.

Federal Register (FR): A daily journal of the Federal Government that includes Federal Agency regulations, proposed rules and notices of interest to the public, Executive Orders, proclamations, and other presidential documents.

Fifth Wheel: A device mounted on a truck tractor or similar towing vehicle (e.g., converter dolly) that interfaces with and couples to the upper coupler assembly of a semitrailer. For more information on fifth wheel assemblies, see 49 CFR § 393.70.

Finding: A documented deficiency in a State's CDL program because it does not meet the minimum regulatory provisions of 49 CFR Part 384. Repeat findings are those which have been previously documented by FMCSA to the State and have not been corrected or the corrective action failed to fully satisfy the minimum regulatory provision.

Fixing America's Surface Transportation

(FAST) Act: Passed by Congress and signed into law in 2015, the FAST ACT (Pub. L. No. 114-94) provides long-term funding for surface transportation, allowing State and local governments to move forward with critical transportation projects (new highways, transit lines, etc.) with confidence they will receive Federal support. Additionally, it reforms many Federal transportation programs, including streamlining the approval processes for new transportation projects, providing new safety tools, and establishing new programs to advance critical freight projects.

Foreign Convictions and Withdrawal

Database (FCWD): Repository of the U.S. conviction history on Mexican and Canadian commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers. Allows FMCSA to disqualify drivers from operating in the United States if they are convicted of disqualifying offenses listed in the FMCSRs.

Full Trailer: Any motor vehicle other than a pole trailer which is designed to be drawn by another motor vehicle and so constructed that no part of its weight, except for the towing device, rests upon the self-propelled towing motor vehicle. A semitrailer equipped with an auxiliary front axle (converter dolly) shall be considered a full trailer.

G

Good Faith Effort: A determination by FMCSA that a State has submitted an acceptable corrective action plan (CAP) to resolve the finding(s) and the State's progress is compliant with their approved schedule.

Gross Combination Weight (GCW): The actual weight of a combination vehicle at the time of weighing. This may be more than the GCWR if the vehicle is overloaded.

Gross Combination Weight Rating

(GCWR): The value specified by the manufacturer of the power unit, if such value is displayed on the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) certification label required by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, or the sum of the GVWRs or the GVWs of the power unit and the towed unit(s), or any combination thereof, that produces the highest value. Exception: if there is no towed unit, GCWR is not to be used.

Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW): The actual vehicle weight at the time of weighing. This may be more than the GVWR if the vehicle is overloaded. A safety official may exercise FMCSA jurisdiction based on the GVW or GVWR, whichever is greater. For example, if a vehicle with a GVWR of 9,500 pounds was loaded to 10,500 pounds GVW, it would be subject to the FMCSRs if it was operating in interstate commerce.

Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR):

The value specified by the manufacturer as the loaded weight of a single vehicle.

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Group A Vehicle: See Combination Vehicle – Group A.

Group B Vehicle: See Heavy Straight Vehicle – Group B.

Group C Vehicle: See Small Vehicle – Group C.

H

Hazardous Materials (Hazmat/HM): Includes materials designated by the Secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOT) as posing an unreasonable threat to the public and the environment. The term “Hazardous Materials” includes: (1) Hazardous Substances; (2) Hazardous Wastes; (3) Marine Pollutants; (4) Elevated Temperature Material; (5) Materials identified in 49 CFR Part 172.101; and (6) Materials meeting the definition of Hazardous Materials contained in 49 CFR Part 173.

Heavy Straight Vehicle – Group B: Any single vehicle with a GVWR or GVW 26,001 pounds or more, or any such vehicle towing a vehicle not in excess of 10,000 pounds GVWR or GVW.

Hours of Service (HOS): Regulations issued by FMCSA and governing the working hours of anyone operating a commercial motor vehicle (CMV). These regulations apply to truck drivers, commercial and city bus drivers, and school bus drivers who operate CMVs. These rules limit the number of daily and weekly hours drivers may spend driving and working, and regulate the minimum amount of time drivers must spend resting between driving shifts. For intrastate commerce, the respective State’s regulations apply.

I

Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS): The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) was established under the U.S. Department of Labor in 1933 to administer matters related to establishing immigration and naturalization policy. After being transferred to the U.S. Department of Justice in 1940, the INS was subsequently dismantled by the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Pub. L. No. 107-296, 116 Stat. 2135) at which time its various duties were split up and transferred to three new agencies established under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Insulin-Treated Diabetes Mellitus (ITDM) Assessment: As a part of the medical certification process for insulin-treated diabetes mellitus (ITDM) individuals, FMCSA requires that the Insulin-Treated Diabetes Mellitus (ITDM) Assessment, Form MCSA-5870, be completed by the ITDM individual’s treating clinician to confirm that the individual has a stable insulin regimen and properly controlled diabetes.

Interstate Commerce: When a driver operates a CMV in trade, traffic, or transportation:

- From one State to another State or a foreign country;
- Between two places within a State, but during part of the trip the CMV crosses into another State or foreign country; or
- Between two places within a State, but the cargo is part of a trip that began or will end in another State or foreign country.

Intrastate Commerce: When a driver operates a CMV and does not meet any of the descriptions above for interstate commerce.

L

Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR): A lawful permanent resident (LPR), also known as a “green card” holder, is a non-citizen who is lawfully authorized to live permanently within the United States. As proof of that status, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) grants the individual a permanent resident card, commonly called a “green card.”

Lawful Status: As defined by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) lawful status describes an individual who:

- Is a citizen or national of the United States
- Is an alien who is lawfully admitted for permanent or temporary residence in the United States
- Has conditional permanent resident status in the United States
- Has an approved application for asylum in the United States or has entered into the United States in refugee status
- Has a valid immigrant status in the United States
- Has a pending application for asylum in the United States;
- Has a pending or approved application for temporary protected status (TPS) in the United States
- Has approved deferred action status
- Has a pending application for lawful permanent residence (LPR) or conditional permanent resident status

This definition does not affect other definitions or requirements that may be contained in the Immigration and Nationality Act or other laws, as lawful status is not the same as being a lawful permanent resident and having lawful status does not mean that a person is eligible for a CDL or non-domiciled CDL.

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Legal Presence: While not formally defined in 49 CFR Part 383, legal presence means proof that an individual is legally allowed to obtain a CDL by presenting evidence of U.S. citizenship or a valid, unexpired Permanent Resident Card. While synonymous with lawful permanent residency in 49 CFR Part 383, this term has no actual meaning per the DHS.

M

Masking: Any action whereby a State defers, diverts, or in any other way prevents the conviction of a CLP or CDL holder from appearing in a CDLIS driver record.

Master Pointer Record (MPR):

In CDLIS, the CDLIS Central Site (CS) keeps a Master Pointer Record for each driver. The record contains driver identification information and a pointer to the current State of Record (SOR).

Medical Examination Report (MER): The Medical Examination Report (MER), Form MCSA-5875, is a long form completed as part of the mandatory physical exam commercial motor vehicle drivers must undergo at least once every two years.

Medical Examiner's Certificate (MEC): A medical examiner's certificate (MEC), Form MCSA-5876, is completed by a medical examiner and provided to a CLP or CDL holder if the examination results conclude that he or she is physically qualified to drive a commercial motor vehicle in accordance with the physical qualification standards. It is commonly referred to as a medical certificate or DOT card.

Medical Exemption: As defined in 49 CFR § 381.300, an exemption is temporary regulatory relief from one or more FMCSR given to a person or class of persons subject to the regulations, or who intend to engage in an activity that would make them subject to the regulations. An exemption provides the person or class of persons with relief

from the regulations for up to five years, and may be renewed, upon request, for subsequent five-year periods. Though the regulation allows for a five-year exemption, medical programs only issue an exemption for two years. Therefore, FMCSA grants exemptions for two years to be aligned with the maximum two-year validity of medical examiner's certificates (MECs).

Medical Variance: Medical variance means a driver has received one of the following from FMCSA that allows the driver to be issued a medical certificate:

- An exemption letter permitting operation of a CMV pursuant to 49 CFR §§ 381, Subpart C or 391.64 (vision),
- A Skill Performance Evaluation (SPE) certificate permitting operation of a CMV pursuant to 49 CFR § 391.49,
- An exemption from the physical qualifications for drivers pursuant to 49 CFR § 391.41.

Missing Pointer: A situation in which a Driver History Record (DHR) exists but there is no Master Pointer Record (MPR). In other words, the record resides in the SOR but not on the CDLIS Central Site.

Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act (MCSIA) of 1999: Established the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) within the Department of Transportation (DOT). Also disqualified Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) drivers from operating with a revoked, suspended, or canceled CDL.

Motor Vehicle Record (MVR): A report of an individual's driving history, as documented by a State's Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) or similar government entity that issues driver licenses. While this may vary from one State to the next depending on local reporting practices, information reported in MVRs includes driver's license status and class, violations, convictions, restrictions, and other information related to driving records and credentials.

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21): Passed by Congress and signed into law in 2012, MAP-21 provides funding for transportation programs and implemented a streamlined, performance-based surface transportation program, building on previously established highway, transit, bike, and pedestrian programs and policies.

N

National Driver Register (NDR):

National repository of information on problem drivers. Maintains the Problem Driver Pointer System (PDPS).

National Registry (NR): See National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners (NRCME).

National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners (NRCME): A website that helps commercial motor vehicle drivers find trained and qualified medical examiners to perform high-quality physical medical exams that are consistent with Federal regulations and guidelines and issue a paper Medical Examiner's Certificate (MEC), Form MCSA-5876 to qualified drivers.

Non-Excepted Interstate (NI) Commerce: A CLP or CDL holder operates in non-excepted interstate commerce if none of the excepted activities, as described in 49 CFR §§ 390.3(f), 391.2, 391.68, and 398.3 apply. He or she is required to provide a current MEC, as defined in 49 CFR § 391.45, to his or her SDLA. Most CLP or CDL holders who drive CMVs in interstate commerce are non-excepted interstate commerce drivers.

Non-Excepted Intrastate (NA) Commerce: A CLP or CDL holder operates in non-excepted intrastate commerce when he or she drives a CMV only in intrastate commerce and is required to meet the State of licensure's medical certification requirements.

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Nonresident Violator Compact (NRVC):

A voluntary agreement between certain States that standardizes methods to process nonresident violators receiving citations or otherwise failing to comply with outstanding moving traffic summons. If an out-of-State driver violates specific driving laws of an NRVC member State, the State may send a non-compliance notice to the driver's State of Record (SOR).

Notice of Claim (NOC):

The initial document issued by FMCSA to assert a civil penalty for alleged violations of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs), Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMRs), or Federal Motor Carrier Commercial Regulations (FMCCRs).

Notice of Violation (NOV): A document alleging a violation of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs), Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMRs), or Federal Motor Carrier Commercial Regulations (FMCCRs), for which corrective action, other than payment of a civil penalty, is recommended.

O

Office of the Federal Register and Government Publishing Office (GPO):

Formerly known as the Government Printing Office, the GPO is the Federal Government's primary centralized resource for gathering, cataloging, producing, providing, authenticating, and preserving published information in all its forms. The GPO is also responsible for the production and distribution of information products and services for all three branches of the Federal Government.

One Driver, One License, One Record:

The backbone of the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Program, established by the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act (CMVSA) of 1986. Prohibits any person who operates a CMV from having more than one driver's license, ensuring that for every one CDL driver there is one license and one driving record.

Out-of-Service Order (OOSO):

A declaration issued by FMCSA or law enforcement that prohibits a motor carrier or driver from operating a commercial motor vehicle.

Overt Monitoring: An observation and evaluation of a CDL skills and/or knowledge test conducted with the knowledge of the applicant or examiner being observed.

P

Probation Before Judgement (PBJ):

See Deferral.

Problem Driver Pointer System (PDPS):

An electronic information system, similar to CDLIS, that allows States and other relevant organizations to search National Driver Register (NDR) data. Based on information received as a result of an NDR search, PDPS directs the inquiry to the State of Record (SOR) that stores a driver's status and history. Based on the information received from the SOR, the issuing jurisdiction decides if the applicant is eligible to receive a new or renewed driver license.

R

REAL ID: A REAL ID driver's license or identification card means a driver's license or identification card that has been issued by a State that has been certified by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to be in compliance with the requirements of the REAL ID Act and which meets the standards of 6 CFR Part 37, Subparts A - D, including temporary or limited-term driver's licenses or identification cards issued under 6 CFR § 37.21.

REAL ID Act: An act passed by Congress in 2005 that established minimum security standards for license issuance and production.

Reciprocity: Any individual is allowed to operate a CMV, as defined in 49 CFR § 383.5, in any State provided that he or she holds a CLP or CDL issued to him or her by his or her State or jurisdiction of domicile, is not disqualified from operating a CMV, and the CLP or CDL is valid for the type of vehicle being driven. This also applies to non-domiciled CLP or CDL issued by a State of record (SOR) to a qualifying individual who is not a citizen or lawful permanent resident.

Record Retention Period: The length of time a State Driver Licensing Agency (SDLA) is required to maintain conviction and disqualification records.

Report Out-of-State Conviction

(ROOSC): The communication between a State of Conviction (SOC) and State of Record (SOR) that conveys conviction information necessary for the SOR to populate the Driver History Record (DHR). This may occur as an electronic message via CDLIS or a compliant paper form.

Representative Vehicle: For the purposes of taking the driving test in accordance with 49 CFR § 383.113, a representative vehicle for a given vehicle group contained in 49 CFR § 383.91 is any commercial motor vehicle which meets the definition of that vehicle group.

Restricted CDL: A CDL dictating that a holder may only operate CMVs in a limited capacity or on specified roads.

Revocation: Term used for the withdrawal or disqualification of driving privileges. Revocation may indicate that the driver was not eligible for the license. Some States require the driver to be retested before the restoration of his or her commercial driving privileges.

Roadside Inspection: The pre-defined evaluation of a driver or vehicle components to ensure compliance with applicable FMCSRs. Roadside Inspections are conducted by a certified inspector at a variety of locations, such as weigh stations, border checkpoints, bus terminals, or when a law enforcement official stops a CMV.

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Rulemaking Process: Steps through which Federal executive and independent agencies create, establish, and promote regulations. The rulemaking process is dictated by the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) of 1946.

S

School Bus: A CMV used to transport pre-primary, primary, or secondary school students from home to school, from school to home, or to and from school-sponsored events. School bus does not include a bus used as a common carrier.

Security and Accountability For Every (SAFE) Port Act: An Act of Congress passed 2006 covering port security that promotes increased trucking security through legal status verification for licensed United States commercial drivers, commercial driver's license antifraud programs, and verification of commercial motor vehicle traffic.

Semitrailer: Any motor vehicle other than a pole trailer which is designed to be drawn by another motor vehicle and is constructed so that some part of its weight rests upon the self-propelled towing motor vehicle.

Skill Performance Evaluation (SPE) Certificate: Drivers with physical impairments which affect their ability to safely operate CMVs according to their medical examiners, or with missing limbs (e.g., a hand or finger, an arm, foot or leg), are required to obtain SPE certificates, per 49 CFR § 391.49. The SPE certification provides an alternative physical qualification and allows these drivers to drive CMVs across state lines if they have been fitted with (and are wearing) the right prosthetic device, and the driver can demonstrate the ability to drive the truck safely.

Skills Test Review (STR): The evaluation of a State's CDL skills testing processes using either overt or covert methods to detect and reduce fraud and determine a State's compliance with 49 CFR Part 384.

Small Vehicle – Group C: Any vehicle that is designed to transport 16 or more passengers (including the driver) or a vehicle of any size that is used in the transportation of the placardable amounts of hazardous materials.

Social Security Database (SSD): A repository of Social Security Numbers maintained by the Social Security Administration (SSA).

Social Security Online Verification (SSOLV): A process that allows jurisdictions to verify Social Security Numbers in real time against the Social Security Database (SSD). SSOLV allows State Driver Licensing Agencies (SDLAs) to verify drivers' names and Social Security Numbers.

State Compliance Records Enterprise (SCORE) System: An FMCSA database that:

- Catalogs findings of noncompliance by States, and includes suggestions for CDL program improvements, notices of fraud vulnerabilities, and lists of noteworthy practices;
- Maintains a repository of documents related to FMCSA oversight of the CDL program;
- Delivers electronic mail notifications informing users of some of the required pending actions;
- Allows users to generate detailed reports related to State compliance and the national CDL program; and
- Tracks completion of annual program requirements.

State Driver Licensing Agency (SDLA): The organization within a State responsible for issuing driver licenses. Sometimes referred to as "Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV)" or "Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)."

State of Conviction (SOC): Any State that convicts a driver of a reportable offense. It maintains the original conviction records and any negations in its own database or on paper records. It is also the authority for conviction on the Driver History Record (DHR).

State of Domicile (SOD): The State where a person has his or her true, fixed, and permanent home and principal residence and to which he or she has the intention of returning whenever he or she is absent.

State of Record (SOR): Issues the CDL to the driver and maintains the Master Pointer Record (MPR) on the CDLIS Central Site (SC) and the Driver History Record (DHR) on its own database.

State of Withdrawal (SOW): Any State that withdraws a driver's privileges to operate a motor vehicle. If the SOW is also the State of Record (SOR), the withdrawal is effective Nation-wide.

State Procedures Manual (SPM): Outlines the standard administrative practices required by each jurisdiction.

State Programs Specialist (SPS): Reporting to the Division Administrator (DA) within each FMCSA Division, the State Programs Specialist (SPS) is responsible for the oversight, promotion, and review of the State's technical projects and programs, including the Commercial Driver's License Program and Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program.

Substantial Compliance: A designation by FMCSA that a State has no finding(s) of noncompliance or that a State is making a good faith effort to address the finding(s). To be in substantial compliance with 49 U.S.C. 31311(a), a State must meet each and every standard of 49 CFR Part 384, [Subpart B](#) by means of the demonstrable combined effect of its statutes, regulations, administrative procedures and practices, organizational structures, internal control mechanisms, resource assignments (facilities, equipment, and personnel), and enforcement practices.

Suspension: The temporary withdrawal or disqualification of a driver.

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T

Tank Vehicle: Any CMV that is designed to transport any liquid or gaseous materials within a tank or tanks having an individual rated capacity of more than 119 gallons and an aggregate rated capacity of 1,000 gallons or more that is either permanently or temporarily attached to the vehicle or the chassis. A commercial motor vehicle transporting an empty storage container tank, not designed for transportation, with a rated capacity of 1,000 gallons or more that is temporarily attached to a flatbed trailer is not considered a tank vehicle.

Temporary Protected Status (TPS):

Temporary protected status (TPS) is granted to eligible foreign-born individuals of certain countries (or parts of countries), who are already in the United States and unable to return home safely due to conditions or circumstances preventing their country from adequately handling the return. Eligible individuals without nationality who last resided in the designated country may also be granted TPS.

Theory Instruction: As defined in 49 CFR § [380.605](#), knowledge instruction on the operation of a CMV and related matters provided by a theory instructor through lectures, demonstrations, audio-visual presentations, computer-based instruction, driving simulation devices, online training, or similar means.

Third Party Skills Test Examiner: As defined in 49 CFR § [383.5](#), a third party skills test examiner means a person employed by a third party tester who is authorized by the State to administer the CDL skills tests specified in 49 CFR [Part 383](#), [Subparts G](#) and [H](#).

Third Party Tester: As defined in 49 CFR § [383.5](#), a third party tester means a person (including, but not limited to, another State, a motor carrier, a private driver training facility or other private institution, or a department, agency, or instrumentality of a local government) authorized by the State to employ skills test examiners to administer the CDL skills tests specified in 49 CFR [Part 383](#), [Subparts G](#) and [H](#).

Training Provider Registry (TPR): An FMCSA web system that will contain the official list of all entities that register with FMCSA and self-certify they meet the requirements for being an entry-level driver training provider and retain a record of which drivers have successfully completed entry-level driver training for States to access.

Transportation Security Administration (TSA): A U.S. Agency within the Department of Homeland Security that is mandated to develop and implement policies to ensure the safety of the Nation's transportation systems.

Truck: Any self-propelled CMV except a truck tractor, designed and/or used for the transportation of property.

Truck Tractor: A self-propelled commercial motor vehicle designed and/or used primarily for drawing other vehicles.

U

USA PATRIOT Act of 2001: Passed by Congress and signed into law in 2001, the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA PATRIOT) Act allows the FMCSA to assist the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) in implementing Section 1012 of the USA PATRIOT Act regarding the issuance of licenses to operate CMVs transporting hazardous materials.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS): U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is the Federal agency within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that oversees lawful immigration to the United States.

U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT): A Federal Cabinet Department whose mission is to ensure the United States has the safest, most efficient, and modern transportation system in the world, which improves the quality of life for all American people and communities, from rural to urban, and increases the productivity and competitiveness of American workers and businesses.

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Acronyms

AAMVA: American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators

ACD: AAMVA Code Dictionary

APA: Administrative Procedure Act

APR: Annual Program Review

BTW: Behind-the-Wheel

CDL: Commercial Driver's License

CDLIS: Commercial Driver's License Information System

CDLPI Grant: Commercial Driver's License Program Implementation Grant

CFR: Code of Federal Regulations

CLP: Commercial Learner's Permit

CMV: Commercial Motor Vehicle

CMVSA: Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act

CR: Compliance Review

CRBA: Consular Report of Birth Abroad

CS: CDLIS Central Site

CSTIMS: Commercial Skills Test Information Management System

DA: Division Administrator

DHR: Driver History Record

DHS: Department of Homeland Security

DQ File: Driver Qualification File

DUI: Driving Under the Influence

EA Commerce: Excepted Intrastate Commerce

EAD: Employment Authorization Document

eCFR: Electronic Code of Federal Regulations

EI Commerce: Excepted Interstate Commerce

ELDT: Entry-Level Driver Training

FAST Act: Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act

FCWD: Foreign Convictions and Withdrawal Database

FMCSA: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

FMCSR: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations

FR: Federal Register

FTA/FTP/FTC: Failure to Appear, Failure to Pay, Failure to Comply

GCW: Gross Combination Weight

GCWR: Gross Combination Weight Rating

GPO: Office of the Federal Register and Government Publishing Office

GVW: Gross Vehicle Weight

GVWR: Gross Vehicle Weight Rating

Hazmat/HM: Hazardous Materials

HOS: Hours of Service

INS: Immigration and Naturalizations Service

ITDM Assessment: Insulin-Treated Diabetes Mellitus Assessment

LPR: Lawful Permanent Resident

MAP-21: Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act

MCSIA: Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act

MEC: Medical Examiner's Certificate

MER: Medical Examination Report

MPR: Master Pointer Record

MVR: Motor Vehicle Record

NA Commerce: Non-Excepted Intrastate Commerce

NDR: National Driver Register

NHTSA: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

NI Commerce: Non-Excepted Interstate Commerce

NOC: Notice of Claim

NOV: Notice of Violation

NR: National Registry

NRCME: National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners

NRVC: Nonresident Violator Compact

OIG: Office of Inspector General

OOSO: Out-of-Service Order

PBJ: Probation Before Judgement

PDPS: Problem Driver Pointer System

ROOSC: Report Out-of State Conviction

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SAFE Port Act: Security and Accountability For Every Port Act

SCORE System: State Compliance Records Enterprise System

SDLA: State Driver Licensing Agency

SOC: State of Conviction

SOD: State of Domicile

SOR: State of Record

SOW: State of Withdrawal

SPE Certificate: Skill Performance Evaluation Certificate

SPM: State Procedures Manual

SPS: State Programs Specialist

SSD: Social Security Database

SSOLV: Social Security Online Verification

STR: Skills Test Review

TMS: Test Maintenance Subcommittee

TPR: Training Provider Registry

TPS: Temporary Protected Status

TSA: Transportation Security Administration

USCIS: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USDOT: U.S. Department of Transportation