



MOTOR CARRIER NEWS

Quarterly Newsletter and Official Publication of the Oregon Department of Transportation,
Motor Carrier Transportation Division, 550 Capitol Street NE, Salem OR 97301-2530

Volume 27, Number 96

March 2012

CDL holders adjust to new medical card rules

Won't it be nice when truckers don't need to keep a paper copy of their medical card with them while driving and employers won't need to keep a copy in drivers' files? That day is coming soon. In less than two years, in fact, according to the latest Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration rule requiring state DMVs to complete the necessary process for interstate CDL holders by January 30, 2014.

Oregon's Driver and Motor Vehicle Services Division (DMV), like DMVs throughout the country, is now requiring that commercial truck and bus drivers submit a photocopy of their medical examiner's certificate whenever a driver is renewing or replacing a CDL or upgrading to a higher class. Also, since qualifications are dependent on driving type, a CDL driver will be required to certify at each issuance the type of driving they do or for which they wish to be authorized. The goal is to link each CDL with the driver's medical certification information in the Commercial Driver's License Information System, the federal electronic database, so that law enforcement and licensing agencies in any state can have electronic access to a driver's CDL medical status. That status will also then be available on driver records requested by employers.

Because all drivers must ultimately comply with this requirement by January 30, 2014, Oregon's DMV got things started last year by mailing informational letters to all Oregon CDL

holders. Those who renew or replace their license before 2014 will be required to provide a photocopy of their medical card and certify their driving type at the time of renewal or replacement. For drivers who are not due to renew their license by 2014, DMV will send a notification requesting a photocopy of their medical card in a staggered process over the next two years. These drivers don't need to do anything until notified. But it's critical that all drivers maintain a valid mailing address with DMV, as required by law, so they can receive the notification.

When they get a notice, or if they want to do it before getting a notice, Oregon CDL holders can use one of three ways to submit a fully-legible copy of their medical card:

1. **Mail:** DMV Driver Safety Unit, CDL Medical Certification, 1905 Lana Avenue NE, Salem OR 97314
2. **E-mail:** DSMEC@odot.state.or.us
3. **Fax:** 503-945-5329

Whichever way the copy is submitted, drivers must ensure the name and license number on the medical certificate are legible. If it's hard to read what's on the card, DMV recommends that drivers either include a copy of the front of the CDL or write the driver's name and license number legibly on a separate piece of paper

included in the mailing, e-mail, or fax.

Employers can also submit a copy of their drivers' medical cards to DMV for them.

DMV is not accepting the Medical Examination Report for Commercial Driver Fitness Determination, which

is called the "long form." That form does not include specific information from the medical card that DMV needs to comply with federal law.

The medical examiner must complete the

medical card and a copy of that card is the document submitted to DMV.

If a driver fails to meet the requirement to submit a copy of a valid medical card, DMV will send a notice that it intends to cancel the driver's CDL and the cancellation is effective 30 days after the notice is mailed. Regardless, once the medical certificate expires a driver may not legally operate a commercial motor vehicle.

Drivers who don't want to meet the requirement to submit a copy of their medical card have the option, of course, to just surrender their commercial driving privileges at a DMV field office. And currently there's no fee to issue a replacement license without commercial privileges if a driver is downgrading because he or she doesn't meet the medical standards for holding a CDL.



continued on page 2

New medical card rules now in effect

continued from page 1

If a driver's CDL is canceled for not maintaining a current medical card with DMV, the driver will have three years from the cancellation date, or three years from the date a driver drops the CDL, whichever is earliest, to get another CDL without retesting. If a driver has his or her CDL canceled for failing to submit a copy of the medical card, the driver can still operate a non-commercial vehicle if the non-commercial privileges are not expired, revoked, suspended or canceled under a separate action.

The concept of linking medical cards with CDLs was first discussed more than 20 years ago. The Federal Highway Administration got the ball rolling in 1990 and six states completed pilot programs in 1995 that showed it could work. An FMCSA rulemaking in 2008 called for all states to get it done by January 2012. But when several states found that was impossible, the deadline was extended to January 2014.

Merging the medical fitness determination into the CDL process has many benefits. When drivers don't have to carry their medical cards, they can't be inadvertently lost, damaged or destroyed. Enforcement officers will know the medical fitness status of a driver without the time-consuming need to refer to and authenticate a separate document. Carriers no longer need to maintain driver medical qualification certificates on file. States are better able to identify unqualified drivers that operate without medical cards or with forged cards. And when there's a question about an applicant, the driver licensing agency can refer the applicant and the medical fitness form to the state's medical advisory board for further review.

For more information about the new medical card requirements, visit DMV online at <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/DMV/faqs/CDLMedCert.shtml>.

DMV service offers alerts when driving record changes

Trucking companies can keep a close eye on their Oregon licensed drivers by enrolling in an Oregon DMV system called the Automated Reporting Service (ARS). ARS produces and sends employers a printout of an employee's driving record whenever a conviction, accident, or suspension is posted to the record. In the future, this will even include a printout when the medical status changes.

Employers sign up for the automated system by first applying for a DMV Record Inquiry Account. Once approved, they tell DMV which employees they wish to add to the automated service. They can go online to change their ARS employee list, add or remove names, or ask DMV for assistance. Then any time one of their employees has a citation, accident, or suspension added to his or her driving record, DMV notifies the employer. Employers approved for a Record Inquiry Account also have access to an Interactive Voice Response System that allows them to make driver license or vehicle inquiries by phone, 24 hours a day. They can obtain information over the phone or have printed copies mailed overnight. Menu options include: listen to driver license name, address, description and status, listen to vehicle description and ownership, order a three-year non-employment or three-year employment driving record, order a complete or certified court print driving record, and order a vehicle record print.

For more information about these services and the fees involved, visit DMV online at www.oregon.gov/ODOT/DMV/records/business.shtml.

About CDLs in Oregon

A total of 127,332 Oregon drivers have a Commercial Driver License (CDL):

Class A —

89,113 Oregon drivers have a Class A license to operate any vehicle or combination of vehicles. (An endorsement may still be required to operate certain vehicles.)

- 1,961 of them have a valid Hazmat endorsement
- 9,442 have a Tank/Hazmat Combination endorsement

Class B —

34,765 Oregon drivers have a Class B license to operate any single vehicle weighing 26,001 pounds or more (GVWR), or any such vehicle towing a vehicle under 10,001 pounds (GVWR). (An endorsement may still be required for certain vehicles.)

- 300 of them have a valid Hazmat endorsement
- 712 have a Tank/Hazmat Combination endorsement

Class C —

3,454 Oregon drivers have a Class C license to operate vehicles weighing under 26,001 pounds (GVWR) that are designed to transport 16 or more persons, including the driver, if the driver has a passenger endorsement, or used to transport hazardous materials in quantities that require placarding, if the driver has a hazardous materials endorsement.

- 460 of them have a valid Hazmat endorsement
- 70 have a Tank/Hazmat Combination endorsement

Totals are as of December 31, 2010