

# SELF-CERTIFICATION/MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATION FACT SHEET

As part of the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) amended the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) to require interstate commercial driver's license (CDL) holders, subject to the physical qualification requirements of the FMCSRs, to provide a current copy of their Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) to their state driver licensing agency.

In addition, Pennsylvania regulations (Title 67, Chapter 231: [http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/067/chapter231/067\\_0231.pdf](http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/067/chapter231/067_0231.pdf)) relating to CDL holders who operate in intrastate commerce incorporate the FMCSRs by reference, therefore requiring, with limited exception, nearly all commercial drivers to submit a copy of their Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) to PennDOT.

These regulations will ensure that accurate and up-to-date information about the CDL holder's Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) is contained in the electronic driving record.

## WHAT IS DEEMED INTERSTATE COMMERCE?

Interstate is defined as trade, traffic or transportation in the United States:

- Between a place in a state and place outside of such state (including a place outside of the United States); or
- Between two places in a state through another state or a place outside of the United States; or
- Between two places in a state as part of trade, traffic, or transportation originating or terminating outside the state or the United States.

## WHAT IS DEEMED INTRASTATE COMMERCE?

Intrastate commerce is any type of transportation that does not fall into the definition of interstate commerce.

## WHAT IS A SELF-CERTIFICATION FORM?

The new Federal regulations require commercial drivers to self-certify the type of driving in which they operate or expect to operate, i.e., Non-excepted Interstate, Non-excepted Intrastate, Excepted Interstate, or Excepted Intrastate. The self-certification process will identify commercial drivers that operate in Non-excepted transportation, therefore identifying which drivers are required to submit a copy of their valid Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) to PennDOT. Commercial drivers may use PennDOT's Self-Certification Form (DL-11CD), which can be obtained online by visiting the Commercial Driver Information Center at [www.dmv.pa.gov](http://www.dmv.pa.gov).

## WHAT ARE THE SELF-CERTIFICATION DRIVING TYPES?

The Federal regulations categorize commercial driving into four groups: Non-excepted Interstate, Non-excepted Intrastate, Excepted Interstate, or Excepted Intrastate.

## WHO MUST SUBMIT A SELF-CERTIFICATION FORM?

Every driver who currently has a commercial driver's license, as well as every driver applying for a commercial learner's permit, must submit a self-certification form. Those commercial drivers who engage in Non-excepted transportation are also required to submit a copy of their valid Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) to PennDOT.

## I AM NOT REQUIRED TO HAVE A CDL; HOWEVER, I AM REQUIRED TO CARRY A MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD). DO I NEED TO SUBMIT A COPY TO PENNDOT?

No. Only CDL holders that operate in "Non-excepted" transportation are required to submit a copy to PennDOT.

## WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF "NON-EXCEPTED INTERSTATE"?

A person who must certify that he or she operates or expects to operate in interstate commerce, is both subject to and meets the qualification requirements under 49 CFR part 391, and is required to obtain a Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card). When circumstances allow, it is recommended that Medical Examiner's Certificates (DOT Physical Cards) that expire within the next six (6) months be renewed prior to submitting to PennDOT. Drivers engaging in Non-excepted transportation must be at least 21 years of age.

- All Class A, B and C commercial drivers who engage in interstate commerce while transporting goods or providing services.
- All Class A, B and C commercial drivers who have been granted a federal vision or diabetes exemption, or who have successfully completed a Skills Performance Evaluation (SPE).
- School bus drivers employed by a school transportation provider/contractor who transport students for any purpose other than home to school/school to home, i.e., out of state for a field trip.

#### **WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF “NON-EXCEPTED INTRASTATE”?**

A person who must certify that he or she operates or expects to operate only in intrastate commerce, is both subject to and meets the qualification requirements under Title 67, Chapter 231, and is required to obtain a Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card). When circumstances allow, it is recommended that Medical Examiner's Certificates (DOT Physical Cards) that expire within the next six (6) months be renewed prior to submitting to PennDOT.

- All Class A, B and C commercial drivers who operate commercial motor vehicles in intrastate commerce while transporting goods or providing services.
- Drivers who transport hazardous materials in intrastate commerce.
- Drivers who transport personal property for compensation.
- Drivers of migrant workers (must meet minimum medical standards only; 49 CFR 398.3).

#### **WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF “EXCEPTED INTERSTATE”?**

A person must certify that he or she operates or expects to operate in interstate commerce, but engages exclusively in transportation or operations excepted under 49 CFR 390.3(f), 391.2, and 391.68 or 398.3 from all or parts of the qualification requirements of 49 CFR part 391, and is therefore not required to obtain a Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card):

- Drivers who are employed by the Federal government, a state, or any political subdivision of a state who engage in interstate commerce.
- School bus drivers employed by a school district who transport students for any purpose other than home to school/school to home, i.e., out of state field trip. \*School bus drivers are still required to comply with the School Bus Driver's Physical Examination required by Title 67, Chapter 71.
- School bus drivers employed by either a school district or a school transportation provider/contractor who during normal home to school/school to home trips transport students out of state. \*School bus drivers are still required to comply with the School Bus Driver's Physical Examination required by Title 67, Chapter 71.
- Drivers who operate vehicles in interstate commerce that have a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 10,001 to 26,000 lbs., do NOT transport hazardous materials that require placarding, and are NOT designed to transport 16 or more persons, including the driver. \*Although not tied to the commercial license, drivers of these vehicles are required to carry a Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card).
- Drivers who occasionally transport personal property *not for compensation*, nor in the furtherance of a commercial enterprise, who engage in interstate commerce.
- Drivers who transport human corpses or sick and injured persons across state lines.
- Drivers who operate fire trucks and rescue vehicles while involved in emergency and related operations who engage in interstate commerce.
- Drivers who operate 9 to 15 passenger vans (including the driver) weighing less than 26,001 GVWR *not for compensation* who engage in interstate commerce.
- Drivers who work in the apiarian industry (Beekeepers) who engage in interstate commerce.
- Drivers who work in farm custom operations (Custom Harvesters) who engage in interstate commerce.
- Drivers of farm vehicles who engage in interstate commerce while operating within a 150-mile radius of the farm.
- Drivers who transport passengers for non-business related purposes and not for compensation who engage in interstate commerce, i.e., organizations exempt from the Internal Revenue Code that provide transportation for their members.

- Drivers who operate in interstate commerce while delivering emergency supplies of propane winter heating fuel or responding to a pipeline emergency.

### **WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF “EXCEPTED INTRASTATE”?**

A person must certify that he or she operates in intrastate commerce, but engages exclusively in transportation or operations excepted from all or parts of the Federal and State driver qualification requirements:

- Drivers who are employed by the Federal government, a state, or any political subdivision of a state who operate in intrastate commerce.
- Inspection mechanics who operate within a 25-mile radius of the maintenance facility for the purpose of conducting a road test as required under Chapter 175 (relating to vehicle equipment and inspection).
- School bus drivers who transport students for any purpose within the boundaries of Pennsylvania. \*School bus drivers are still required to comply with the School Bus Driver’s Physical Examination required by Title 67, Chapter 71.
- Drivers who operate vehicles in intrastate commerce that have a GVWR of 17,001 to 26,000 lbs., do NOT transport hazardous materials that require placarding, and are NOT designed to transport 16 or more persons, including the driver. \* Although not tied to the commercial license, drivers of these vehicles are required to carry a Medical Examiner’s Certificate (DOT Physical Card).
- Drivers who occasionally transport personal property *not for compensation*, nor in the furtherance of a commercial enterprise, in intrastate commerce.
- Drivers who transport human corpses or sick and injured persons in intrastate commerce.
- Drivers who operate fire trucks and rescue vehicles while involved in emergency and related operations in intrastate commerce.
- Drivers who operate 9 to 15 passenger vans (including the driver) weighing less than 26,001 GVWR *not for compensation* in intrastate commerce.
- Drivers who work in the apiarian industry (Beekeepers) and operate in intrastate commerce.
- Drivers who work in farm custom operations (Custom Harvesters) and operate in intrastate commerce.
- Drivers of farm vehicles who engage in intrastate commerce.
- Drivers who transport passengers for non-business related purposes and not for compensation in intrastate commerce, i.e., organizations exempt from the Internal Revenue Code, that provide transportation for their members.
- Drivers who operate in intrastate commerce while delivering emergency supplies of propane winter heating fuel or responding to a pipeline emergency.

### **IF AN INDIVIDUAL WORKS IN BOTH NON-EXCEPTED AND EXCEPTED OCCUPATIONS, WHICH DRIVING TYPE SHOULD THEY SELECT?**

Since there will be times where a Medical Examiner’s Certificate (DOT Physical Card) is required, their driving record must reflect the Non-excepted driving type. When certifying that they operate in Non-excepted transportation, they will also be required to submit a valid Medical Examiner’s Certificate (DOT Physical Card).

### **WHO MUST SUBMIT A MEDICAL EXAMINER’S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD)?**

Nearly every commercial driver, with limited exception, is required to submit their valid Medical Examiner’s Certificate (DOT Physical Card) to PennDOT. (When circumstances allow, it is recommended that you renew your Medical Examiner’s Certificate (DOT Physical Card) if it expires within the next six (6) months, prior to submitting it to PennDOT for processing.) The Federal regulations require interstate commercial drivers to meet specific physical and mental standards in order to be certified to operate in interstate commerce. In addition, Pennsylvania regulations have adopted the Federal physical and mental standards for commercial drivers operating in intrastate commerce. Driver’s engaged in Excepted transportation, including but not limited to school bus drivers, government employees, beekeepers (apiarists), etc., do not have to submit the Medical Examiner’s Certificate (DOT Physical Card) to PennDOT.

This is not a new requirement. The only things that are changing are:

- The required medical examination is now tied to licensure; and
- The driving-type and Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) information will be recorded as part of the driving record and outlined on the Pennsylvania Driver Abstract.

Note: Non-CDL holders who require a Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) will still be required to carry a Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card).

#### **WHERE CAN THE FEDERAL PHYSICAL QUALIFICATIONS AND THE MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD) INFORMATION BE OBTAINED?**

The Federal Physical Qualifications and Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) can be obtained from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's website, <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rules-regulations/topics/medical/medical.htm>, under Rules and Regulations at the top of the page.

#### **IF A MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD) WAS COMPLETED BY A PHYSICIAN LICENSED IN A STATE OTHER THAN PENNSYLVANIA, WILL PENNDOT ACCEPT IT?**

Yes. PennDOT will accept the Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) completed by an out-of-state physician who is listed on the National Registry, as long as it is not expired.

#### **IN THE PAST, THE MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD) WAS NOT REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED TO PENNDOT. WHEN AND WHY DID THE FEDERAL REGULATIONS CHANGE?**

On Dec. 1, 2008, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration published new regulations that link the Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) to commercial licensure. This gives the driver greater incentive to renew the medical certification in a timely fashion because the penalty for failing to renew the Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) is the loss of the commercial driving privilege.

#### **ARE THERE ANY EXCEPTIONS TO THESE REQUIREMENTS?**

Commercial drivers who are exempt from carrying the Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) (including but not limited to school bus drivers, government employees, beekeepers (apiarists), etc.) are exempt from submitting the Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) to PennDOT, as long as they self-certify to PennDOT that they are engaged in "Excepted Interstate" or "Excepted Intrastate" transportation.

#### **HOW WILL A CDL HOLDER KNOW IF PENNDOT HAS A COPY OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD) AND/OR SELF-CERTIFICATION FORM ON FILE?**

PennDOT will mail the CDL holder a receipt indicating that the Medical Examiner's Certification and/or Self-Certification Form has been processed. This receipt should be retained.

#### **HOW WILL AN EMPLOYER/PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYER KNOW THAT THE REQUIRED MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD) OR SELF-CERTIFICATION FORM HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO PENNDOT?**

The Self-Certification Driving Type and Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) information, if applicable, will appear on the driver abstract. In addition, the CDL holder may provide their employer with a copy of the receipt indicating the date that the information was processed by PennDOT.

In addition, motor carriers are also required to retain a copy of the Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) in the driver's qualification file until Jan. 30, 2014.

#### **IF A CDL HOLDER'S DRIVING PRIVILEGE IS CURRENTLY UNDER SUSPENSION OR DISQUALIFIED, DO THEY STILL NEED TO SUBMIT THE SELF-CERTIFICATION FORM AND/OR MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD) TO PENNDOT?**

Yes, otherwise the medical certification status will be changed to not-certified and downgrade procedures will be initiated (commercial driver's designation will be removed within 45 days - downgraded to a non-commercial driver's license) upon restoration. If their driving privilege is restored prior to the submission of the Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) and/or Self-Certification Form, and the license is not expired, their valid commercial driver's license will be restored. However, the following business day, PennDOT will change the medical certification status to not-certified and initiate downgrade procedures. Once downgrade procedures have been initiated, the commercial designation will be removed and a duplicate non-commercial driver's license issued if a new Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) is not provided within 45 days.

## **WHAT MEDICAL INFORMATION WILL APPEAR ON THE DRIVING RECORD?**

All of the information from the Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) will be recorded on the official driving record, however, not everyone will have access to all of the information.

- If the CDL holder, their employer or prospective employer accesses the driving record, all of the information that appears on the Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) will appear on the Driver Abstract.
- If an insurance company or law enforcement accesses the CDL holder's driving record, information is limited. They will only see the driving type, and if the CDL holder operates in Non-excepted commerce and has a Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) on file with PennDOT. The driver abstract will indicate that the CDL holder is "certified" and list any applicable commercial medical restrictions, i.e., corrective lenses, hearing aid, etc.

## **WILL THERE BE ANY NEW CDL RESTRICTIONS APPEARING ON THE DRIVER'S LICENSE?**

Yes, if a Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) indicates that a driver must wear corrective lenses, a hearing aid, or needs a variance (vision or diabetic), that information will be recorded as a CDL restriction. Below is a list of all CDL restrictions that could be placed on a commercial driver's license.

- A - Restricts the driver to driving within an exempt intracity zone (49 CFR §391.62). \*
- B/M - Allows a driver to operate a Class B or Class C bus.
- C/N - Limits a driver to only operate a Class C bus.
- G - Indicates the driver is qualified medically by operation of 49 CFR §391.64. \*
- L - Restricts the driver to vehicles not equipped with air brakes.
- Q - Requires the driver to wear corrective lenses.
- V - Indicates the driver has been issued a medical variance.
- Y - Requires the driver to wear a hearing aid(s).
- E - Restricts the driver from driving manual transmission commercial vehicles.
- K - Limits a driver to only operate in intrastate commerce.
- O - Restricts the driver from driving a tractor trailer.
- Z - Prohibits driving a commercial motor vehicle with full air brakes

\* Federal regulations require all individuals qualifying with an "A" or "G" restriction to have a physical (new Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card)) at least every 12 months.

## **WHAT IF A MEDICAL EXAMINER RESCINDS THE MEDICAL CERTIFICATION?**

Once PennDOT is notified that an individual's medical certification has been rescinded, the commercial driving designation will be immediately removed (downgraded) and a non-commercial driver's license will be issued. In addition to being mailed a non-commercial driver's license, the individual will be notified in writing of the removal of the commercial driving designation. To regain the commercial driving designation, the individual may be required to apply for a commercial learner's permit and complete all required testing and training, if applicable.

## **WHAT WILL APPEAR ON THE DRIVING RECORD IF THE CDL HOLDER HAS A MEDICAL VARIANCE FOR DIABETES OR A VISION DEFICIENCY?**

Drivers who have been qualified for a medical variance will have the issue and expiration date of the variance appear as part of the driving record. The waiver type, i.e., vision deficiency or diabetes mellitus, will not appear on the record. The driver will need to continue to carry the variance documentation issued by FMCSA with them while driving a commercial motor vehicle.

## **WILL PENNDOT REMIND THE CDL HOLDER THAT THE MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD) IS GOING TO EXPIRE?**

Yes. Approximately 90 and 30 days prior to the expiration date of the Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card), PennDOT will mail a reminder letter.

## **WILL PENNDOT REMIND THE CDL HOLDER THAT THE MEDICAL VARIANCE IS GOING TO EXPIRE?**

Yes. Approximately 90 and 30 days prior to the expiration date of the medical variance, PennDOT will mail a reminder letter.



## **WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF A CDL HOLDER FORGETS TO MAIL A COPY OF THEIR MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD) TO PENNDOT?**

Upon the expiration date of the Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card), PennDOT will mail the CDL holder an official notice that indicates the medical certification status has been changed to not certified and downgrade procedures initiated. The CDL holder will then have 45 days from the mail date of the notice to provide a new Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) to avoid being downgraded and having the commercial designation removed from their driver's license. A new Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) can be processed at a PennDOT Driver License Center as late as the day the current certificate expires to avoid the changing of the medical certification status and downgrade procedures.

## **DOES A SCHOOL BUS DRIVER NEED TO SUBMIT A MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD)?**

Only school bus drivers who are engaged in Non-excepted transportation are required to comply with the Medical Examiner's Certification. Typically, this would be a school bus driver employed by a school bus contractor who is taking students on an out-of-state field trip. (According to the Federal regulations, school bus drivers who are employed by a school district and taking students on an out-of-state field trip are exempt from the Medical Examiner's Certification.) However, school bus driver regulations, [Chapter 71](#), establish minimum mental and physical requirements. School bus drivers will continue to carry their annual Physician's Certificate, School Bus Driver Endorsement Card, and a valid Commercial Driver's License with the "S" and "P" endorsements.

## **IF A CDL HOLDER WORKS FOR A PRIVATE COMPANY UNDER CONTRACT WITH A GOVERNMENT AGENCY, IS A MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD) REQUIRED?**

Working for an employer who has a contract with a government agency will not affect the requirement to comply with the medical qualifications outlined in the Federal regulations. If you work in Non-excepted commerce, then the Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) is required.

## **IF A CDL HOLDER WORKS FOR A COMPANY BASED IN ANOTHER STATE AND ONLY DRIVES WITHIN THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, WHAT DRIVING TYPE ARE THEY AND DO THEY NEED TO SUBMIT A MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD) TO PENNDOT?**

If the goods being transported fall into the definition of interstate commerce, they are operating in Non-excepted Interstate commerce even though they are only driving within the boundaries of Pennsylvania. They are required to submit a valid Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) to PennDOT.

If the goods being transported fall into the definition of intrastate commerce (from the shipper's shipping point to the shipper's intended destination), they are operating in Non-excepted Intrastate commerce. They are required to submit a valid Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) to PennDOT.

## **WHAT IF THE CDL HOLDER IS UNABLE TO OBTAIN AN UPDATED MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD) BEFORE THE CURRENT CERTIFICATION EXPIRES? IS THERE A WAY TO AVOID THE REMOVAL OF THE COMMERCIAL DRIVING DESIGNATION?**

Yes. To avoid the removal of the commercial driving designation and the requirement to apply for the commercial learner's permit, the CDL holder must change their driving type using the Self-Certification Form (DL-11CD) to "Excepted Interstate" or "Excepted Intrastate" transportation.

Please note that making this change to the driving record will automatically disqualify the CDL holder from operating in any form of Non-excepted transportation. Once they are able to renew their Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card), they must submit it along with an updated Self-Certification Form (DL-11CD).

## **IS THERE A FEE TO CHANGE THE DRIVING TYPE WITH PENNDOT?**

No. PennDOT will not charge any additional fees to change the driving type. The update is made to the driving record only. CDL holders will not be issued a new commercial driver's license.

## **DOES THE MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD) AND/OR SELF-CERTIFICATION FORM HAVE TO BE HAND DELIVERED TO PENNDOT OR CAN IT BE MAILED?**

If the CDL holder is submitting the required form(s) at least 30 days before the due date, it can be mailed to PennDOT at the following address:

PennDOT  
Bureau of Driver Licensing  
P.O. Box 69008  
Harrisburg, PA 17106-9008

If the CDL holder is submitting the required form(s) less than 30 days before the due date, it can be faxed to PennDOT at (717) 783-5429, emailed to [cdlmedscert@pa.gov](mailto:cdlmedscert@pa.gov), or hand delivered to your local PennDOT Driver License Center for processing. For a list of Centers and their hours of operation, visit [www.dmv.pa.gov](http://www.dmv.pa.gov) and click on "Find a PennDOT Location Near You".

**WHAT HAPPENS TO THE MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE (DOT PHYSICAL CARD) INFORMATION IF THE CDL HOLDER MOVES OUT OF PENNSYLVANIA?**

It depends on the self-certified driving type. If a CDL holder is a Non-excepted Interstate driver, the Federal regulations require the Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS) to capture and store the Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) information. During the process of transferring their Pennsylvania driver's license to the new state of residence, CDLIS will provide the new state with the stored information. (Please note that CDLIS is governed by and in compliance with state and Federal Driver Privacy Protection Act standards.)

If a CDL holder is a Non-excepted Intrastate driver and will continue to be operating in Non-excepted Intrastate commerce in their new state of residence, they will need to present their Medical Examiner's Certificate (DOT Physical Card) when they transfer into that state.

For more information, please feel free to visit the  
Commercial Driver Information Center on our website at

[www.dmv.pa.gov](http://www.dmv.pa.gov)

or

call 717-412-5300

You may also mail inquiries to:

PennDOT

Bureau of Driver Licensing

PO Box 69008

Harrisburg, PA 17106-9008