

## FMCSA: Motor Carrier Safety in Our Daily Lives

*The FMCSA is responsible for all aspects of the truck drivers and their cargo that take to the highways everyday*

In our everyday lives we don't often think about all the rules and regulations that go into keeping this country not only running smoothly but that are there to keep the public-at-large safe. Public safety is something we unknowingly take for granted because it's expected to be there.

### FMCSA: a closer look at an everyday safety measure

When we're out on the road, going to and from work, running errands, and taking the kids to and from school we expect there to be the proper safeguards in place to protect us.

One of the most crucial safeguards that's often overlooked is the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration** (or "FMCSA"). This is the federal agency responsible for creating, upholding, and enforcing the laws, regulations, and rules that govern motor carriers (trucks, freight, commercial) in the United States.

### Reducing truck-related accidents, the FMCSA keeps drivers safe

The FMCSA is responsible for various trucking laws and upholding the regulations for each. These laws and regulations are in place to increase safety of large trucks on the road. They assist in reducing truck-involved accidents.

Most importantly, they're enforced to protect the public safety of the other vehicles, drivers, and commuters on the road.

### It's more than just a license

Because truck driving is federally regulated, drivers must consistently abide by a specific set of rules and regulations laid out for them before they can perform their duties. These rules and regulations range from the number of licenses allowed to be acquired by the truck driver, physical requirements that govern their health and safety, and special training specific to trucking.

The following requirements are just some of the federal regulations in place for truck drivers issued by the **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**:

#### Licensing requirements:

- Truck drivers are issued **(1) one** driver's license in their home state; this license is issue only after they have completed multiple knowledge and skill exams.
- If the driver is a Hazmat (hazardous material) employee, they are required to undergo addition testing before they are issued a license.

### Special training requirements:

- Truck drivers are required to complete and pass specific training every two years; if the requirements aren't kept up to date or the driver fails to pass the exam, they are then restricted from driving.

### Physical requirements:

- Truck drivers are required to pass a physical exam every **(2) two** Failing this test can also restrict their ability to drive.
- The physical well-being of the driver is important because health problems can lead to fatigue and loss of consciousness, putting themselves and other drivers on the road at risk for collision.

### Alcohol and controlled substance regulations:

- No driver under any circumstances is allowed to report to work with a blood alcohol level of 0.02 or higher.
- Drivers are prohibited from carrying any alcohol with them. The exception to this is if it is a part of the cargo they're transporting.
- Alcohol or other substances known to affect driving abilities are prohibited in the **(8) eight** hours before a shift.

## Driver fatigue has trucking accidents on the rise

Truck driver fatigue is real and it's deadly. The number of trucking accidents has risen in recent years due to overworked truck drivers who think they can just go that extra few miles before they stop for the night. This is not the case and has resulted in numerous preventable fatalities.

Because of this, the FMCSA has implemented "hours of service" laws that apply to truck drivers. The new regulations state in part, that: truck drivers can drive a maximum of **(11) eleven** hours in one work day, after which time they are required to a minimum of **(10) ten** hours off downtime. Log books are now required by law to maintain an accurate account of the number of hours drivers spend behind the wheel.

## Cargo, companies, hazardous material carriers

It's not only the drivers who must abide by federal regulations, their cargo and hazardous material must be regulated, safe, and secure as well.

In an effort to secure cargo and minimize the chance of it falling off the truck, these rules were enforced to include updated safety regulations for tying down cargo with proper securing devices. These regulations are part of the training truck drivers receive every two years to maintain their license and they cannot drive unless they are proficient in them.

### Required vehicle markings:

Another important aspect of road safety for truck drivers is a properly marked vehicle.

- Under this federal regulation, the FMCSA requires all trucks to display markings noting their "USDOT" (United States Department of Transportation) number, Hazmat (hazardous waste) markings or any other federally recognized service the truck is providing.

Contact us to schedule a complimentary consultation. There's no obligation. Take the first step and call today: (877) 529-0080

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