

DON'T LOSE IT! – Medical Certification Required for CDL Drivers

Effective January 30, 2015, all drivers with a commercial driver's license (CDL) must have a current medical certification registered with the Missouri Department of Revenue and Missouri Department of Transportation. (*The original deadline was January 30, 2014, and that was extended to January 30, 2015*)

All CDL holders must provide information to their state driver's license agency (SDLA) regarding the type of commercial motor vehicle operation they drive in or expect to drive in with their CDL. Drivers operating in certain types of commerce will be required to submit a current medical examiner's certificate to their SDLA to obtain a "certified" medical status as part of their driving record. CDL holders required to have a "certified" medical status who fail to provide and keep up-to-date their medical examiner's certificate with their SDLA will become "not-certified" and they may lose their CDL.

It is the drivers' responsibility to keep their medical certification up to date. Drivers who do not submit a medical certification prior to it expiring will find that their CDL license will be downgraded to a non CDL license. They'll lose their commercial motor vehicle operation privileges. In order to regain the CDL a driver will have to complete all written and skills tests all over again.

While registering the certificate is the responsibility of the individual driver, employers have a stake in the matter. They stand to lose valuable drivers who fail to comply with the regulation. So it's in the employers' interest to inform their drivers of the requirement. Follow up and make sure all commercial motor vehicle drivers have taken steps to keep their CDL in force.

Each state is handling the matter of medical certificates differently. For specific state-by-state requirements for drivers and information related to how a state is handling the Medical Certification requirements, and to determine whom to contact for additional information, click on the following link: <http://www.aamva.org/aamva/DocumentDisplay.aspx?id={687D99D3-FFB5-4B76-BD6F-F5EF54728BE0}>

Don't Let Your Drivers Get Downgraded!

Many drivers have called and coming in because they have received a downgrade letter in the mail from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). If you failed to return your self-certification letter to tell the DMV the type of driving you engage in or expect to, that is usually the reason for that dreaded letter (see [earlier post](#) for information on how to self-certify). If you did fill out and return the self-certification letter, not keeping a current and valid medical examiner's certificate on file at the DMV is the other reason for a downgrade notice.

If you are or employ a CDL driver who allows medical certification information that the state has on file to expire, it could cause the driver or carrier to receive a serious violation. The driver's CDL could also be downgraded, meaning the driver would no longer hold a commercial driver's license. This downgrade will happen within 60 days of the medical certification expiring. Drivers with a downgraded CDL could result in violations and fines for the carrier, whether the issue is discovered through an audit or at the roadside. [Click here to read more.](#)

As an employer or driver, you have a lot of responsibilities to make sure you or your drivers are safe and productive on the road. A duty of all commercial drivers is to abide by Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) requirement to obtain a medical examiner's certificate. Below is a list of questions and answers on what to do in order to make sure you or your drivers don't get downgraded so you can stay on the road and productive!

What if the driver's medical certificate expires before providing a new one?

If a driver's medical certificate expires before providing a new one, the Department of Revenue will notify the driver that he/she is no longer medically certified to operate a commercial motor vehicle and remove the CDL privileges from the driver's license.

What should a driver do if his/her medical certificate is about to expire?

If a driver's medical certificate is about to expire, the driver must have a new medical examination and obtain a new medical certificate. This medical certificate should be provided to the Department of Revenue.

How can a driver get his/her CDL privileges back?

First, the driver must obtain a medical examiner's certificate and provide to the Department of Revenue. If the variance waiver has expired, the driver must renew with FMCSA. Retesting may be required if the driver let the CDL license remained expired for more than six months.

How can you as an employer ensure that your drivers don't get downgraded?

- Track your drivers' medical expiration dates, as they appear on the driver's motor vehicle report, or MVR – it is what the state has on file that matters!

- Get the driver in for his/her physical 30 days in advance of the expiration of the medical certification information on his/her MVR.
- Have the driver submit a copy of the new medical card to the state licensing agency the same day as the physical is passed.
- Run an MVR 12 or 13 days after the exam or use the Missouri License Monitor Program through First InfoSource at www.FirstInfoSource.com for automatic updates.