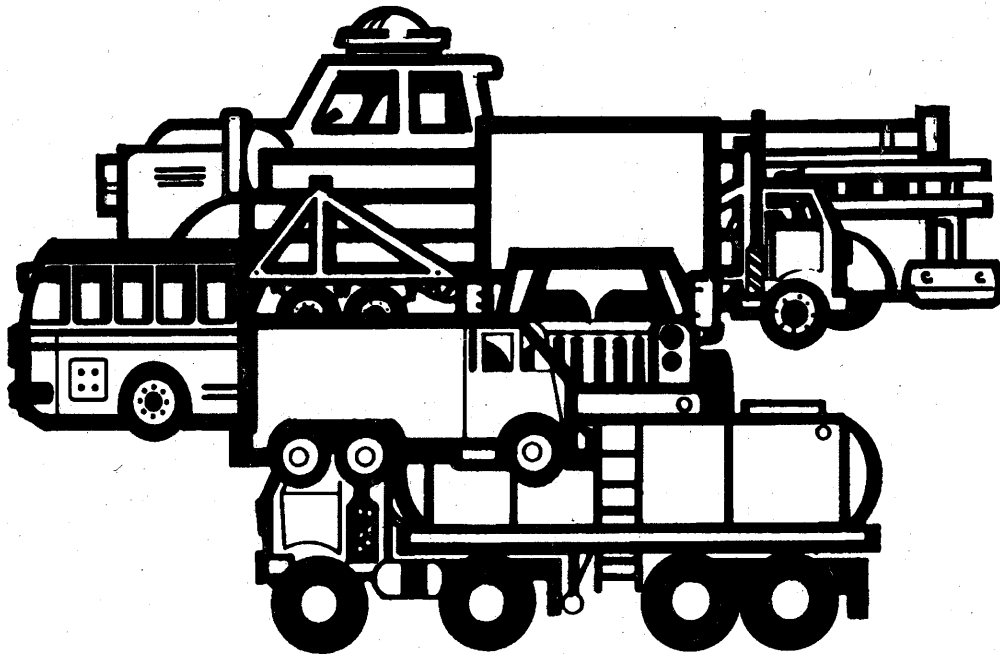


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CALIFORNIA COMMERCIAL DRIVER HANDBOOK



1999

CALIFORNIA DRIVER LICENSE CLASSES—Valid As Of January 1, 1999

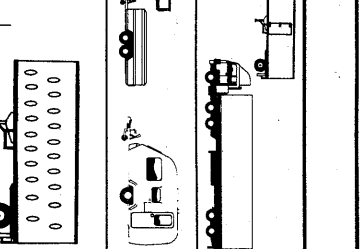
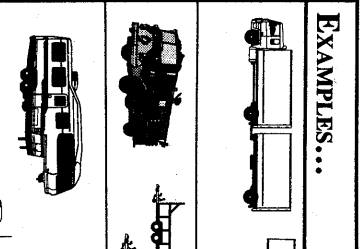
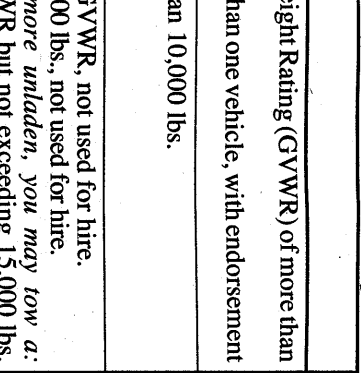
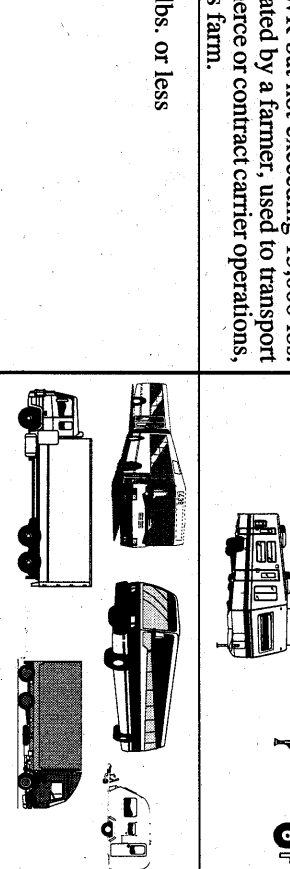
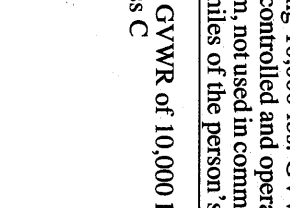
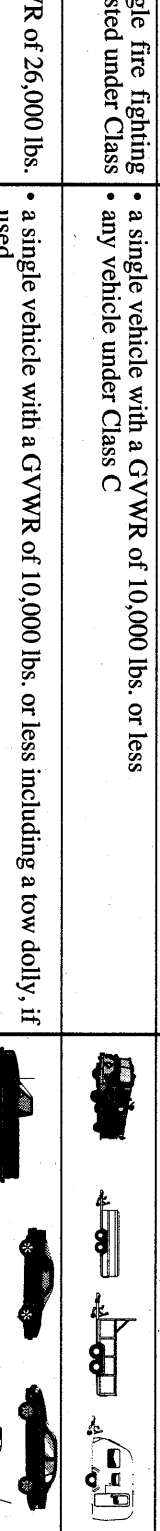
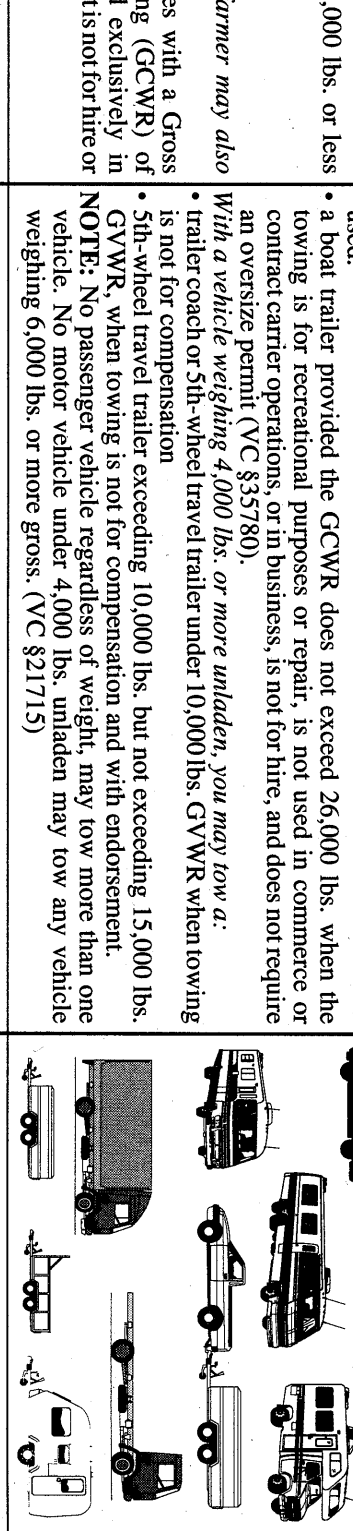

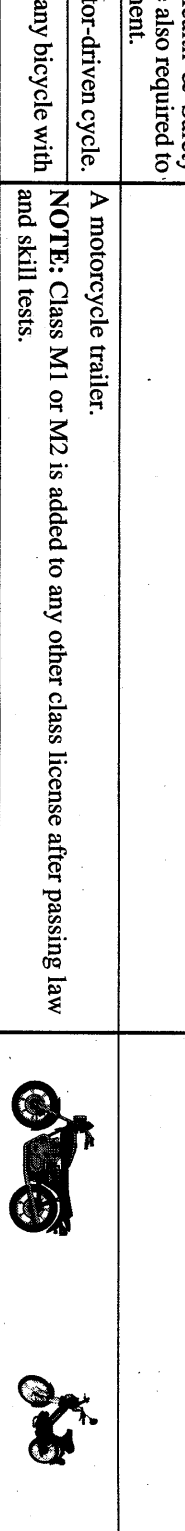
LICENSE CLASS	YOU MAY DRIVE...	AND YOU MAY TOW...	EXAMPLES...
A	Any legal combination of vehicles, including vehicles under Class B and Class C.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any single vehicle with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of more than 10,000 lbs. • any trailer bus, with endorsement or more than one vehicle, with endorsement • any vehicles under Class B and C • a single vehicle with a GVWR of more than 10,000 lbs. • any vehicle under Class C 	
A Fire Fighter	Only Class A and Class B defined combination fire fighting vehicles and all vehicles listed under Class C. You may not drive a bus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • travel trailers weighing over 10,000 lbs. GVWR, not used for hire. • 5th-wheel travel trailers weighing over 15,000 lbs., not used for hire. • <i>With a vehicle weighing 4,000 lbs. or more unladen, you may tow a:</i> livestock trailer exceeding 10,000 lbs. GVWR but not exceeding 15,000 lbs. GVWR if the vehicle is controlled and operated by a farmer, used to transport livestock to or from a farm, not used in commerce or contract carrier operations, and is used within 150 miles of the person's farm. 	
A Non-commercial	Any vehicles under Class C.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a single vehicle with a GVWR of 10,000 lbs. or less • any vehicle under Class C 	
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a single vehicle with a GVWR of more than 26,000 lbs. • a 3-axle vehicle weighing over 6,001 lbs. gross • a bus (except a trailer bus), with endorsement • any farm labor vehicle, with endorsement • all vehicles under Class C 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a single vehicle with a GVWR of 10,000 lbs. or less • any vehicle under Class C 	
B Fire Fighter	Only a Class B defined single fire fighting vehicle and all the vehicles listed under Class C. You may not drive a bus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a single vehicle with a GVWR of 10,000 lbs. or less • any vehicle under Class C 	
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a 2-axle vehicle with a GVWR of 26,000 lbs. or less • a 3-axle vehicle weighing 6,000 lbs. or less gross • a housecar <p><i>A farmer or employee of a farmer may also drive:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any combination of vehicles with a Gross Combination Weight Rating (GCWR) of 26,000 lbs. or less if used exclusively in agricultural operations and it is not for hire or compensation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a single vehicle with a GVWR of 10,000 lbs. or less including a tow dolly, if used. • a boat trailer provided the GCWR does not exceed 26,000 lbs. when the towing is for recreational purposes or repair, is not used in commerce or contract carrier operations, or in business, is not for hire, and does not require an oversize permit (VC §35780). • <i>With a vehicle weighing 4,000 lbs. or more unladen, you may tow a:</i> trailer coach or 5th-wheel travel trailer under 10,000 lbs. GVWR when towing is not for compensation • 5th-wheel travel trailer exceeding 10,000 lbs. but not exceeding 15,000 lbs. GVWR, when towing is not for compensation and with endorsement. <p>NOTE: No passenger vehicle regardless of weight may tow more than one vehicle. No motor vehicle under 4,000 lbs. unladen may tow any vehicle weighing 6,000 lbs. or more gross. (VC §21715)</p>	
C Commercial	Any Class C vehicle carrying hazardous materials which requires placards. The hazardous materials (HAZMAT) endorsement must be on the license. Drivers who transport hazardous wastes, as defined by Health & Safety Code §25115 and §25117, are also required to have the HAZMAT endorsement.	Same as Class C above.	
M1	Two-wheel motorcycle or motor-driven cycle.	A motorcycle trailer.	
M2	Motorized bicycle, moped, or any bicycle with an attached motor.	<p>NOTE: Class M1 or M2 is added to any other class license after passing law and skill tests.</p>	

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Section 1: Introduction

This section is for all commercial drivers

The California Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Program was enacted in the interest of improving traffic safety on our roadways. As a result, California has developed licensing and testing requirements for drivers of commercial vehicles which equals or exceeds federal standards.

It takes special skills and a professional attitude to safely operate large trucks and buses. Only professional drivers will receive and keep a Commercial Driver License (CDL). A CDL is proof of your professional skills and aptitude.

This Section Covers

- Who Needs a CDL
- CDL Exceptions
- How to Get a CDL
- Additional Requirements
- State Laws and Rules
- Other Rules

To operate commercial vehicles, California residents must apply for a CDL. Residency is established by any of the following: registering to vote here, paying resident tuition at a public institution of higher education, filing for a California homeowner's property tax exemption, obtaining a license (such as a fishing license), or any other privilege or benefit not ordinarily extended to nonresidents. You need a CDL if you operate a vehicle or combination of vehicles which requires a Class A or Class B license or Class C license with endorsements. A commercial motor vehicle is a motor vehicle or combination of vehicles designed or used for the transportation of persons or property for compensation and:

1.1 Who needs a CDL?

- Has a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 26,001 pounds or more.
- Tows any vehicle with a GVWR of 10,001 pounds or more.
- Tows more than one vehicle or a trailer bus.
- Has three or more axles (excludes three axle vehicles weighing 6,000 pounds or less gross).
- Transports hazardous materials requiring placarding or marking.*
- Transports hazardous wastes as defined by Health and Safety Code §§25115 and 25117.* This requirement does not apply to:
 - Any person operating an implement of husbandry who is not required to have a driver license.
 - Any person exempted under Health and Safety Code §25163.
 - Any person operating a vehicle in an emergency situation at the direction of a peace officer.
- Is any vehicle (bus, farm labor vehicle, general public para-transit vehicle, etc.) designed, used, or maintained to carry more than 10 passengers including the driver, for hire or profit, or is used by any nonprofit organization or group.

* Drivers subject to the commercial driver sanctions.

A special endorsement is also required to drive the following types of vehicles. (Refer to the section on Testing on page 5.) This endorsement will show as a single letter on the driver license.

- Tank vehicles (including a cement truck)—N.
- Passenger transport vehicles—P.
- Double trailer combination—T.
- Placarded or marked vehicles transporting hazardous materials or wastes—H.
- Tank vehicles transporting hazardous materials or wastes—X.

1.2 CDL Exceptions

Exceptions to the CDL requirements are:

- Drivers who tow a fifth-wheel travel trailer over 15,000 pounds GVWR or a trailer coach over 10,000 pounds GVWR, when the towing is not for compensation. Drivers must have a noncommercial Class A license.
- Drivers of only fire fighting vehicles used to travel to and from the scene of an emergency or to transport equipment used in the control of an emergency. Drivers need either a noncommercial Class A or B license with a fire fighter restriction. You cannot transport passengers with the restricted license. All fire fighters, whether they have a CDL or a noncommercial Class A or B driver license, are subject to commercial driver sanctions.
- Noncivilian military personnel operating military vehicles.
- Current existing farm vehicle exemptions.

Special certificates

Special certificates may be required in addition to a CDL, depending on the type of vehicle or load you carry.

Applications for the following certificates can be made at any DMV office:

Ambulance Driver Certificate is required for driving an ambulance used commercially in emergency service (Vehicle Code [VC] §2512). Persons who have an ambulance driver certificate must submit a copy of the medical report to DMV every two years. (See page 4.)

Hazardous Agricultural Materials (HAM)* Training Program exempts persons who transport hazardous waste or transport loads which require placards from CDL requirements if the:

- Person is 21 years of age.
- Person is employed in an agricultural operation.
- Load is not being transported for compensation.
- Vehicle is owned or leased by a farmer.
- Person has completed a HAM program approved by the California Highway Patrol (CHP).
- Person operates a vehicle which is an implement of husbandry **OR** requires a Class C license and does not exceed 50 miles from one point to another.

Although the person who qualifies for a HAM is not required to have a CDL, commercial motor vehicle penalties and sanctions will apply.

Verification of Transit Training Document (VTT) requires drivers of transit bus vehicles to comply with specified training requirements. Transit bus vehicles are used to provide the public with regularly scheduled transportation for which a fare is charged.

* Drivers subject to the commercial driver sanctions.

(Does not include general public paratransit vehicle). Drivers who have a *school bus certificate* or *school pupil activity bus certificate* do not need to get a VTT.

Applications for the following certificates may be made at any CHP office:

General Public ParaTransit Vehicle Certificate (GPPV)* is required for any person who drives:

- a vehicle which carries not more than 24 persons including the driver and provides local transportation to the general public (e.g., Dial-A-Ride) (VC §12523.5).
- pupils at or below the 12th grade level to or from a public or private school or school activity.

School Bus Driver Certificate* is required of any person who is a bus driver for any school district or any other party carrying public or private pupils (VC §§12517, 12522, 34500, 34501.5).

School Pupil Activity Bus Certificate (SPAB)* is required of any person who is a bus driver for any school district or any other party carrying public or private pupils for school related activities (VC §12517).

Farm Labor Vehicle Certificate* is required to drive farm labor trucks and buses (VC §12519).

Youth Bus Certificate* is required to operate any bus other than a school bus which carries not more than 16 children and the driver to or from a school, to an organized non-school related activity, or to and from home (after receiving additional CHP training) (VC §§680, 12523).

Tow Truck Driver Clearance* is required for all emergency road service organizations and the drivers in those road service organizations that provide freeway service patrol operations pursuant to an agreement or who contract with a specified public transportation planning entity (traffic commission).

Vehicle for Developmentally Disabled Persons (VDDP)* is required of a driver to operate a vehicle for a business or nonprofit organization or agency whose primary job is to transport for hire persons with developmental disabilities as defined in Welfare and Institutions Code §4512(A).

To get a CDL, you must apply at any DMV field office.

- If you are under age 18, you cannot drive for hire.
- You may drive for hire within California if you are 18 years of age or older and do not engage in interstate commerce activities.
- You must be at least 21 years old to drive a commercial vehicle across state lines (interstate commerce).
- You must be at least 21 years old to transport hazardous materials or wastes (intrastate or interstate commerce).

You will need to bring the following items to any DMV field office:

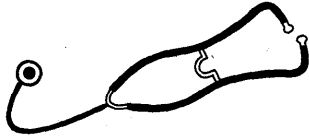
- A completed Application for a Driver License (DL 44) form. Signing this form means you have agreed to this statement, "I agree to submit to a chemical test of my blood, breath, or urine for the purpose of determining the alcohol or drug content of my blood when testing is required by a peace officer acting in accordance with Sections 13388 or 23612 VC." If you refuse to sign this statement, DMV will not issue or renew your driver license.

* Drivers subject to the commercial driver sanctions.

1.3 How to get a CDL

Age requirements

Bring these items



- A medical form (or copy) completed by a U.S. licensed doctor of medicine (M.D.), osteopathy (D.O.), licensed physician assistant (P.A.), a nurse practitioner (N.P.), advance practice nurse, or chiropractor must be given to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) with your application for a driver license or instruction permit. The medical forms must be on a form approved by the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration, DMV, or on the DMV Report of Medical Examination (DL 51) form. A medical report dated within the last 2 years is required for the original CDL application and then every two years after that. Mail the interim medical to:

Department of Motor Vehicles
Special Certificates Unit
P.O. Box 942890 M/S G204
Sacramento, CA 94290-0001

If you are required to have a CDL as part of your job, your employer shall pay the cost of the examination unless your examination was taken before you applied for the job (Labor Code §231).

NOTE: It is not necessary to give a copy of your medical report to the CHP.

- The physician will also complete and sign a Medical Certificate Card (DL 51A) for you to carry when you are driving commercially. You can be given a citation for driving out-of-class if you drive a commercial vehicle after your medical certificate expires or without a valid medical certificate in your possession.
- An acceptable birth date/legal presence document such as a U.S. birth certificate for an original CDL. Only a document produced by an issuing authority, which has an impressed seal or an original stamped impression is an acceptable birth date/legal presence document. It will be returned to you.
- A document to verify your social security number (SSN) for an original CDL. The documents must contain your name and SSN. Any of the following are acceptable:
 - Social Security Card
 - Military ID card: Active-DD form 2, Retired-DD form 2, Reserve-DD form 2, Dependent-DD form 1173, original copy of a Military separation document form DD214 (Military ID cards may have a letter(s) following the number indicating a specific branch of service.)
 - Medicare Card
- A Certificate of Driving Skill (DL 170) if your employer is authorized by DMV to issue such certificates. Both you and your employer sign this form.
- Pay the applicable fee which is good for 12 months. (See the chart on the next page.) This fee pays for both the instruction permit and the driver license, if you qualify for both within that time period. The fee must be paid when you apply and will not be returned.

Fees

If class of license applied for is...	and the application type is...	the fee is...
Commercial Class A or B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an original (with or without a driving test), • to remove a restriction(s) requiring a driving test, or • to add an endorsement requiring a driving test 	\$64
	a driving retest fee	\$30
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a renewal, • a duplicate, or • an upgrade or endorsement not requiring a driving test 	\$34
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a name change or • to remove a restriction that does not require a driving test 	\$15
Fire fighters restricted noncommercial Class A or B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an original, • a renewal, • a duplicate, or • an endorsement (except PV) requiring a driving test 	\$34
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a name change or • to remove restriction(s) 	\$15
Commercial Class C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an original (with or without a driving test), • a renewal, • a duplicate, or • an upgrade or endorsement not requiring a driving test 	\$34
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to remove an air brake restriction, or • to upgrade a license which requires a driving test (includes a Certificate of Driving Skill (DL 170) or a CHP driving test) 	\$64
	a driving retest fee	\$30
	name change	\$15

NOTE: A driving test is required:

Testing

- to remove a restriction from your license if the restriction was placed on the license because of the type of commercial vehicle you used to obtain your current driver license or
- renew a CDL expired for more than one year.

You will need to take vision, knowledge (law), and performance (pre-trip and driving, if required) tests to get your CDL and/or endorsements. A law and vision test are required when you apply for an original, renewal, or upgrade to a different class of license. Three tries total for pre-trip, skills, and road test is allowed on one application. A driving test may be required for a three-time failure on any test. The CDL knowledge tests required are:

- General Knowledge Tests, taken by Class A and B applicants.
- Air Brakes Test, taken by all applicants who operate vehicles with air brakes.
- Combination Vehicles Test, if you drive combination vehicles.
- Passenger Transport Test, taken by all applicants who transport passengers.
- Hazardous Materials Test, if you transport hazardous materials or wastes requiring placards or markings.
- Tank Vehicle Test, if you transport liquids in bulk (including cement mixers).
- Doubles/Triples Test, if you pull double or triple trailers. (Triple trailers are illegal in California.)

After passing the required knowledge test(s), you will take the CDL performance tests which include a pre-trip inspection/knowledge test, basic control skills tests, and the driving test. Under certain specified conditions, the driving test requirements may be waived by DMV or CHP.

For the **pre-trip inspection**, you demonstrate your knowledge of how the specific features and equipment on the test vehicle should be checked. This handbook contains inspection guides on pages 143 and 144 for handy reference. **You may use only one of these guides when taking your pre-trip test.** The memory aid cannot include instructions on how to perform the pre-trip inspection. If you do not pass the pre-trip inspection test, the other tests will be cancelled. There is no additional fee for repeat pre-trip tests until the fourth attempt. See Section 10 for specific information regarding pre trips.

For the **skills tests**, you perform various skills that test your control and ability to maneuver the vehicle. The tests consist of various exercises marked by traffic cones or markers. The examiner will explain how each exercise is to be done and you will be scored on your ability to properly perform each exercise. Failure of any skill test will end the test and a retest fee is due for each retest. See Section 11 for specific information regarding skill tests.

For the **driving test**, you drive over a route specified by DMV and you must use the same (or similar) vehicle you will be operating. The test (which will take about 90 minutes to complete) will include, wherever possible, left and right turns, intersections, railroad crossings, curves, up and down grades, rural or semi-rural roads, city multi-lane streets, and freeway driving. If you fail the driving test, a retest fee is charged for each additional driving test. See Section 12 for specific information regarding driving tests.

CDL restrictions

Your CDL may be restricted to the type of vehicle you use for the driving test. For example, if your test vehicle does not have air brakes you will be restricted to driving vehicles without air brakes. If your passenger transport vehicle carries 15 persons or less including the driver, you will be restricted to driving a small size bus.

You may take the law test at any DMV office. However, some of the smaller DMV offices may not be open all day. Please call for an appointment.

CDL offices

The driving test may only be taken at one of the offices listed on the next page. You must make an appointment for the driving test.

Arleta (818) 897-2446	Eureka (707) 445-6483	Pittsburg (925) 432-4748	Seaside (831) 649-2935
Auburn (916) 885-9417	Fremont (510) 797-0515	Placerville (530) 622-2820	Spring Valley (619) 461-9360
Bakersfield (805) 395-2825	Fresno (209) 445-5469	Redding (530) 225-2100	Stockton (209) 948-7687
Bishop (760) 872-4651	Fullerton (714) 680-7966	Salinas (831) 443-3141	Torrance (310) 637-7266
Capitola (831) 476-7480	Hemet (909) 652-2711	San Bernardino Driving Test Center (909) 884-1455	Ukiah (707) 463-4726
Compton (310) 637-7266	Indio (760) 342-2288		Vallejo (707) 649-0130
Crescent City (707) 464-2721	Lancaster (805) 949-2424	San Diego/Clairemont (619) 565-6691	Ventura (805) 654-4591
Culver City (310) 390-4026	Modesto (209) 576-6305	San Luis Obispo (805) 543-0590	Visalia (209) 625-9780
Daly City (650) 755-0964	Montebello (323) 724-0930	Santa Barbara (805) 963-9741	West Sacramento Driving Test Center (916) 375-0080
El Centro (760) 352-1684	Mountain View (650) 968-0610	Santa Maria (805) 928-2568	Yuba City (530) 822-4521
El Cerrito (510) 235-9171	Newhall (805) 259-9010	Santa Rosa (707) 542-2424	
Escondido (760) 741-2811	Oakland-Coliseum (510) 568-0691	Santa Teresa (408) 224-4511	

All commercial vehicle drivers must meet the following requirements:

- Surrender all out-of-state driver licenses (current or expired), if any.
- Certify that you do not have a driver license from more than one state or country.
- Notify your home state Department of Motor Vehicles of any conviction which occurred in other states within 30 days of the conviction.
- Notify your employer of any conviction within 30 days of the conviction using form Report of Traffic Conviction (DL 535).
- Notify your employer of any revocation, suspension, cancellation, or disqualification before the end of the business day following the action.
- If you are applying for a job as a driver, then you must also give your employer a 10-year employment history of commercial driving.

DMV will withhold, suspend, or deny all classes of driver licenses when the driver has not complied with a judgment or order for family support payments. DMV will also prohibit operation of a commercial vehicle based on the following convictions. (Points may be added to your driving record.)

1.4 Additional Requirements

Sanctions/ Disqualifications

A **60-day** sanction for a second conviction in three years of:

- Improper or erratic lane change.
- Following too closely.
- Reckless driving.
- A violation connected with a fatal accident relating to motor vehicle traffic control.
- Evading a peace officer.
- Speeding 15 miles per hour, or more, over the posted speed limit in a commercial vehicle.

A **120-day** sanction for a third conviction in three years for the same offenses listed above.

A **one-year sanction** for a first conviction of operating a commercial vehicle:

- Under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance.
- Leaving the scene of an accident in which you are involved.
- In commission of a felony while using a commercial vehicle (VC §15304).
- Manslaughter.

A **three-year sanction** for a first conviction of transporting a hazardous material in a commercial vehicle:

- Under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance.
- Leaving the scene of an accident in which you are involved.
- In commission of a felony while using a commercial vehicle (VC §15304).

A **lifetime sanction**, if convicted of more than one violation of operating a commercial vehicle (including transporting hazardous materials):

- Under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance.
- Leaving the scene of an accident in which you are involved.
- In commission of more than one felony arising from separate arrests or citations.
- Any combination of the above offenses.
- Using a commercial vehicle in commission of a felony involving manufacturing, distributing, or dispensing a controlled substance or possession with intent to manufacture, distribute, or dispense a controlled substance.

Professional drivers **do not** drive commercial vehicles (or any other vehicle) after drinking alcohol. If any level of alcohol is detected, law enforcement personnel can place a commercial vehicle out-of-service for 24 hours.

Violation point counts

The department keeps a public record of all your traffic convictions and accidents for 36 months or longer, depending on the type of conviction. A traffic conviction for driving unsafely counts as one point. Any *at fault* accident is normally counted as one point.

Two points are charged against you if you are convicted of reckless driving, of driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, or of hit-and-run driving.

A violation received in a commercial vehicle carries one and one-half times the point count normally assessed. A Class A or Class B driver who does not have a special certificate may be allowed two additional points before being considered a negligent operator.

If you get too many points, you will lose your privilege to drive. Remember that the more traffic convictions you have, the more likely you are to have an accident.

You may be considered a **negligent operator** of a commercial motor vehicle when your driving record shows the following point counts:

- 6 points in 12 months
- 8 points in 24 months
- 10 points in 36 months

All commercial drivers must know the state laws limiting the size and weight of vehicles and loads. All commercial vehicles must stop at locations posted for CHP testing and inspection (VC §§2802 – 2805, 2813).

Any officer, who has reason to believe that a commercial vehicle is not safely loaded or that the height, width, length, or weight of a vehicle and load is unlawful, is authorized to require the driver to stop and submit to an inspection, measurement, or weighing of the load. The officer may have the driver stop in a suitable area and reload or remove any part of the load.

Any person driving a commercial vehicle over a highway or bridge illegally is liable for all damage caused to the highway or bridge. When the driver is not the owner of the vehicle but is operating it with the permission of the owner, the owner and driver may both have to pay for the damage.

The maximum length for a **single vehicle** is 40 feet. This length may be exceeded by parts complying with fender and mudguard provisions of the California Vehicle Code.

NOTE: Some vehicles are conditionally exempted from the 40 foot maximum length (i.e., semitrailers, buses).

The front bumper of a vehicle must not extend more than two feet ahead of fenders, cab, or radiator, whichever is foremost.

On a bus, a front and/or rear safety bumper may extend an additional foot, and a wheel chair lifter may extend up to 18 inches ahead of the bus.

In a **combination of vehicles**, auxiliary parts or equipment which does not provide space for carrying a load or is not used to support or carry the vehicle may exceed the single vehicle length limit, but the combination may not exceed the length limit for combinations.

An articulated bus or trolley coach cannot exceed a length of 60 feet.

A semitrailer being towed by a motor truck or truck tractor may exceed 40 feet when certain conditions are met (VC §35400b[4]).

A combination of a truck tractor and a trailer coupled together shall not exceed a total length of 65 feet.

A combination of vehicles consisting of a truck tractor, a semitrailer, and a trailer cannot be longer than 75 feet, providing the length of either trailer does not exceed 28 feet 6 inches.

If posted, cities and counties may prohibit a combination of vehicles in excess of 60 feet in length on highways they control.

Other exceptions can be found in VC §35401.5.

1.5 State Laws and Rules

Length of vehicle and loads—single vehicle

Length of vehicle and loads—combination vehicle