

NOTICE OF PROPOSED GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

CDL Licensing

Pursuant to Wis. Stat. s. 227.112, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation is hereby seeking comment on CDL Licensing s.343 a proposed guidance document.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Comments may be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for 21 days by:

1. Department's website:

<https://appengine.egov.com/apps/wi/dot/guidance-docs?guidDocId=DMV24>

2. Mailing written comments to:

Division of Motor Vehicles
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
4822 Madison Yards Way
PO Box 7336
Madison, WI 53707-7336

WEBSITE LOCATION OF FINAL GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

The final version of this guidance document will be posted at wisconsindot.gov to allow for ongoing comment.

AGENCY CONTACT

DOTDMVGuidanceDocs@DOT.WI.GOV



State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation

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Commercial Driver License (CDL) - Overview

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The [interactive driver licensing guide](#) is a helpful tool for those looking for information on commercial driving requirements. The guide will provide you with a checklist of requirements, and allow you to pre-fill any required application(s) before visiting a DMV Customer Service Center. Depending on your eligibility, you may also be able to use the guide to electronically submit your application(s) and schedule an appointment with the DMV for expedited service.

Commercial driver licenses (CDL) are required to operate vehicles that:

- Weigh over 26,000 pounds, determined by the highest of the following weights:

- manufacturer's gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR)
- manufacturer's gross combination weight rating (GCWR) when the towed unit has a GVWR, registered weight or actual gross weight over 10,000 pounds
- actual weight
- registered weight
- Carry [hazardous materials that require placarding](#) under federal law.
- Are designed or used to carry 16 or more persons including the driver (buses and some school buses).

There are [federal](#) and state regulations governing the operation of commercial motor vehicles.

Wisconsin CDL law requires:

- A classified licensing system.
- Issuance of only one license to each driver.
- [Proof of Citizenship or Legal Status in the U.S.](#) Effective March 1, 2015 persons with a Commercial Driver License (CDL) will be required to provide proof of legal status upon original (first time) issuance, renewal, transferring an out of state license or when adding or removing a class, endorsement or restriction.
- Testing of commercial drivers, who must pass a [knowledge test](#) and [driving skills](#) test in the type of vehicle they drive.
 - [School bus](#) drivers are required to pass a knowledge test and abbreviated driving skills test at each renewal in addition to providing proof of physical fitness in the form of a completed MV3030B or valid Federal Medical Certificate. Drivers are also required to complete the School Bus Endorsement Application [MV3740](#).
 - [Hazardous materials](#) (Hazmat) drivers who are renewing, transferring or applying for the "H" endorsement for the first time require a background check, including [fingerprinting](#). Drivers are also required to complete the Hazardous Materials Endorsement Application [MV3735](#), pass the "H" knowledge test and provide [proof of Citizenship or Legal Status in the U.S.](#) at the time of testing.
- Enforcement of the law through the Commercial Driver License Information System (CDLIS), a computer network of all states.
- Enforcement of [CDL disqualifications](#) for alcohol and serious traffic violations such as a BAC of .04 in a commercial motor vehicle, and speeding in excess (15 mph or more) in a commercial motor vehicle.

Disqualification

A disqualification is the withdrawal of a person's privilege to operate a commercial motor vehicle.

Operation of farm machinery

A driver license is not required to move non-registered farm machinery on a highway between fields or between a farm and a field. However, a [Farm Service CDL](#) is available for a person who is employed by a farm service industry for 180 days or less per calendar year.

License classes

Wisconsin has a classified licensing system. The classes are:

Class A

For operation of a commercial motor vehicle. Any combination of vehicles with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR), actual weight, or registered weight over 26,000 pounds provided the

GVWR, actual weight, or registered weight of the towed vehicle(s) is more than 10,000 pounds.

Class B

For operation of a commercial motor vehicle. Any single vehicle with a GVWR, actual weight, or registered weight over 26,000 pounds, or such vehicle towing a vehicle with a GVWR, actual weight, or registered weight of 10,000 pounds or less.

Class C

For operation of a commercial motor vehicle. Any single vehicle with a GVWR, actual weight, or registered weight of 26,000 pounds or less, (or such vehicle towing a vehicle less than 10,000 pounds) transporting hazardous materials requiring placarding or designed to carry 16 or more persons including the driver.

Class D

For operation of automobiles; light trucks and mopeds.

Class M

For operation of motorcycles.

Who is exempt from CDL licensing in Wisconsin?

Federal law allows states the option to waive certain kinds of drivers from the requirement to obtain a CDL. In Wisconsin, the following drivers are not required to hold a CDL:

- **Fire fighters** and **rescue squad members** are not required to hold a CDL to drive properly equipped emergency or fire fighting vehicles. However, if you hold a Wisconsin driver license but operate a fire fighting vehicle in another state, you may be required to obtain a CDL.
- **Recreational vehicle operators** (owned or leased motor home, fifth wheel mobile home or touring mobile home, provided it isn't longer than 45 feet) not engaged in commercial activity are not required to hold a CDL.
- **A farmer**, the **farmer's family members**, and/or the **farmer's employees** are not required to hold a CDL to drive a commercial motor vehicle owned or leased by the farmer, provided the vehicle is not used in "for hire" carriage, is transporting farm supplies, produce or machinery to or from the farm and is within 150 miles of a farm in Wisconsin, Minnesota or Iowa. The farm supplies that a farmer may transport without obtaining a CDL may include hazardous materials. However, a farmer driving a commercial motor vehicle with double or triple trailers or designed to carry or actually carrying 16 or more passengers must have a CDL with proper endorsements.
- **Back-up** (substitute or replacement) **snowplow drivers** (includes snow or ice removal by plowing, salting or sanding) for local units of government (defined as a county, city, village, town, school district, county utility district, sanitary district, metropolitan sewage district, or other public body created by or pursuant to state law) are not required to hold a CDL if they meet all of the following:
 - Are an employee of a local unit of government with a population of 3,000 or fewer.
 - Hold a valid Class D license.
 - Are operating within the boundaries of the local unit of government.
 - Is one of the following:
 - Substituting for or replacing, a regular employee who ordinarily operates the vehicle.
 - An additional employee because a snow emergency exists as determined by the local unit of government.

Driver Eligibility Unit

Email [Wisconsin DMV email service](#)

Phone (608) 264-7447

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