



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

10.09 Employee License and Certification Fees

Revised: July 10, 2020

1. GENERAL

Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) provides payment for certain job-related licenses and certifications.

2. ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 The license or certification must be a necessary or a preferred qualification on the requesting employee's Position Description (PD).
- 2.2 The requesting employee must be a budgeted employee of TFS as of the due date of the license or certification. No prorating of license or certification fees is made for employees hired after the due date.
- 2.3 The authorized approver is responsible for confirming the requestor's eligibility before approving payment. The authorized approver for licenses is the employee's supervisor and for certifications is the employee's department head.

3. LICENSE

- 3.1 A license is formal permission from the government to engage in a regulated activity. Engaging in the regulated activity without the appropriate license is generally treated as a violation of law and is subject to criminal or civil penalties.

Examples of licenses include:

- Commercial driver's license (CDL)
- Licensed peace officer
- Non-commercial pesticide applicator license

See Section 6 for special requirements related to CDL's

4. CERTIFICATION

- 4.1 A certification is evidence of successful completion of an educational or training program related to specific activities. While certification is not required by law for all activities, individuals holding a certification are recognized as having demonstrated a certain level of expertise in the activity.

Examples of certifications include those offered by these organizations:

- Society of American Foresters (Certified Forester)
- International Society of Arboriculture (Certified Arborist)
- International Association of Administrative Professionals (Certified Administrative Professional)
- Texas Commission on Fire Protection
- State Firefighters' and Fire Marshalls' Association of Texas
- National Wildfire Coordinating Group
- Texas Forestry Association (Texas Accredited Forester)
- The Wildlife Society (Certified Wildlife Biologist)

5. PAYMENT PROCESS

- 5.1 Each employee is responsible for initiating all required payments to obtain or maintain an eligible license or certification.
- 5.2 An employee may pay the fees and expenses using personal funds and then seek reimbursement or may request direct payment by the agency to the appropriate organization. However, when requesting direct payment, the employee must allow sufficient processing time to avoid any late charges.
- 5.3 TFS will pay for allowable costs associated with all eligible licenses and certifications.

Allowable Costs	Unallowable Costs
Test preparation courses/materials	Discretionary membership fees
Initial exam fees at member rate	Initial exam fee differential between member rate and nonmember rate
Additional exam fees for computer-based testing	Re-take exam fees
Recertification or renewal fees at member rate	Recertification or renewal fee differential between member rate and nonmember rate
License renewal fees	Late payment penalty fees
Required police academy costs, including tuition, supplies, fingerprinting, driver record, psychological and physical exams, drug screening, and academy uniforms. (Only for employees TFS sends to police academy)	

See Section 7 for special provisions related to CDL reimbursement and documentation.

- 5.4 The requesting employee must provide appropriate documentation to the departmental payment document preparer for processing of payment for eligible certification fees and expenses. The authorized approver will review the documentation to confirm eligibility before approving payment.
- 5.5 Except for police academy costs, employees may not use a procurement card for allowable costs since eligibility must be verified prior to making payment.

6. COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE (CDL) REQUIREMENTS

- 6.1 Newly hired employees whose position description requires a CDL will be required to complete and pass a Class A CDL within 180 days of hire. Failure to attempt testing will be considered a failure. The mid-level manager (Regional Forester, Assistant Chief Regional Fire Coordinator, etc.) will be provided test results by the first line supervisor of the employee after each testing attempt. If the employee has not obtained a Class A CDL within 180 days of hire, the first line supervisor will be required to meet with the employee and their mentor/trainer (if applicable) to develop a plan of action to correct deficiencies that have contributed to the employee failing the written, pre-trip or driving portion of the CDL test. This plan of action must be in written form and must be provided to the mid-level manager for approval.
- 6.2 Upon approval of the plan of action and barring any unrelated disciplinary actions, the employee will be granted an additional 90 days to practice, test and obtain a Class A CDL. Supervisors should support the employee in making this a priority to accomplish. The mid-level manager will be provided test results by the first line supervisor after each testing attempt. After the 90 day period (270 days post hire), if the employee has not received a Class A CDL, the employee's first line supervisor and mid-level supervisor must meet with the employee and revise the plan of action. This plan of action must be in written form and must be provided to the applicable Department Head for approval.
- 6.3 Upon approval of the plan of action by the Department Head and barring any unrelated disciplinary actions, the employee will be granted a final 90 days to practice, test and obtain a Class A CDL. The mid-level manager and applicable Department Head will be provided test results by the first line supervisor after each testing attempt. If the employee has not obtained a Class A CDL within this time period (360 days post hire), the employee's chain of command up to the associate director, the Environmental Health and Safety Officer and the AgriLife Human Resource Manager will be notified by e-mail. The employee may be placed in another job not requiring the Class A CDL or will be terminated.

7. CDL REIMBURSEMENT AND DOCUMENTATION

- 7.1 The fee for a CDL (new or renewal) is \$97 and it is valid for eight years. TFS will reimburse the initial \$25 commercial learner's permit (CLP) fee and the difference between the cost of a regular driver's license (\$33) and a CDL. [\$97 - \$33 = \$64]

7.2 If a driver already has valid Texas driver's license (class A, B or C) and converts to a CDL, they will be given a \$4 credit for each full year remaining on the current license. If this occurs, include the following statement on the receipt when processing reimbursement request:

“The cost of a new CDL is \$97. Employee received \$___ credit from DPS for the unused years on regular driver license. As a result, employee was required to pay DPS \$___. Employee requests reimbursement for difference between cost of regular driver license and CDL.”

7.3 Subsequent fees caused by failure to pass the knowledge/road tests are the responsibility of the employee.

7.4 If an employee is required to have a physical exam to obtain or renew their CDL, TFS will reimburse the employee for their insurance co-pay.

7.5 If an employee has a CDL and TFS requires the employee to obtain an additional endorsement or a higher CDL class, TFS will reimburse for the additional testing fee. If the employee fails to pass the test, TFS will not reimburse for the testing fee.

7.6 An employee must submit a copy of the license and receipt to the voucher preparer to request reimbursement. If an employee does not submit a reimbursement voucher within 90 days, the reimbursement will be treated as taxable income to the employee. The reimbursement will be processed through the payroll system and appropriate taxes will be withheld.

7.7 Only budgeted employees whose position requires them to have a CDL are eligible for reimbursement.

8. EXCEPTIONS

8.1 Exceptions to any other requirement or limitation contained in these procedures must be requested through Employee Development and approved by the Director.

CONTACT: [Employee Development Department Head](#), 979-458-6694