

## *Commercial Driver License Information and Guidelines*

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Some Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) employees are required as part of their job to drive vehicles that require a commercial driver license (CDL). The following CDL guidelines are provided:

### **I. CDL Classes**

There are three basic classes of CDL:

1. Class A – five year CDL for driving any combination of vehicles with a gross combination weight rating of 26,001 pounds or more, provided the gross vehicle weight rating of the vehicle or vehicles towed exceeds 10,000 pounds. *[Example: tractor trailer rig]* The following endorsements may be added to a Class A CDL:

T – double/triple trailer

P – passenger bus

N – tank vehicle

H – hazardous material (requires extra fee for criminal background check)

X – combination of N and H

S – school bus

2. Class B – five year CDL for driving a single vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating of 26,001 pounds or more, any one of those vehicles towing a vehicle that does not exceed 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight, and any vehicle designed to transport 24 passengers or more, including the driver. A Class B license will be restricted to operating buses under 26,001 pounds GVWR if the skill test is taken in a bus with a GVWR of less than 26,001 pounds. *[Examples: dump truck, passenger bus, school bus, water tanker truck]*
3. Class C – five year CDL for driving any single vehicle or combination of vehicles that is not a Class A or Class B if the vehicle is designed to transport at least 16 passengers (including driver) or transport hazardous chemicals that require the vehicle to be placarded under 49 CFR, Part 172, Subpart F.

### **II. CDL Process**

1. The driver must complete a CDL application and pay the CDL fee at the local DPS office.
2. Upon passing all tests, the driver must obtain an original receipt and temporary permit.
3. If the driver does not pass the required tests within 90 days, his/her application will be destroyed and a new application, fee and tests will be required. TFS will not reimburse for the CDL fees if the employee doesn't pass the required tests to receive the CDL.

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### **III. CDL Knowledge Tests**

1. Knowledge tests required to obtain a Class A CDL for the operation of TFS haul trucks are: (1) Texas Commercial Rules, (2) General Knowledge, (3) Combination, and (4) Air Brakes. The knowledge tests are multiple choice and matching type questions. The applicant must answer 80% of the questions correctly prior to taking the skills test.

### **IV. Commercial Learner's Permit (CLP)**

1. Prior to receiving a CLP the applicant must pass all knowledge tests.
2. A CLP must be held for a minimum of 14 days prior to being allowed to take the CDL skills test. The CLP expires 180 days from the date of issuance.
3. While operating a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) with a CLP the applicant must have a licensed CDL operator (with the proper class of license) in the front passenger seat.
4. The driver must know what type of vehicle they will be driving in order to obtain a learner's permit with the appropriate endorsements.
5. The driver must pay the learner's permit fee and pass the basic requirements test at a local DPS office.

### **V. CDL Skills Tests**

1. All drivers of CMV's must have the skills necessary to operate a CMV safely. The required skills tests (road test) consist of three sections: (1) pre-trip vehicle inspection, (2) basic vehicle control, and (3) safe on-road driving skills. Each section of the skills test must be passed before moving onto the next section.
2. The driver must pass all knowledge and skills tests at the local DPS office. *[Note: A driver has three chances to pass each test but must pass all tests within 90 days.]*
3. The driver will be required to take the skills tests in a CMV from the same class he/she is applying for.
4. Skills tests are not required for doubles/triples or tanker trucks.
5. Not all driver's license offices offer CDL skills tests. Refer to [Texas CDL Skills Testing Locations](#) for testing locations.

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### **VI. CDL Fees**

1. The fee for a CLP is \$25.
2. The fee for a CDL (new or renewal) is \$97 and it is valid for eight years. [If a CDL with a hazardous materials endorsement is required, the fee is \$61 and it is valid for five years.]
3. Test fee after initial CDL application is \$11/test.
4. Criminal background check fee is \$78.20 (\$68.25 + \$9.95 processing fee).
5. Transaction fee is \$1/transaction.
6. Reimbursement for CDL fees is addressed in Administrative Procedure 10.09.

### **VII. CDL Renewals**

1. The driver must obtain a CDL renewal from the local DPS office.
2. The driver must obtain an original receipt.

### **VIII. Eligibility for Reimbursement**

Only budgeted employees whose position description requires them to have a CDL are eligible for reimbursement by TFS. See Administrative Procedures [10.09, Employee License and Certification Fees](#) for reimbursement provisions and process.