

Traffic Safety Division-Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Common Questions/Answers

Q	I operate a truck with a GVWR of 10,001 pounds. Do I need a Medical Examiner's Certificate?
A	Yes. A driver of a vehicle with an actual gross weight, gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) or Gross combination weight rating (GCWR) of 10,001 or more pounds; a vehicle designed to transport 9 or more passengers, including the driver, for compensation or a vehicle designed to transport 15 or more passengers, including the driver, not for compensation; or a vehicle used to transport hazardous materials requiring placarding; used in intrastate or interstate commerce, must pass a medical examination and carry a medical examiner's certificate.
Q	I operate a truck that weighs less than 8,000 pounds and pull a trailer. Do I need to plate the truck with an Elected Gross Vehicle Weight registration plate?
A	Yes, trucks (not pickup trucks) under 8,000 lbs. empty weight must have EGVW plates when towing a non-recreational trailer. The weight is based on empty weight ready for use, not loaded weight. A truck with an empty weight of more than 8,000 lbs. must have an EGVW plate, whether or not it tows a trailer (see next sentence). EGVW plates are not required on trucks or pickup trucks, regardless of empty weight, towing trailers for recreational use and not used in a profit making venture. See the question below regarding pickup trucks and EGVW plates.
Q	I hold a commercial driver's license (CDL). Am I subject to the controlled substance and alcohol testing rules?
A	<p>Yes. This includes the following: Federal, State, Local and tribal governments Church and civil organizations Farmers and custom harvesters Apiarian Industries For-hire and private companies</p> <p>Note that the drug and alcohol testing requirements are only required when you operate a vehicle that requires a CDL. An individual can 'hold' a CDL for years and not need to be in a drug and alcohol program until they actually operate a commercial motor vehicle.</p>
Q	I operate a commercial motor vehicle; may I use a radar detector in the vehicle?
A	No. The use of radar detectors is prohibited for any vehicle that meets the definition of a commercial motor vehicle provided in the first answer.
Q	I operate a commercial motor vehicle more than 100 air miles of my work reporting location. Am I required to maintain a driver's logbook?
A	Yes. Generally, the hours of service rules apply to all motor carriers and drivers. Exceptions are found in Section 395.2 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. In 2006, Congress passed federal legislation that exempted all public utilities and contractors to public utilities from all of the hours of service regulations.
Q	Can my carrier require me to drive a CMV after I have worked 60 hours in 7 consecutive days?
A	<p>A motor carrier must not permit or require a driver to drive a CMV after a total of : 60 hours on duty in 7 consecutive days or; 70 hours on duty in 8 consecutive days.</p> <p>If the driver works more than one job of any kind, that time must also be included as On Duty Time. Michigan law allows a driver that is engaged in intrastate construction related activities to be on duty 70 hours in 7 days or 80 hours in 8 days, as well as be on duty up to 16 hours in a day and drive not more than 12 hours in a day.</p>
Q	What types of brakes are required on a commercial motor vehicle?

A	<p>Commercial motor vehicles must be equipped with the following brake systems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A service brake system A parking brake system An emergency brake system
Q	<p>Do surge brakes meet brake requirements of Part 393?</p>
A	<p>There are different provisions for surge brakes for interstate (across state lines) and intrastate transportation:</p> <p>Interstate transportation: Surge brakes are allowed on any trailer with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 12,000 lbs. or less, when its GVWR does not exceed 1.75 times the GVWR of the towing vehicle; or any trailer with a GVWR of more than 12,000 lbs. but less than 20,001 lbs. when its GVWR does not exceed 1.25 times the GVWR of the towing vehicle. See section 393.48 of the FMCSR.</p> <p>Intrastate transportation: Surge brakes are allowed on any trailer when the combination has a GVWR of not more than 26,000 lbs. AND the actual Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) or GVWR of the trailer is 15,000 lbs. or less. Vehicles of any size that are transporting hazardous materials in an amount that requires placarding or vehicles that are designed to transport more than 8 passengers, including the driver, are prohibited from being equipped with surge brakes in intrastate commerce.</p>
Q	<p>I drive a commercial motor vehicle. Am I required to do a post trip inspection?</p>
A	<p>Yes. The inspection must be completed and submitted to the company, but there is no requirement for a copy of the report to be retained in the vehicle.</p>
Q	<p>Is there a place I can call to get answers to my questions regarding operating a commercial motor vehicle?</p>
A	<p>Yes. The Michigan Center for Truck Safety operates a toll free hotline to answer your trucking questions. The number is (800) 682-4682.</p>
Q	<p>Where can I obtain copies of the Physical Examination form and other USDOT required forms?</p>
A	<p>Physical examination and other USDOT required forms are available from the Michigan Trucking Association, 1131 Centennial Way, Lansing, MI. 48917 Phone (517) 321-1951.</p>
Q	<p>I own a pick up truck that weighs less than 8,000 lbs. empty and I tow a trailer for commercial purposes. Do I need an EGVW plate?</p>
A	<p>No. A pick up truck or van that weighs less than 8,000 lbs. empty is not required to have an EGVW plate, whether or not it is used to tow a trailer.</p>