



Strengthening the Supply Chain through Licensing

Trucking plays a critical role in the U.S. supply chain and economy and America's truck drivers have been on the frontlines of this pandemic, delivering goods to every corner of this country. Seventy-two percent of goods in America are shipped by truck. One role that FMCSA can play to help is getting drivers licensed to operate commercial motor vehicles and States manage this role every day. Even while facing significant challenges brought on by the pandemic – such as limited staff, office closures, and strained testing procedures because of masks, social distancing, and cleaning protocols – States, on average, are issuing more than 50,000 commercial driver's licenses (CDLs) and commercial learner's permits (CLPs) each month. However, there is still work to be done and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) is doing targeted outreach and engagement with those States where it is taking longer for driver applicants to receive their CDLs/CLPs. The FMCSA wants to ensure States are using all available tools to reduce testing and delays and getting drivers on the job, working, and earning faster.



Implement these Top Ten Proven Strategies to Streamline CDL Processing



Waive the 14-day waiting period between the time the driver obtains his or her commercial learner's permit and takes the driver's test.



Allow drivers to train and test in different States.



Increase testing capacity by using certified third-party testers.



Redistribute staffing to locations of greatest need.



Prioritize CDL issuance.



Offer "stand by" testing in the event appointments are cancelled.



Offer after hours and weekend testing appointments.



Invest in and use testing kiosks.



Allow online scheduling and renewals.



Allow banking of test scores so applicants only have to retake portions they fail.

Use Funds to Make CDL Processing Improvements

Before the end of the year, FMCSA will release its Commercial Driver's License Program Implementation Notice of Funding Opportunity that will support a State's efforts to improve CDL processing systems. These grants are regularly issued, but this year is different. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law recognizes the vital importance of State infrastructure to support efficient and modern CDL processing structures and therefore nearly doubles investment in States' ability to execute these necessary upgrades. With the additional funding provided in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, funding can increase from \$33 million to \$58 million through appropriations.