

# How to Apply to the FMCSA Safe Driver Apprenticeship Pilot (SDAP) Program as a Motor Carrier



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Are you looking to hire new professional drivers? The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) new three-year pilot program may be for you! The Safe Driver Apprenticeship Pilot (SDAP) program enables more drivers on the road by allowing motor carriers to hire qualified drivers ages 18-20 to operate CMVs in interstate commerce.

**Follow these steps to successfully apply to the SDAP program.**

1

Make sure you are registered with the U.S. Department of Labor [Registered Apprenticeship Program](#) and have your USDOT number handy.



2

Ensure you meet all [safety and equipment qualifications](#) for the program:

- Have proper operating authority, if required, and registration.
- Have at least the minimum levels of financial responsibility required by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs).
- Not be a high- or moderate-risk carrier.
- Not have a conditional or unsatisfactory safety rating.
- Not have any open enforcement actions in the previous six years.
- Not have a crash rate above the 2021 national average (0.96 crashes per million vehicle miles traveled).
- Not have a driver out-of-service (OOS) rate above the 2021 national average (5.30%).
- Not have a vehicle OOS rate above the 2021 national average (19.40%).
- Provide proof of insurance for under 21 drivers prior to being issued an exemption from FMCSA for the age requirements found in 49 CFR 391.11(b)(1).
- Transport cannot include passengers or hazardous materials or operate double- or triple-trailer combinations or cargo tank vehicles.
- Vehicles are equipped with onboard monitoring systems (OBMS) that include forward-facing and in-cab driver-facing cameras, an automatic or automatic manual transmission, active braking collision mitigation system, and a governed speed of 65 miles per hour at the pedal and under adaptive cruise control.



**See following page for  
additional steps on how to apply.**

3

Learn about the SDAP program procedures and required follow-up actions according to the [Federal Register Notice](#) and be confident in your commitment to the program.



4

Click on [Apply](#) and follow the steps.



5

Submit your application!

## So, what's next?

Once your application is submitted, FMCSA is committed to reviewing all motor carrier applications and notifying them of their decision within 30 days of receipt of the application.


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