

FMCSA Safe Driver Apprenticeship Pilot Program (SDAP)



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

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) is conducting a three-year commercial driver apprenticeship program, in accordance with Section 23022 of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This program will allow qualified drivers ages 18-20, who hold intrastate commercial driver's licenses (CDLs), to explore interstate trucking careers. It will also help trucking companies hire and train new drivers.

FMCSA will grant apprentice drivers approval to operate commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) in interstate commerce while they are under 21 years of age. During the pilot program's probationary periods, apprentice drivers can operate in interstate commerce only when accompanied by a qualified, experienced driver in the passenger seat.



Information for Motor Carriers

Motor Carriers must meet all safety criteria listed on the following page and use the application posted on FMCSA's website to participate in SDAP.

Experienced drivers must meet all criteria specified in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Apprentice drivers must operate vehicles equipped with forward-facing cameras, 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.

Apprentice drivers cannot transport passengers or hazardous materials or operate double- or triple-trailer combinations or cargo tank vehicles while participating in this program, regardless of any license endorsements they hold.

Contact FMCSA



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1-800-832-5660

See following page for
motor carrier qualifications





Required Motor Carrier Qualifications

Participating motor carriers must:

- 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 6 years;
- Not have a crash rate above the 2021 national average (0.96 crashes per million vehicle miles travelled);
- 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%); and
- 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).

Experienced Driver Qualifications

- Must be at least 26 years of age;
- Must have held a CDL for 2 years prior to serving as an experienced driver;
- Must have at least 5 years of experience driving a CMV in interstate commerce.
- In the prior two years has not had:
 - Any preventable accidents reportable to DOT; or
 - Any moving violations resulting in points.



To learn more and apply to participate, visit www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safedriver