

Safe Driver Apprenticeship Pilot Program

Quarterly Program Update

End of Fourth Quarter
2024



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

FMCSA's Safe Driver Apprenticeship Pilot Program

On January 14, 2022, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) announced in a Federal Register Notice (FRN) the establishment of a pilot program that allows motor carriers to participate in an apprenticeship program for drivers of commercial motor vehicles (CMVs). This apprenticeship program, called the Safe Driver Apprenticeship Pilot (SDAP) Program, allows apprentices, ages 18-20, to operate CMVs in interstate commerce under the supervision of an experienced CMV driver until the apprentice has completed two probationary periods. An apprentice is an individual who is under the age of 21 and holds a commercial driver's license.

Upon completion of two probationary periods totaling at least 400 hours of on duty time, apprentice drivers are allowed to operate in interstate commerce without an experienced driver in the passenger seat, for the remainder of their participation in the pilot program under the employ of an approved motor carrier. The goal of the SDAP Program is to help strengthen supply chains and assist with driver retention.

FMCSA is gathering safety and driving data from those in the program to determine the safety impacts of allowing commercial drivers under the age of 21, with specialized training and experience, to operate a CMV in interstate commerce. Safety is FMCSA's priority, and the Agency is ensuring that each motor carrier and driver is adhering to the performance standards established by the program. FMCSA has the authority to remove a motor carrier or driver and end the pilot program at any time if it believes safety is being compromised.

The SDAP Program officially launched on July 26, 2022, when FMCSA began accepting applications from interested motor carriers. Data collection on apprentice drivers began in November 2022 and will continue through November 2025.

QUARTERLY UPDATE

This is the eighth public update, which is being provided at the conclusion of the Fourth Quarter, Calendar Year 2024.

Motor Carrier Applications

As of December 31, 2024, FMCSA has received 199 motor carrier applications for participation in the pilot program. Of this total, 59 carriers are currently approved to participate in the program, 81 carriers have been disapproved due to not meeting the prerequisite safety standards, 53 carriers have voluntarily withdrawn from the program, and 6 carriers have been removed from the program because they no longer have proper operating authority.

Table 1. Summary of Motor Carrier Status, Q4 2024

Status	Number of Motor Carriers
Approved	59
Disapproved	81
Voluntarily Withdrawn	53
Removed from Program	6
Pending Registered Apprenticeship ¹	-
Total Number of Applications	199

¹ As of March 2024, carriers are no longer required to have a Registered Apprenticeship (RA) with the U.S. Department of Labor before being accepted in the SDAP program.

Experienced Driver Applications

As of December 31, 2024, FMCSA has received 146 applications for experienced drivers, who accompany and supervise the under-21-year-old apprentices throughout their probationary periods. Of this total, 139 experienced drivers are currently approved to participate, 1 has been disapproved, 4 have voluntarily withdrawn from the program, 1 has been removed from their carrier, and 1 has been removed from the program for safety reasons.

Table 2. Summary of Experienced Driver Status, Q4 2024

Status	Number of Experienced Drivers
Approved	139
Disapproved	1
Voluntarily Withdrawn	4
Removed from Carrier	1
Removed from Program	1
Total Number of Applications	146

Apprentice Driver Applications

As of December 31, 2024, FMCSA has received 68 applications for apprentice drivers. The table below outlines the current status of apprentice drivers.

Table 3. Summary of Apprentice Driver Status, Q4 2024

Status	Number of Apprentice Drivers
Currently Enrolled in Probationary Periods	10
Completed Both Probationary Periods	36
- <i>Currently Active</i>	18
- <i>Aged Out of Program</i>	13
- <i>Voluntarily Withdrawn</i>	3
- <i>Removed from Carrier</i>	1
- <i>Removed from Program</i>	1
Did Not Complete Probationary Periods	20
- <i>Aged Out of Program</i>	3
- <i>Voluntarily Withdrawn</i>	11
- <i>Removed from Carrier</i>	6
Disapproved	2
Total Number of Applications	68