

National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

What is the National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners?

The National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners (National Registry) is a new Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) program that establishes minimum training and testing requirements for all State-licensed healthcare professionals who perform physical qualification examinations for truck and bus drivers. Beginning May 21, 2014, all drivers who need a new medical certificate must see an examiner on the National Registry. Medical certificates issued prior to May 21, 2014 remain valid until the expiration date.

Why did FMCSA establish the National Registry?

FMCSA issued the rule in response to the statutory requirements in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), the surface transportation reauthorization legislation enacted in 2005. The final rule will improve safety by ensuring that medical examiners have completed training and testing concerning FMCSA's physical qualifications standards and only issue medical certificates to individuals who meet those standards.

Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Drivers

Do I have to have a new physical examination with a medical examiner on the National Registry on May 21, 2014, even if my certificate is not yet expired?

No. Medical certificates issued prior to May 21, 2014, are valid until the expiration date on the certificate. Any interstate CMV driver seeking a medical certificate on or after May 21, 2014, must obtain it from an examiner listed on the National Registry website located at <https://nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov>.

Will the physical qualifications standards change on May 21, 2014, as a result of the National Registry deadline?

No. The physical qualifications standards for CMV drivers will not change. What may happen is that some examiners who have completed the mandatory training and testing may conduct more thorough examinations and subsequently, identify drivers who were not supposed to receive unrestricted 2-year medical certificates.

How do I find a certified medical examiner?

Certified medical examiners are listed on the National Registry website at <https://nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov>.

I prefer going to my doctor for my commercial motor vehicle physical exam. Can I still use him/her after May 21, 2014?

Yes. You can still use your doctor provided he/she is listed as a certified medical examiner on the National Registry. If not, you will have to use a certified medical examiner who is listed on the National Registry website at <https://nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov>.

Will the medical examiner inform the State driver licensing agency that I have passed the physical examination?

No. Commercial driver's license (CDL) holders are still required to provide proof of medical certification to the State agency issuing the license. Contact your State driver licensing agency for information about how to provide proof of your medical certificate.

Do I have to send a copy of my medical certificate to FMCSA?

No. Your medical certificate information will be transmitted electronically to FMCSA by your medical examiner.

Will the medical examination reports be entered into the National Registry?

No. FMCSA will not collect or store medical examination reports (i.e., the long form).

Motor Carriers

Are motor carriers required to verify that a driver's medical card issued on or after May 21, 2014, was issued by a healthcare professional on the National Registry?

Yes. The regulations require that motor carriers check the National Registry website to verify that the medical examiner is certified. However, motor carriers are not required to contact the medical examiner to verify that he/she signed the document.

May a motor carrier accept a medical certificate issued prior to May 21, 2014, from a person applying for a job as an interstate driver?

Yes. Medical certificates issued before May 21, 2014, remain valid until the expiration date, even if the certificates were issued by a healthcare professional who is not listed on the National Registry. The new National Registry requirements are applicable only to medical examinations performed on or after May 21, 2014. For example, if a driver has a 2-year medical certificate issued on May 1, 2014, that medical certificate is valid through May 1, 2016. Therefore, the driver would not be required to obtain a medical certificate from an examiner on the National Registry until he/she renews the medical certificate.

May motor carriers that have preferred examiners continue to rely on those individuals to perform medical examinations for their drivers?

Yes. They can use preferred examiners provided those individuals are listed on the National Registry. The regulations allow healthcare professionals who are licensed by a State to perform physical examinations, and who have completed FMCSA's training and testing requirements for the National Registry, to issue medical certificates. Therefore, if the examiner has completed all of the training and testing requirements prior to issuing any new medical certificates on or after May 21, 2014, FMCSA will accept the newly issued certificates. And, any medical certificates issued before May 21, 2014, will remain valid until the expiration date, regardless of whether the examiner enrolls in the National Registry.

If a driver receives a medical certificate from a medical examiner who is later removed from the National Registry for inappropriate activities, is the medical certificate still valid?

Yes. However, FMCSA may exercise its authority to review the medical examiner's report (long form) and, if necessary, discuss the matter with the driver to make an individual determination whether the driver may need to obtain a new medical certificate.

Medical Examiners

Who is eligible to become a medical examiner?

Currently, healthcare professionals who are licensed, certified, and/or registered in accordance with applicable State laws and regulations to perform physical examinations, may perform medical examinations for CMV drivers. This includes, but is not limited to, doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathy, physician assistants, advanced practice nurses, and doctors of chiropractic.

How do I become a certified medical examiner on the National Registry?

To become a certified medical examiner, you must register through the National Registry website at <https://nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov> to receive a unique identification number (National Registry Number). You will then need to complete accredited training and pass the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Medical Examiner Certification Test. You may become certified after the compliance date, but you must not issue medical certificates for interstate truck and bus drivers on or after May 21, 2014, until you have completed the certification process.

Do I have to pay for the training and testing to become a certified medical examiner?

Yes. You are responsible for paying any fees charged by the private sector training and testing organizations. FMCSA neither establishes nor regulates the schedules of fees established and collected by private sector training or testing organizations and does not receive any monies collected by these organizations or providers.

How do I find training organizations?

FMCSA posts contact information on the National Registry website for training organizations. However, FMCSA does not approve or endorse training providers or courses.

To access the list of training providers who offer National Registry training, follow these steps:

1. Visit the National Registry website at <https://nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov>.
2. Select the “Medical Examiners and Assistants” link at the top of the page.
3. Select “Find a Training Organization” from the menu on the left.

How can I determine whether a training provider's program meets all of the National Registry requirements?

Prospective medical examiners may visit the National Registry website at <https://nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov> to obtain the regulatory requirements for training, including the eight topics (the core curriculum) that must be covered by the training. The training organization must be accredited by a nationally recognized medical profession accrediting organization that provides continuing education units, and the training must include all of the topics outlined in the final rule. The training organization must provide training participants with proof of participation.

How can I find a testing organization?

To find a testing organization near you, follow these steps:

1. Visit the National Registry website at <https://nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov>
2. Select the “Medical Examiners and Assistants” link at the top of the page
3. Select “Search for Testing Locations” from the menu on the left. Then select “Find a Testing Organization” to search by testing organization name, city and state, or zip code.
3. Select a test center and click the website link.
4. Follow the instructions on the test organization website to schedule your test appointment.

Note: Please be sure to read all the policies and procedures provided by the test organization before you submit your payment; some test organization fees are non-refundable.

How long will it take to obtain my certification after I pass the test?

You will receive email notification of your certification credential approximately 1 to 2 business days after you pass the certification test. At that time, your information will be available via the National Registry website's Public Search link. Make sure all the information in your National Registry account is up to date. Missing or inconsistent information or expired credentials can cause delays in receiving your certification.

What should I do if it has been longer than expected, and I have not received my certification?

Review the information in your National Registry account to make sure it is up to date. Check to make sure the name you entered exactly matches the name on your medical license. If you have not done so, you must enter your training information and make sure your medical licensing information is not expired by following these steps:

1. Go to the National Registry website at <https://nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov>
2. Select "Login" in the blue bar at the top of the screen.
3. Enter your username and password and click "Login."
4. Select "View and Add Training Information" under "My Certification and Training" in the blue bar across the top of the screen.
5. Select "Add Training" and enter your training information.
6. Click "Save Changes."

Note: The system cannot certify your account until your training information has been entered.

If I don't pass the certification test, can I retake it?

Yes. However, you must wait at least 30 days before taking the test.

How do I submit the monthly report of medical certificates to FMCSA?

The CMV Driver Medical Examination Results, *Form MCSA-5850*, is a secure, online form that is only available through your National Registry account. FMCSA will not accept submissions by any other means.

Certified medical examiners may submit the CMV Driver Medical Examination Results by following these steps:

1. Go to the National Registry website at <https://nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov>
2. Login to your National Registry account.
3. Select "CMV Driver Exams" from the blue bar at the top of the screen.
4. Select "Submit CMV Driver Exam Results."
5. Enter driver information and exam data, click "Submit."

Be sure to submit a form for each driver exam you have completed during the previous month. If you have not completed any exams during the previous month, select the box next to “No exams completed during this period” on the CMV Driver Examination Results page.

When do I have to begin submitting CMV Driver Examination Results ?

You must submit exam results for all driver examinations you perform on or after May 21, 2014. This must be done by the end of the following month. For example, if you perform a driver exam on May 21, you must report that exam by June 30, 2014. You may, but are not required to, submit CMV Driver Examination Results for exams performed before May 21, 2014.

State Commercial Driver Licensing Agencies

Are State agencies that issue CDLs required to verify the validity of the medical certificate?

No. State licensing agencies are required to enter the medical certificate information, including the National Registry identification number, onto interstate CDL holders’ driving record, accessible through the Commercial Driver’s License Information System (CDLIS), but they are not required to verify the accuracy of the medical certificate.

FMCSA anticipates publishing and implementing a final rule that would provide a means for the Agency to receive the medical certificates from certified examiners. The Agency would then transmit the medical certificate information directly to the State licensing agency to reduce the possibility of falsification of medical certificates.

Enforcement (Roadside Inspectors)

Are roadside inspectors required to verify that medical certificates are issued by examiners on the National Registry?

No. As part of the North American Standard Inspection procedure, roadside inspectors will verify that interstate drivers subject to the physical qualifications standards have a medical certificate (e.g., a paper or electronic copy with e-signature or, in the case of a CDL holder, a paper or electronic copy or proof on the CDL driving record). However, inspectors are not required to verify that examiners are listed on the National Registry. If an inspector wants to verify the identity of an examiner, and has internet access at the inspection site, he/she may visit and search the registry to verify the examiner identified on the certificate is listed on the National Registry.