

Version 2.0

Commercial
Driver's
License Manual



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Registry of Motor Vehicles
PO Box 55889
Boston, MA 02205

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Preface: Massachusetts CDL Information

On October 26, 1986, Congress passed the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986. This law required each State to meet the same minimum standards for commercial driver licensing. The standards required commercial motor vehicle drivers to get a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). You must have a CDL to operate any of the following Commercial Motor Vehicles (CMVs):

- a) A single vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of more than 26,000 pounds.
- b) A trailer with a GVWR of more than 10,000 pounds if the gross combination weight rating is more than 26,000 pounds.
- c) A vehicle designed to transport 16 or more persons (including the operator).
- d) Any size vehicle which requires hazardous materials placards.

To get a CDL, you must pass knowledge and skills tests. This manual will help you pass the tests.

Commercial Driver's License Tests

Knowledge Tests




You will have to take one or more knowledge tests, depending on what class of license and what endorsements you need. The CDL knowledge tests include:

- the General Knowledge Test, taken by all applicants.
- the Passenger Transport Test, taken by all bus driver applicants.
- the Air Brakes Test, which you must take if your vehicle has air brakes.
- the Combination Vehicles Test, which is required if you want to drive combination vehicles.
- the Hazardous Materials Test, required if you want to haul hazardous material or waste.
- the Tanker Test, required if you want to haul liquids in bulk.
- the Doubles/Triples Test, required if you want to pull double or triple trailers.
- the School Bus Test, required if you want to transport pre-primary, primary, and secondary school students in a full-sized "School Bus" (i.e., Big Yellow Bus).

CDL Eligibility Requirements

- Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements listed in Title 49 CFR Part 391 or 540 CMR 2.06 and 14.00.

MASSACHUSETTS COMMERCIAL DRIVERS LICENSE CLASSIFICATION

WITH THIS CLASS LICENSE	YOU MAY DRIVE	RELATED ENDORSEMENTS
A	<p>Any combination of vehicles with a GVWR of 26,001 or more pounds provided the GVWR of the vehicle(s) being towed is in excess of 10,000 pounds. (Holders of a Class A license may, with any appropriate endorsements, operate all vehicles within Classes B, C, and D).</p> <p>Examples include, but are not limited to:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p>Double/Triple Trailers</p> <p>Tank Vehicles</p> <p>Tank Vehicles with HAZMAT</p> <p>HAZMAT</p> <p>Passenger Transport Vehicles</p> <p>School Bus</p>
B	<p>Any single vehicle with a GVWR of 26,001 or more pounds, or any such vehicle towing a vehicle not in excess of 10,000 pounds GVWR. (Holders of a Class B license may, with any appropriate endorsements, operate all vehicles within Classes B, C, and D)</p> <p>Examples include, but are not limited to:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p>Tank Vehicles</p> <p>Tank Vehicles with HAZMAT</p> <p>HAZMAT</p> <p>Passenger Transport Vehicles</p> <p>School Bus</p>
C	<p>Any single vehicle, or combination of vehicles, that does not meet the definition of Class A or Class B, but is either designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver, or is placarded for hazardous materials. (Holders of a Class C license may, with any appropriate endorsements, operate all vehicles within Classes C and D.)</p> <p>Example includes, but is not limited to:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p>Tank Vehicles</p> <p>Tank Vehicles with HAZMAT</p> <p>HAZMAT</p> <p>Passenger Transport Vehicles</p> <p>School Bus</p>

The vehicle in which you will take the road skills test must meet the written description for that class. The above vehicle silhouettes typify, but do not fully cover, the types of vehicles falling within each class.

If you wish to be licensed to drive a vehicle with air brakes, the vehicle in which you will be tested must be equipped with air brakes.

To operate a school bus, drivers are required to obtain a specific certification from the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (see p. viii), in addition to the appropriate class and endorsement of CDL license.

Beginning the CDL Application Process

You can get an application for a Commercial Driver's License at any RMV branch office or online at mass.gov/rmv.

Also, you can take the knowledge test for a CDL permit at most RMV branch offices from 9:00am to 3:00pm, Monday through Friday (see notes below about Thursday hours and other exceptions).

Currently, the Branch Offices that offer the CDL knowledge test include:

Beverly *	Melrose*
Boston*	Milford
Braintree*	Nantucket**
Brockton*	New Bedford*
Chicopee	North Adams**
Easthampton	North Attleboro*
Fall River*	Pittsfield
Falmouth	Plymouth
Framingham*	Southbridge
Greenfield	South Yarmouth*
Hadley*	Springfield*
Haverhill**	Taunton
Lawrence*	Watertown*
Leominster*	Wilmington*
Lowell*	Worcester*
Martha's Vineyard**	

Hours and locations are subject to change without notice. Check mass.gov/rmv for the most up-to-date list.

*These branches offer CDL knowledge tests from 10:00am until 4:00pm on Thursdays.

****Haverhill** offers CDL knowledge tests from 8:00am until 2:00pm.

Martha's Vineyard and **Nantucket** offer CDL knowledge tests from 8:00am until 2:00pm, but are closed between 12:00pm and 1:00pm.

North Adams offers CDL knowledge tests from 9:00am until 3:00pm, but is closed between 12:00pm and 1:00pm.

Note: Depending on the number of endorsement tests you are taking, you may not have time to take all of them if you arrive late in the day. Please allot your time accordingly.

If You Apply for a CDL as Your First License

If you apply for a CDL as your first license and have never held a private passenger vehicle license, the Massachusetts RMV requires you to take the knowledge test for a class D (passenger vehicle) permit before taking the CDL knowledge tests. This is needed to show that you understand the rules of the road. CDL knowledge tests cover the Federal CDL requirements; they do not test applicants on the rules of the road.

Federal Regulations 49 CFR section 383.23 (c)(2): CDL learner's permit issuance requirements state in part that the CDL learner's permit holder must have a valid automobile driver's license, or have passed all vision, sign/symbol, and knowledge tests as the State issuing the learner's permit ordinarily administers.

Questions About CDL

If you have any further questions about Commercial Driver's Licenses, call the RMV Phone Center at:

- (617) 351-4500 If you are in the 339, 617, 781, or 857 area codes
- 1-800-858-3926 If you are in any other Area Code within Massachusetts

Also, see the Registry website at mass.gov/rmv



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
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CDL ROAD TEST INFORMATION SHEET

Please read the following information before scheduling your road test.

To book a road test, call: 1-617-351-4500 (from area codes 339/617/781/857)
1-800-858-3926 (from area codes 351/413/508/774/978)

Applicant Requirements

Applicants must meet the following requirements for a Class A, B, or C road test:

- Have a current driver's license, if you are seeking additional endorsements.
- Have a valid CDL permit, with proper endorsements for the vehicle used.
- Have a valid Department of Transportation (DOT) medical card or medical waiver.*
- Have a completed road test application. (If you answered **YES** to question 4, 6, or 7 on the road test application, the application must be approved by an RMV branch manager or an authorized RMV employee before the road test.)
- Be on time for the skills test. If you are late, you will not be examined. If you must cancel or reschedule your appointment with less than 24 hours notice, you will be responsible for the skills test fee.
- Be accompanied by a sponsor who:
 - Is at least 21 years old.
 - Has a valid U.S. Commercial Driver's License with proper endorsements for the class of vehicle that you are using.
 - Has a current DOT medical card. (If the sponsor does not have a current DOT medical card, he/she will be subject to a fine.* The test, however, will still proceed.)

Vehicle Requirements

Vehicles used for a Class A, B, or C road test must meet the following requirements:

- Represent the type of vehicle you will be driving when you receive your CDL.
- Be able to pass a safety check. Vehicles with unstable, dangerous, or HAZMAT loads will be rejected. The vehicle must be completely free of hazardous material.
- Have a valid registration and current inspection sticker.
- Have adequate seating next to the operator for the use of the examiner.
- Have a manufacturer's gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) on the vehicle, appropriate for the class of license for which you are applying. If there is no GVWR on the vehicle, you must have a document from the manufacturer or a motor vehicle dealer proving the GVWR.

*A DOT medical card is not required for a state or municipal employee using a state or municipal vehicle. (continued)

Out-of-state Registered vehicles, trailers, and semi trailers

- Carry proof of insurance coverage in the form of a policy or letter from the insurance company specifying the limits of coverage. The insurance coverage *MUST* be equal to Massachusetts minimum requirements of \$20,000/\$40,000 bodily injury and \$5,000 property damage coverage for the vehicle's use in Massachusetts. (No faxes or photo copies.)

Rental vehicles

- Have the rental agreement and written permission on the rental company's letterhead authorizing use of the vehicle for the road test.

The CDL Skills Test has three parts:

1. The **Pre-Trip Inspection** is described in Part 3, Section 10 of the *CDL Manual*. It is important that you can demonstrate this inspection to the examiner by pointing out and naming the parts of the vehicle.

Note: If the vehicle has air brakes, you are also required to demonstrate the air brake test described in Part 3, Section 10 of the *CDL Manual*. If you are testing a combination vehicle, you must be familiar with Part 2, Section 6 of the *CDL Manual*.

2. The **Skills Test** involves the following maneuvers:
 - Pre-Trip inspection
 - Air brake
 - Forward and back through an offset alley
 - Parallel parking (conventional)
 - Parallel parking (sight-side)
 - Alley dock
3. The **On the Road** portion of the test begins immediately following the successful completion of all parts of the off-street skills testing maneuvers. This portion involves driving through various traffic and road conditions to evaluate your judgment, control, and safe operation on the street, as well as your ability to start, stop, shift, turn competently, and obey all relevant rules of the road.

All parts of the test must be successfully completed to pass the CDL Skills Test.

Canceled Road Tests

Road tests may be canceled due to weather, road, or other emergency conditions, such as:

- Public school cancellations or delays in the city/town where your test is scheduled.
- A state of emergency has been declared by the Governor throughout the state or in the region where your road test is scheduled.
- The Road Test Examiner cancels road tests due to scheduling or safety reasons.

If you think that your road test may be canceled, please call the RMV Phone Center at 617-351-4500 (from the 339/617/781/857 area codes) or 1-800-858-3926 (from the 351/413/508/774/978 area codes).

You are responsible for the skills test fee for each failure, rejection, late arrival, or no show.

The Registrar reserves the right to cancel and recall any license if it is later determined that the licensee did not meet the minimum legal requirements for the road test.

Directions to CDL Road Test Sites

This list is subject to change. Please call the Phone Center at (617) 351-4500 or (800) 858-3926 (from the 413/508 area codes) for a list of road test sites. The Phone Center is open weekdays from 9 am to 5 pm.

Dartmouth DPW (1111)

The test site is on Faunce Corner Road in North Dartmouth across from the State Police Barracks. Take Route I-195 to the North Dartmouth exit. As you come off the exit, the DPW is on the left, just before the railroad tracks.

Deerfield (South) (1106)

From exit 4 off the Mass Pike, follow route 91 North to exit 24 (Deerfield, Routes 5 & 10N). Take the first right at the Citgo station onto Route 116. The test site is approximately 3/4 miles on your left, hidden by trees.

Everett MBTA Repair Station (1167)

Route 99 traveling south just beyond Route 16 or traveling north prior to Route 16, at lights turn onto Bowdoin Street. Left on Charlton Street follow to end.

Methuen National Guard Armory (1168)

Take 93 North to Route 110. Go one-half way around the rotary and take Route 110 toward Methuen. (Water will be on your left and signs guiding you to Methuen and to the National Guard Armory should be visible). Follow Route 110 approximately one mile to the National Guard Armory.

Newbury DPW (1109)

Take I-95 North to the Scotland Road exit. Follow Scotland Road approximately one half mile past the State Police Barracks. The test site will be on your left.

Otis AFB (1154)

Cross the Bourne Bridge onto Cape Cod. Follow Route 28 South to the Route 151 exit. Turn right onto Route 151. Turn Left onto Sandwich Road to the Falmouth Gate. Go left through the gate onto the Base. Turn left onto Kitteredge Road, then right onto Generals Boulevard. Turn left into the transfer station to the test site.

Sterling DPW (1157)

From I-190, take exit 6. Turn left onto Route 12S. Turn left onto Chocksett Road. The test site is approximately a quarter of a mile on your left.

Stoughton DPW (1163)

From Route 24, exit 18B, go approximately one quarter mile. At the split, turn right onto Route 27. The test site will be approximately one mile on the left, across from the Blue Hills Alzheimers Research Center.

Sturbridge DPW (1161)

From exit 9 off the Mass Pike, the test site is at the intersection of Routes 20 and 131 just south of the Mass Turnpike interchange.

Winchendon (1120)

From exit 19 off Route 2, take route 202 North for approximately ten miles towards Baldwinville/Winchendon. The test site will be on the left, past Lake Dennison State Park, on Baldwin Road.

Motor Bus/School Bus License

For more information on obtaining a motor bus driver certificate or a school bus driver certificate, contact the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities, 1 South Station, Boston, MA 02110 or call (617) 305-3559.

Motor Bus Requirements

To operate a motor bus in Massachusetts, you need a CDL and a Passenger (P) endorsement. You also need a Motor Bus Driver Certificate from the Department of Public Utilities.

School Bus Requirements

To operate a **full-sized school bus** in Massachusetts, you must have a CDL with a Passenger (P) endorsement and a School Bus (S) endorsement. You also need a School Bus Driver Certificate from the Department of Public Utilities.

To operate a **restricted school bus** (a school bus with a maximum seating capacity of fourteen passengers), you need a Class D (Passenger Vehicle) license and a "Restricted School Bus Driver" certificate from the Department of Public Utilities.

Note: To operate a school bus with air brakes, you must, in addition, pass an air-brakes written exam at the RMV and pass an air-brakes road test.

SCHOOL BUS DRIVER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for a full-sized or restricted School Bus Certificate you must meet the following requirements:

- Have three (3) continuous years of driving experience
- Pass a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check
- Pass a Sex Offender Record Information (SORI) check
- Pass a Department of Transportation (DOT) physical exam
- Have a clean driving record
- Pass all required RMV written exams
- Pass a Department of Public Utilities road test

STUDY MATERIALS FOR FULL-SIZED SCHOOL BUS WRITTEN EXAM

You need BOTH the *Commercial Driver's License Manual* (this document) to study for the CDL general knowledge test, the Passenger endorsement test, and the Air Brakes endorsement test, and *Section 10 of the 2004 Model Commercial Driver's License Manual (version 080904)* to study for the S-Endorsement test. The S-endorsement document and CDL manual are both available on the Massachusetts RMV website (mass.gov/rmv). Also, both documents are available at all full-service RMV branch offices.

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