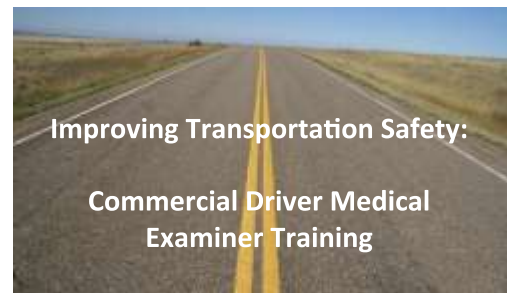


Medical Examiner Training Frequently Asked Questions



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The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has established a National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners with requirements that all medical examiners who conduct physical examinations for interstate commercial motor vehicle drivers (and some intrastate drivers depending on your state law) must complete a training course and pass a certification examination prior to May 21, 2014. Only providers passing the test will be listed on the National Registry and able to perform the exams.

These FAQs are provided to help educate current providers about these new requirements. The FMCSA has also posted FAQs (some summarized below) on their website to answer additional questions:

<http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rules-regulations/topics/medical/faqs.aspx>

To find out more, go to <http://nrcme.fmcsa.dot.gov>

General

What is the National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners?

The National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners (National Registry) is a Federal program that establishes requirements for healthcare professionals that perform physical qualification examinations for truck and bus drivers. To become a certified medical examiner (ME) and be listed on the National Registry, healthcare professionals must complete training and testing on the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) physical qualifications standards and guidelines.

All healthcare professionals whose scope of practice authorizes them to perform physical examinations, as defined by the state in which they practice, and who intend to perform physical examinations and issue medical certificates for commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers must be certified and listed on FMCSA's National Registry by May 21, 2014.

Why is the National Registry necessary?

FMCSA developed the National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners final rule as part of the agency's commitment to enhancing the medical oversight of interstate drivers, and preventing commercial vehicle-related crashes, injuries and fatalities. The final rule addresses four NTSB recommendations on a comprehensive medical oversight program for interstate drivers.

Who is affected by this program?

The program affects MEs who need to obtain certification in order to continue issuing medical certificates for truck and bus drivers, CMV drivers who need to obtain medical certificates from certified MEs on the National Registry, motor carriers who must ensure their interstate drivers have been medically certified by a certified ME on the National Registry, and training and testing organizations that will deliver these aspects of the program.

Are there any National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) recommendations related to the establishment of the National Registry?

The National Registry final rule addresses four NTSB recommendations on a comprehensive medical oversight program for interstate drivers that include the following elements:

- Individuals performing medical examinations for drivers are qualified to do so and are educated about occupational issues for drivers;
- A tracking mechanism is established that ensures that every prior application by an individual for medical certification is recorded and reviewed;
- Medical certification regulations are updated periodically to permit trained MEs to clearly determine whether drivers with common medical conditions should be issued a medical certificate; and
- Individuals performing examinations have specific guidance and a readily identifiable source of information for questions on such examinations.

Medical Examiners

Who can perform FMCSA medical examinations for CMV drivers?

Beginning May 21, 2014, all MEs who wish to conduct medical examinations for interstate CMV drivers must (1) complete training about FMCSA's physical qualifications regulations and advisory criteria, and (2) pass the FMCSA certification test to be listed on the National Registry. All medical certificates issued on or after this date must be issued by certified MEs listed on the National Registry.

What must a ME do to become a certified ME?

To become a certified ME, a ME must complete the necessary training and pass the certification test required by FMCSA. In order to take the FMCSA certification test, the ME must first register through the National Registry website and receive a unique identification number. The ME will then provide ME's unique identification number to the testing organization selected from the list of approved testing organizations on the National Registry website.

Beginning May 21, 2014, CMV drivers in interstate commerce must use certified MEs listed on the National Registry to obtain a medical certificate. Medical certificates issued prior to this date are valid until the expiration date.

How can a healthcare professional obtain more information about the National Registry?

Go to the National Registry website at <http://nrcme.fmcsa.dot.gov> and read the information provided. For ongoing updates, register for the National Registry Listserv by selecting the link.

When will a ME be required to complete a training program?

Compliance Date – Effective May 21, 2014, all CMV drivers seeking a medical certificate must use a ME on the National Registry.

ME Registration Date – Beginning August 20, 2012, MEs may register at the National Registry website and receive their unique identification number that will be used to sign up for the mandatory certification testing.

How will a ME know that a training provider's program meets all of the National Registry requirements?

The ME candidate may visit the National Registry website at <http://nrcme.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 medical 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 and FMCSA point-of-contact information.

Although FMCSA posts contact information on the National Registry website for training organizations that send it to the National Registry, FMCSA does not approve or endorse training providers or courses. The ME candidate is required to determine whether a training course meets the regulatory requirements.

Where will MEs go to take the FMCSA certification test?

The test will be offered by private sector test delivery organizations throughout the United States. FMCSA will post contact information for testing organizations on the National Registry website. In addition, testing organizations may administer the test online with remote monitoring.

Are ME candidates required to pay for the training and testing?

Yes, ME candidates are responsible for paying any fees charged by the training and testing organizations. FMCSA neither establishes nor regulates the schedules of fees established and collected by training or testing organizations, and does not receive any monies collected by these organizations or providers. Training and testing providers are not reimbursed by the Federal government but may charge fees for training and test delivery.

If a ME candidate does not pass the FMCSA certification test, can the candidate take the test again?

If the candidate fails the test, he or she must wait at least 30 days before taking the test again.

How long will the ME's FMCSA certification be valid?

FMCSA will issue a certification document that will expire 10 years from the date of issuance. After the initial training and certification, a ME must complete periodic training every 5 years to refresh the ME's knowledge of both the medical standards for CMV drivers and any changes to FMCSA physical examination standards or guidelines.

MEs are required to complete recertification testing every 10 years. FMCSA may remove a ME from the National Registry if the ME does not complete the periodic training (after 5 years) or pass the recertification testing (after 10 years on the National Registry).

Do all MEs have to be certified?

Yes, all MEs who intend to perform physical examinations and issue medical certificates for interstate CMV drivers must complete the mandatory training and testing requirements in the National Registry rule by May 21, 2014.

How will the FMCSA certification test be administered?

The testing organizations may administer the certification test at a testing facility where ME candidates can take the certification test using test booklets and test forms, or using computer terminals.

Alternatively, the testing organization may provide an on-line testing option where the candidate may take the test from his or her office or other location provided the testing organization has a monitoring mechanism to detect cheating or other inappropriate activity during the on-line test.

What will MEs be required to do after they are added to the National Registry?

After a ME is certified to be on the National Registry, the ME must apply the qualifications standards consistently and uniformly during the physical examination of drivers. Each certified ME listed on the National Registry will also be required to complete and transmit to FMCSA once every calendar month the following information about each CMV driver examined during the previous month: (1) name, (2) date of birth, (3) driver's license number and State, (4) date of examination, (5) indication of physical examination outcome (for example, medically qualified), (6) whether intrastate driver only, and (7) date of driver medical certification expiration.

If a ME does not conduct any exams during any given month, the ME must submit that information. Data will be submitted electronically via a secure FMCSA National Registry website.

What Other Rules apply now that I'm certified?

Medical examiners also have to comply with the following administrative requirements as of May 21, 2014.

- Submit Form MCSA-5850 electronically via the National Registry every month for each driver examined. If no exams were done during the month, that must also be reported.
- Retain original certificate for a least 3 years from the date of the examination.
- Submit to periodic audits;
- Provide FMCSA with medical examination reports and other documents as requested.
- Continue to be licensed, registered or certified in accordance with the applicable State laws and regulations of each State in which you perform examinations with a scope of practice that includes performing physical examinations;
- Submit any changes in the application information to FMCSA within 30 days of the change.
- Report to FMCSA any information related to any termination, suspension or withdrawal of your license, registration or certificate under State law;
- Maintain documentation of State licensing, registration, or certification and completion of all required training (remember when you annually renew your state license, you need to provide FMCSA with your new expiration date)

- Maintain certification by completing periodic training every five years and recertify by passing the ME certification exam every 10 years.

Do I have to do all this reporting myself?

NO. Certified Medical Examiners (CMEs) may authorize support staff to access the National Registry system and perform certain activities on their behalf. Support staff must register in the National Registry system <https://nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov/NRPublicUI/AdminAssistReg.seam> and create their own accounts as administrative assistants. Next, the certified medical examiner designates each assistant as authorized to (on the medical examiner's behalf) transmit CMV driver exam data, and update contact information. The ME uses the administrative assistant's unique Registry number to complete the designation process.

I'm all done, now how do I maintain my certification?

FMCSA will issue a certification document that will expire 10 years from the date of issuance. After the initial training and certification, an ME must complete periodic training every 5 years to refresh his/her knowledge of both the medical standards for CMV drivers and any changes to FMCSA examination standards or guidelines. MEs are required to complete recertification testing every 10 years. FMCSA may remove an ME from the National Registry if he/she does not complete the periodic training (after 5 years) or pass the recertification test (after 10 years).

CMV Drivers / Carriers

What impact does the National Registry have on CMV drivers and motor carriers?

As of May 21, 2014, interstate CMV drivers are required to obtain physical examinations and a medical examiner's certificate from a certified ME listed on the National Registry website.

Is the National Registry program applicable to both interstate and intrastate CMV drivers?

Yes, to all interstate and certain intrastate drivers. Certain intrastate drivers, including those carrying hazardous materials, heavy loads, paid passengers, package delivery – UPS, FedEx, DHL, even if only driving within state boundaries, are required to be seen by a certified ME. States will continue to establish their own requirements for most intrastate drivers, although states that receive Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program ("MCSAP") grant funds are required to adopt regulations compatible with the Federal regulations – though they are not being required to establish their own state registries.

How is the driver medical certificate issued by a ME on the National Registry different from the current driver medical certificate?

The new driver medical certificate will contain the same medical information as the current driver medical certificate, but will now include the ME's National Registry number. Additionally, this rule assures that all medical examiners who perform physical exams for interstate truck and bus drivers are trained, tested and certified on the specific physical qualifications standards that affect a driver's ability to safely operate the vehicle.

Will the ME inform the State driver licensing agency (SDLA) that a driver has passed the physical examination?

No, it is up to CMV driver required to have a commercial driver license (CDL) to provide the medical certificate to the SDLA issuing the license. As of May 21, 2014, States will be required to enter the ME's National Registry number from the medical examiner's certificate into the Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS) for each non-excepted interstate CDL driver. A driver's medical certificate is valid until it expires. If the expiration date is after May 21, 2014, the driver must obtain a medical certificate from a certified ME listed on the National Registry.

Will FMCSA transmit the medical certificate information for interstate CDL drivers to the SDLAs?

Not at this time. The final rule provides for reporting to FMCSA by the MEs of medical certificate information for all interstate CMV drivers. The FMCSA is considering a new rule to require more frequent submission of medical certificate information by certified MEs and for FMCSA to transmit to the SDLAs that information for interstate CDL drivers required to have a medical certificate.

How will an employer or enforcement personnel verify that a ME is on the National Registry?

They may visit the National Registry website at <http://nrcme.fmcsa.dot.gov> and search the registry for the certified ME who provided the driver's medical certificate. They can search by ME name or National Registry number.

How will a driver/carrier find a certified ME?

ME candidates who pass the FMCSA certification test will be listed in an online registry located on the National Registry website. As of May 21, 2014, all interstate CMV drivers seeking a medical examination/certificate must use a certified ME listed on the National Registry.

To find a certified ME, visit the National Registry website at <http://nrcme.fmcsa.dot.gov> and conduct a basic or advanced search by: (1) city and state, (2) zip code, (3) ME's name, (4) business name, (5) employer name, (6) medical profession, (7) National Registry ID number.

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

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

If a driver loses the driver's medical card, can the driver get a replacement copy from the National Registry?

No. The National Registry is not intended to serve as a medical certificate database for drivers or carriers. For a driver to get a copy of the driver's signed medical certificate, the driver must contact the certified ME that issued it.

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

What happens to a certified ME who inappropriately or fraudulently certifies a driver?

Errors, omissions, or other indications of improper certification by a certified ME of a driver, in either the completed medical examination reports or the medical certificates, may result in FMCSA initiating an action to remove the certified ME from the National Registry. The final rule provides due process for addressing the removal of certified MEs from the National Registry.