

National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners

FAQs

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 advisory criteria. The National Registry web site (<https://nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov>) is accessible to carriers, drivers, enforcement officials, and the general public.

All healthcare professionals whose scope of practice authorizes them to perform physical examinations, as defined by the State of licensure, and who intend to perform physical examinations and issue medical certificates for commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers to meet the requirements of 49 CFR 391.41 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) must be certified and listed on FMCSA's National Registry by May 21, 2014; all medical certificates issued on or after this date must be issued by examiners on the National Registry.

Who is impacted by this program?

The program impacts medical examiners who need to be listed on the National Registry in order to continue issuing medical certificates for truck and bus drivers on or after May 21, 2014, interstate CMV drivers who need to obtain medical certificates, motor carriers who must ensure their interstate drivers have been medically certified by an examiner on the 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 of Certified Medical Examiners?

Yes. There are several open NTSB recommendations to FMCSA to develop a comprehensive medical oversight program for interstate drivers that includes the following elements:

- Individuals performing medical examinations for drivers are qualified to do so and are educated about occupational issues for drivers (H-01-017);
- A tracking mechanism is established that ensures that every prior application by an individual for medical certification is recorded and reviewed. (H-01-018);
- Medical certification regulations are updated periodically to permit trained examiners to clearly determine whether drivers with common medical conditions should be issued a medical certificate. (H-01-019); and
- Individuals performing examinations have specific guidance and a readily identifiable source of information for questions on such examinations (H-01-020).

The Agency will provide any additional technical assistance necessary for the NTSB to determine whether the recommendations have been satisfied through the rulemaking.

Medical Examiners

Who can perform FMCSA medical examinations for CMV drivers?

FMCSA's regulations require that all MEs be licensed, certified, and/or registered in accordance with applicable State laws and regulations to perform physical examinations. This includes but is not limited to doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathy, physician assistants, advanced practice nurses, and doctors of chiropractic.

MEs must be knowledgeable of the specific physical and mental demands associated with operating a CMV and the requirements of Section 391.43(c), including the medical advisory criteria prepared by the FMCSA as guidelines to aid the medical examiner in making the individual determination whether a driver should be issued a medical certificate, and be proficient in following the medical protocols necessary to adequately perform the medical examination.

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

What do I have to do to become a certified ME?

To become certified as a ME, you must register through the National Registry web site (<https://nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov>). Once registered, you will receive a unique identification number. You will then need to complete the necessary training and pass the certification test required by FMCSA. The National Registry web site provides program information to healthcare professionals who wish to become certified MEs, CMV drivers, motor carriers, training and testing organizations, and the general public.

CMV drivers who operate in interstate commerce must use MEs listed on the National Registry to obtain a medical certificate beginning May 21, 2014. Medical certificates issued prior to this date are valid until the expiration date. Contact information for the MEs is available online at the National Registry web site to drivers who wish to obtain a CMV driver physical examination.

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

Go to the National Registry web site <https://nationalregistry.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 May 21, 2014 – All interstate CMV drivers seeking a medical certificate must use a ME on the National Registry. Medical certificates issued prior to this date are valid until the expiration date.

MEs may register at the National Registry web site and receive their unique identification number that will be used to sign up for the mandatory training and testing.

How do MEs find training and testing organizations?

Visit the National Registry web site at <https://nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov> and go to the training and testing section for more information.

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

The ME candidate may visit the National Registry web site 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 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 web site 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 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 web site. In addition, testing organizations may administer the test online with remote monitoring.

IMPORTANT: It is your responsibility to keep your contact and licensing information up to date on the National Registry. If your license has expired or your name changes, you **MUST** put the correct information into the National Registry. Be sure to update the contact (e.g. name, address, etc.) and medical licensing information (e.g. license expires, license number, license state, etc.) you entered when registering on the National Registry website when there are changes. If the contact and medical licensing information you entered during registration on the National Registry website does not match the credentials you present to the test center, you will not be allowed to take the exam.

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

Yes. The ME candidate is 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. The providers are responsible for the entire process of fee determination, collection, and refund, if warranted. The providers are also responsible for any advertising of their services, determining the schedules for training and testing sessions, and managing requests for training and testing.

If an ME candidate does not pass the test can he/she 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 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 his or 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 a ME from the National Registry if he or she does not complete the periodic training (after 5 years) or pass the recertification testing (after 10 years on the National Registry).

Do all medical examiners 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. The requirements are set forth in Section 390.101 through 390.115 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs).

If I attended a medical examiner training course prior to the publication of the rule, does that qualify me to take the certification test?

Yes, provided the curriculum for the training course meets the core curriculum specifications and covers all the topics outlined in the final rule, the training organization is accredited by a nationally-recognized medical profession accrediting organization that provides continuing medical education units, and proof of participation and FMCSA contact information is provided to training participants. A medical examiner candidate must pass the certification test within 3 years after completing initial training for initial certification or for reinstatement if FMCSA requires the medical examiner candidate to retake the initial training.

How will the exam be administered?

The testing organizations may administer the exam at a testing facility where candidates can take the examination 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 an examiner is certified to be on the National Registry, the examiner must apply the qualifications standards consistently and uniformly during the examination of drivers. Each 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: name, date of birth, driver's license number and State, date of examination, an indication of the examination outcome (for example, medically qualified), whether intrastate driver only, and date of driver medical certification expiration. If the ME does not conduct any exams during any given month, he/she must submit that information. Data will be submitted

electronically via a secure FMCSA National Registry web site.

Are there any other requirements that a ME must adhere to after they are added to the National Registry?

Yes, MEs also have to comply with the following administrative requirements as of May 21, 2014:

- Submit Form MCSA-5850 for each driver examined electronically every month via the National Registry web site. If no exams were performed during the month, that must also be reported;
- Retain original completed Medical Examination Reports for all drivers examined and a copy or electronic version of the driver's medical examiner's certificate for at least 3 years from the date of the examination;
- Submit to periodic audits;
- Provide FMCSA with medical examination report forms 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; and
- Maintain documentation of State licensing, registration, or certification and completion of all required training.