

280-RICR-30-05-1

TITLE 280 – DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

CHAPTER 30 – DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES

SUBCHAPTER 05 – LICENSING

PART 1 – Rules and Regulations Governing Applicants for Commercial Driver's Licenses, Permits, Renewals and Endorsements

1.1 Authority

Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-10.3-8, the Administrator of the Division Motor Vehicles is authorized to adopt and enforce rules and regulations necessary to administer the provisions of the Uniform Commercial Driver's License Act, contained in R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-10.3-1 *et seq.*

1.2 Purpose

In implementing these Rules and Regulations, the Administrator of the Division of Motor Vehicles seeks to ensure public safety by strengthening commercial driver licensing standards. These Rules and Regulations establish standards to be used in determining eligibility of applicants for commercial driver's licenses, renewals, permits and endorsements, as well as the hearing and appeal process that shall be followed in the event that an application is denied, pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-10.3-8.

1.3 Incorporated Materials

These regulations hereby adopt and incorporate 49 C.F.R Part 391 (2018) by reference, not including any further editions or amendments thereof and only to the extent that the provisions therein are not inconsistent with these regulations.

1.4 Definitions

A. For the purposes of this Part, the following terms shall have the following meaning:

1. "Act" means the Administrative Procedures Act, R.I. Gen. Laws Chapter 42-35.
2. "Administrator" means the Administrator or Chief of the Division of Motor Vehicles.

3. "Applicant" means any person who applies to the Division of Motor Vehicles for a commercial driver's license, renewal, permit or endorsement.
4. "Application" means an official Division of Motor Vehicles' application for commercial driver's license, renewal, permit or endorsement.
5. "Commercial motor vehicle" or "CMV" means a motor vehicle or combination of vehicles used to transport passengers or property if the motor vehicle:
 - a. Has a gross combination weight rating of twenty-six thousand one (26,001) or more pounds, of a towed unit(s) with a gross vehicle weight rating of more than ten thousand (10,000) pounds, or has a gross vehicle weight rating of twenty-six thousand one (26,001) or more pounds;
 - b. Is designed to transport sixteen (16) or more passengers including the driver; or
 - c. Is transporting hazardous materials as defined in these Regulations. (R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-10.3-3)
6. "Conviction" means an unvacated adjudication of guilt or a determination that a person has violated or failed to comply with the law in a court of original jurisdiction or by an authorized administrative tribunal, an unvacated forfeiture of bail or collateral deposited to secure the person's appearance in court, a plea of guilty or nolo contendere accepted by the court, the payment of a fine or court cost or violation of condition of release without bail, regardless of whether or not the penalty is rebated, suspended, or probated. See, R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-10.3-3(11).
7. "Department" means the State of Rhode Island Department of Revenue, a department in the executive branch of state government that is located at One Capitol Hill, Providence, Rhode Island 02908, or any successor Department.
8. "Director" means the Director of the State of Rhode Island Department of Revenue, or any successor Department.
9. "Division" or "DMV" means the division that exists within the State of Rhode Island Department of Revenue or any successor Department, pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-142-1.
10. "Disqualification" means withdrawal of the privilege to drive a commercial motor vehicle due to:

- a. The suspension, revocation, or cancellation of a commercial driver's license by the state or jurisdiction of issuance; or
 - b. Any withdrawal of a person's privileges to drive a commercial motor vehicle by a state or other jurisdiction as the result of a violation of state or local law relating to motor vehicle traffic control (other than parking, vehicle weight or vehicle defect violations); or
 - c. A determination by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration that a person is not qualified to operate a commercial motor vehicle under 49 C.F.R. § 391.
- 11. "Endorsement" means an authorization on an individual's commercial driver's license required to permit the individual to operate certain types of commercial motor vehicles.
 - 12. "Hazardous materials" means any material that has been designated as hazardous under 49 U.S.C. § 5103 and is required to be placarded under subpart F of 49 C.F.R. § 172 or any quantity of a material listed as a select agent or toxin in 42 C.F.R. § 73.
 - 13. "Hearing" means any contested case that is brought before the Administrator of the Division of Motor Vehicles.
 - 14. "License" means a Commercial Driver's License (CDL), a license issued in accordance with state and federal standards which allows the license holder to operate a specified class of commercial motor vehicle.
 - 15. "Medical Advisory Board" means an advisory panel established pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-10-44. When any person's eligibility or continuing eligibility for a license is questioned on the grounds of physical or mental fitness, the Administrator of the Division of Motor Vehicles may consult with relevant specialist members of the Medical Advisory Board in determining that person's qualifications to operate a motor vehicle.
 - 16. "Moving violation" means any violation of the law committed by the driver of a vehicle, while the vehicle is in motion.
 - 17. "Permit" means a commercial driver's permit issued in accordance with state and federal standards which allows the permit holder to operate a specified class of commercial motor vehicle under specified conditions.
 - 18. "Person" means any individual, partnership, corporation, limited liability company, association, governmental subdivision, public or private organization or any other entity however formed.
 - 19. "Renewal" means the reissuance of a license, permit or endorsement, the term of which has expired.

1.5 Minimum Eligibility for Commercial Driver's License, Permit, or Endorsement

- A. At the time of submitting an application, the applicant must have been a licensed driver for a minimum of two (2) years. Time periods during which the applicant's driving privileges were suspended shall not be used in computing the two (2) year minimum.
- B. At the time of submitting the application, the applicant must be physically qualified to safely operate a commercial motor vehicle in accordance with applicable requirements of 49 C.F.R. § 391, incorporated in § 1.3 of this Part.

1.6 Grounds for Mandatory Ineligibility for Issuance of a Commercial Driver's License, Permit, or Endorsement

- A. The Division of Motor Vehicles shall not issue a commercial driver's license, permit or endorsement to any person determined to fall within any of the following categories:
 - 1. Within a three (3) year period prior to submitting the application, the applicant has been convicted of any of the offenses set forth in any of the following sections of the Rhode Island General Laws:
 - a. Offenses resulting in mandatory suspension
 - b. Reckless driving and other offenses against public safety
 - c. Eluding a law enforcement officer with a motor vehicle
 - 2. Within a two (2) year period prior to submitting the application, the applicant has been convicted of three or more moving violations within a twelve (12) month period. Parking tickets shall not be considered moving violations.
 - 3. Within a five (5) year period prior to submitting the application, the applicant has been convicted of one or more violations or offenses set forth in R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 31-27-1 through 31-27-2.7.
 - 4. At the time of submitting the application, the applicant's driving privileges are suspended or revoked.
 - 5. Within a three (3) year period prior to submitting the application, the applicant's driving privileges have been suspended. Suspensions not based on moving violations will not be considered in applying this particular provision.

6. Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-11-3, the Division of Motor Vehicles may regard out of state convictions for similar offenses or violations of the same gravity and carrying similar penalties as those listed herein for purposes of determining license, permit or endorsement eligibility.
7. At the time of submitting the application, the applicant is subject to any disqualification under 49 C.F.R. § 383.51, pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-10.3-31(n).

1.7 Grounds for Mandatory Ineligibility for Renewal

- A. The Division of Motor Vehicles shall not issue a renewal to any person determined to fall within any of the following categories:
 1. At the time of submitting the renewal application, the applicant's driving privileges are suspended or revoked.
 2. At the time of submitting the renewal application, the applicant is subject to any disqualification under 49 C.F.R. § 383.51, pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-10.3-31(n).

1.8 Grounds for Discretionary Ineligibility for Issuance of a Commercial Driver's License, Permit, Renewal or Endorsement

- A. Unless at a hearing it is determined that operation of a commercial vehicle by the applicant would not pose a risk to the safety and welfare of the general public, the Division of Motor Vehicles shall not issue a commercial driver's license, permit, renewal or endorsement to any person determined to fall within the following categories:
 1. Where the application contains inaccurate or incomplete information;
 2. Where other information obtained from a reliable source during the course of the application process presents the person to whom the application has been made with reasonable suspicion that the applicant is not fit or competent to safely operate a commercial motor vehicle. Any DMV employee who refuses to issue a commercial driver's license, permit, renewal or endorsement to any applicant pursuant to this rule shall specify in writing the factual basis for the denial, which must relate directly to an incident during which the applicant was driving a motor vehicle, and identify the source of the information which led to the denial. This information shall be provided to the applicant at the time of denial. Any DMV employee who refuses to issue a commercial driver's license, permit, renewal or endorsement to any applicant pursuant to this rule shall not use as the basis for denial any incident which would not be cause for denial under or in direct contravention to any other rule within these Rules and Regulations.

1.9 Notice of Denial

The Division of Motor Vehicles shall notify in writing any individual whose application for a commercial driver's license, renewal, permit or endorsement has been denied. The notice shall contain the legal and factual basis for the denial, the procedure for requesting a hearing and a description of the individual's rights during the appeals process, as set forth in R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-11-7(b).

1.10 Hearing

A. Request

1. Upon receiving a hearing request from an individual whose application has been denied, the Division of Motor Vehicles shall afford a hearing as early as practical, but no later than twenty (20) days after receiving the request, as set forth in R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-11-7(b).

B. Conduct of hearing

1. An individual whose application has been denied will be afforded the following rights at the hearing:
 - a. A hearing before an impartial decision-maker;
 - b. The opportunity to compel the production of documents and witnesses, including members of the Division of Motor Vehicles' Medical Advisory Board;
 - c. The opportunity to confront and cross-examine witnesses;
 - d. Access to all of the evidence upon which the Division of Motor Vehicles relied in making its determination to suspend; and
 - e. The right to present any and all relevant evidence including the right to obtain and present the results of a recently administered road test, as set forth in R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-11-7(d).

C. Decision

1. After the hearing, the Division of Motor Vehicles shall issue a written decision within thirty (30) days after the hearing based solely on the evidence adduced at the hearing and containing the legal and factual basis for the determination. The Division of Motor Vehicles may:
 - a. Rescind its order of denial;
 - b. Determine that denial is not warranted; or

- c. Deny the license application, as set forth in R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-11-7(f).

1.11 Appeals

- A. Any person aggrieved by any order of the Administrator of the Division of Motor Vehicles regarding license denial may appeal the order to the sixth division of the district court by filing, within ten (10) days from the date of the notice to such person of the issuance of the order appealed from, a petition in the Sixth Division District Court stating the grounds upon which the appeal is taken, as set forth in R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-11-15.
- B. A party aggrieved by a final order of the court may seek further appellate review pursuant to the procedures set forth in R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-35-15.

1.12 Renewals

- A. Licenses shall be renewed every five (5) years.
- B. Any individual seventy (70) years of age or older shall be required to renew their license every two (2) years and shall be required to pass a skills test at the time of renewal. The skills test will not be required so long as the renewal applicant is in possession of a valid medical examination certificate issued pursuant to 49 C.F.R. §§ 391.41 through 391.49, incorporated in § 1.3 of this Part.

1.13 Liberal Construction

The terms and provisions of these Rules and Regulations shall be liberally construed to permit the Division of Motor Vehicles to effectuate the purposes of state law, goals, and policies.

1.14 Severability

If any provision of these Rules and Regulations or the application thereof to any person or circumstances shall be held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the provisions or application of the Rules and Regulations which can be given effect, and to this end the provisions of these Rules and Regulations are declared to be severable.

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