

FMCSA Allows States to Grant Automatic Extension of Expiring CDLs, CLPs and Medical Certificates

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) issued emergency guidance yesterday permitting state licensing authorities to automatically extend certain CDL credential renewal deadlines required under federal regulations. This guidance is important to petroleum marketers and heating fuel dealers because it ensures that CDL credentials expiring during the COVID-19 declaration of national emergency will remain valid. CDL credentialing that may be automatically extended under the FMCSA guidance include:

- Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDL)
- Commercial Learner's Permit (CLP)
- CDL Driver Medical Certificates

State licensing agencies may extend the expiration dates for CDLs, CLPs and medical certificates if the facilities that issue those credentials have been closed, have restricted access, or for individuals who are unable to access those facilities because of COVID-19 concerns. Ordinarily, state licensing agencies would be found in substantial noncompliance with FMCSA requirements and lose federal highway funds by extending expiring deadlines. The FMCSA guidance allows the period of extension to last so long as the national declaration of emergency issued for the COVID-19 is in effect.

However, the FMCSA guidance does not address expiring hazardous material endorsements or provide for a transition period for drivers to renew medical certificates, CDLs and CLPs once the emergency declaration is over. Without a transition period for renewal, CDLs, CPLs and medical certificates will expire automatically when the emergency declaration expires. As a result, thousands of drivers across the country would find their driving status reclassified as “non-qualified” on the same day.

PMAA has reached out to the FMCSA, the TSA and PHMSA requesting a renewal extension for expiring HAZMAT endorsements and a CDL credential renewal transition period to ensure uninterrupted driver qualification status.

It is important to note that the FMCSA guidance only gives permission for states to extend expiring CDL credentials if they choose. The choice to do so or not is left up to each individual state.

The FMCSA Guidance to state licensing agencies can be found [here](#).