

LEGAL UPDATES

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FMCSA Announces 18 Proposed Rule Changes Affecting the Trucking Industry

This week, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) announced a slew of proposed rule changes—18 in all—designed to streamline operations, reduce unnecessary paperwork, and align regulations with modern practices. Here are some of the highlights:

Modification of “medical treatment” in accident reporting: The agency plans to redefine “medical treatment” to exclude diagnostic imaging such as x-rays and CT scans, which will reduce the number of reportable accidents. Under the new rule, only “treatment for diagnosed injuries or other medical intervention directly related to the accident” will be considered “medical treatment.”

Removal of self-reporting requirement: The FMCSA proposes to eliminate the requirement for commercial driver's license (CDL) holders to self-report motor vehicle violations to their state. This change is due to the implementation of an exclusive electronic exchange of violations between state drivers licensing agencies, making self-reporting unnecessary.

CDL standards for military personnel: A new rule would “allow dual-status military technicians, regardless of whether they are members of either the reserves or the National Guard, to qualify for the military exception from the CDL standards,” aligning them with active-duty military personnel who are currently subject to the exemption.

Vehicle examination reports: In response to a petition, the FMCSA proposes to change the requirement for motor carriers and intermodal equipment providers to sign and return completed roadside inspection forms to the issuing state agency. This change addresses the issue of unnecessary paperwork, as not all states review the returned inspection reports.

No more ELD operator's manual in the cab: The requirement for drivers to carry a physical ELD user manual in the cab has been removed. While drivers are still responsible for knowing how to use the ELD, manuals can now be stored online, reducing clutter in the cab and the chance of citations for missing booklets.

What this means to you

If these FMCSA proposals are adopted, you can expect less paperwork, fewer reportable accidents, and more streamlined compliance. Drivers will no longer need to self-report violations or carry paper ELD manuals, and military personnel may have expanded CDL exemptions. Carriers will also see reduced administrative requirements for roadside inspections. These changes will require your company to update its compliance practices accordingly.

Contact us

If you have questions regarding FMCSA rulemakings, please contact Julie Maurer, Aaron Schepler, or your Husch Blackwell attorney.