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# FMCSA COMPLIANCE MANUAL

## Introduction

For more than a century, the U.S. government has taken an interest in making sure that the nation's transportation system operates in a safe and efficient manner. Since at least the 1930's, that interest has extended to include the transportation of goods and passengers by commercial motor vehicle

(CMV) on public roadways. The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) is charged with ensuring that commercial trucks, buses, and other vehicles are operated safely, to prevent accidents, injuries, and fatalities.

Since 2000, responsibility for overseeing the regulation of commercial vehicles has fallen to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The FMCSA's primary mission is to prevent CMV-related fatalities and injuries. This is accomplished in part by enforcing federal laws and regulations, and particularly the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs). The FMCSA Compliance Manual is designed to help companies and individuals comply with a majority of the FMCSRs as they relate to safe vehicle operations.

This manual is divided into six major sections, each focusing on a different compliance topic. Within each section are plain-English "Easy Explanations," the FMCSRs and official interpretations that apply to that topic, and any other pertinent reference materials. Each major section of the manual is designed to stand alone, so in some cases information is repeated or restated when it applies to multiple topics. Section I, Fundamentals, sets the stage for understanding the FMCSRs and how they apply. The sections that follow address personnel issues, hours of service, vehicle compliance, driving-related regulations, enforcement programs, and penalties that can result from non-compliance.

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