

Basic Commercial Motor Vehicle Requirements

The below listed information has been provided from the 11th edition of the Truck Driver's Guide Book. The guide book is available upon request at the Livingston County Sheriff Department front desk. The book provides more information than is listed below. The information provided is "basic" information for those operating a commercial vehicle in Michigan and the United States.

The information provided below describes "some" but not all requirements for vehicles/drivers/owners operating a commercial motor vehicle within Michigan and the United States.

Useful Websites:

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations: www.fmcsa.dot.gov

Michigan Motor Vehicle Code: www.michigan.gov/msp

Livingston County Road Commission: www.livingstonroads.org

Michigan Center for Truck Safety: www.truckingsafety.org

Michigan State Police Traffic Safety Division (formerly known as the Motor Carrier Division): www.michigan.gov/motorcarrier

Michigan Secretary of State: www.michigan.gov/sos

Michigan Department of Transportation: www.michigan.gov/mdot

Commercial Motor Vehicle under Michigan Law:

Michigan Motor Vehicle Code 257.7

"Commercial Vehicle" includes all motor vehicles used for the transportation of passengers for hire, or constructed or used for transportation of goods, wares or merchandise, and/or all motor vehicles designed and used for drawing other vehicles and not so constructed as to carry any load thereon either independently or any part of the weight of a vehicle or load so drawn.

Definition of a Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) under Federal Regulations:
FMCSR 390.5

Any self-propelled or towed motor vehicle used on a highway in interstate or intrastate commerce to transport passengers or property when the vehicle:

- 1) Has a gross vehicle weight rating or gross combination weight rating, gross vehicle weight or gross combination weight of 10,001 lbs or more, whichever is greater; or
- 2) Is designed or used to transport more than eight passengers (including the driver) for compensation; or
- 3) Is designed or used to transport more than 15 passengers, including the driver, and is not used to transport passengers for compensation; or
- 4) Is used in transporting material found by the Secretary of Transportation to be hazardous under 49 USC 5103 and transported in a quantity requiring placarding under regulations prescribed by the secretary und 49 CFR, subtitle B, chapter 1, subchapter C.

** The gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) can “usually” be found on the driver side door of the vehicle on the blue and black manufacturer sticker. The weight will be listed to the right of the letters (GVWR). The GVWR on trailers is “usually” located on the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) plate on the side or tongue of the trailer.

Vehicle Requirements:

Most vehicles being used in commerce are required to have the below listed information. Log books are also sometimes required depending on the distance the vehicle travels. The owner / operator of the vehicles should follow up with one of the above listed agencies to confirm the requirements to operate their vehicle legally and lawfully on the roadway.

License Requirements:

When vehicles are being used in commerce within Michigan between 5,000 lbs and 26,000 pounds the driver “usually” only needs a valid operator’s license, excluding those driving a vehicle which transports passengers or hazardous materials. While transporting passengers a Chauffer’s or Commercial Driver’s License is required depending on size and passenger limit. Any vehicle operated over 26,001 lbs or hauling hazardous materials is required to have a valid Commercial Driver’s License.

** For further information on license requirements it is strongly encouraged that you consult with your local Secretary of State Office.

Vehicle Identification Requirement under Michigan Law:
Michigan Motor Vehicle Code 257.723

All commercial vehicles registered in Michigan with a single or combination gross weight rating or total gross weight of more than 5,000 lbs, and all towing or platform bed wreckers, must have the name, city and state or registered logo or emblem of the registered owner of the vehicle, and lessee of the vehicle if it is being operated under lease, painted or permanently attached on each side of the vehicle, with letters not less than three inches in height and not lower than the bottom edge of the door.

Except for towing or platform bed wrecker road service vehicle, the identification requirements of the subsection may be met through the use of removable devices.

This does not apply to a truck eligible for and registered under a farm or manufacturer license plate that has a gross vehicle weight of less than 10,000 lbs.

NOTE: Vehicles displaying USDOT number need only comply with the identification requirements contained in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (390.21).

USDOT Registration (USDOT NUMBER):
FMCSR 390.21

Michigan Motor carriers operating a commercial motor vehicle (over 10,001 lbs described above) in interstate or intrastate commerce must apply for and display a USDOT number on both sides of each commercial vehicle it operates. Carriers may register online at <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov> or by calling the Michigan State Police Traffic Safety Division at (888)464-8736.

** Also required on both sides of the vehicle are the name of the company and the state which it is operated out of.

Medical Examiner's Certificate (Medical Card):
FMCSR 391.43

A document issued by a medical examiner to a commercial motor vehicle driver certifying the driver is medically qualified under state and/or federal standards to operate a commercial motor vehicle.

NOTE: The certificate or a copy must be carried by the driver when operating a commercial motor vehicle, and the employer is required to keep either the original or a copy in the driver's qualification file.

** Medical cards may be obtained usually from your family doctor.

Annual Inspection of Vehicles:
FMCSR, Part 396.17

Every CMV shall be inspected (and not used until completed):

- 1) At least once every 12 months by a qualified inspector and;
- 2) At a minimum, pass the inspection criteria of FMCSR Appendix G; and
- 3) Must have the following documentation on the vehicle:
 - a) Copy of the periodic inspection form, OR
 - b) Other forms of documentation; and
- 4) For at least 14 months following the inspection, a motor carrier must retain the inspection; a motor carrier must retain the original or a copy of the annual inspection report for each vehicle under its control and make them available for review.

** The vehicle and trailer (if applicable) must **each** have an annual inspection completed.

** Two known places in Livingston County that perform annual inspections are Reliable Fleet Services on Grand River near the airport (M-59) and Howell Auto on Schroeder Park Driver off of D-19 south of I-96.

Emergency Equipment:
FMCSR 393.95

Commercial Motor Vehicles are required to carry a charged, securely mounted and readily accessible fire extinguisher. Also located in the vehicle must be at least one spare fuse for any required part and accessory along with three triangles or flares in case the vehicle breaks down.

** Triangles are reusable and flares can not be used if carrying flammable cargo.

Size and Weight Restrictions for Livingston County Roads:

Owners / Operators should consult with the Livingston County Road Commission or the Michigan Department of Transportation in regards to restrictions and requirements for operating on restricted roads. The road commission maintains requirements for weight/size restrictions and frost laws throughout the county as well as general requirements for all roadways. The Livingston County Road Commission phone number is (517)546-4250.

The above listed information has been provided to assist those operating a business not only within Livingston County but also in the United States. The preceding information is the “BASIC” requirements for driver’s and operators of such vehicles. For further information you should either contact the Livingston County Sheriff Department Traffic Safety Bureau, the Michigan State Police Traffic Safety Division, or one of the above listed websites.