

What Drivers Need to Know About DOT Compliance

Drivers must be knowledgeable of their responsibilities and rules under [49 CFR Parts 300-399](#) of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. The following are some of the most common, but not all, regulations impacting drivers.

Staying Qualified to Drive (Part §391)

- Drivers must pass a “DOT” physical every two years administered by an approved doctor listed on the [DOT's National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners](#). Drivers must submit a copy of the medical certification (card) to their employer and the certificate must be in their possession while on duty. Commercial Drivers License (CDL) holders must self-certify their medical certificate with the state issuing their CDL; which links the medical certificate to their CDL.
- A driver should notify their employer and remove themselves from driving responsibilities if their medical situation changes which renders them unqualified. This includes use of prescribed medications that would impact their ability to drive safely.
- Drivers must possess the correct license. A driver that is notified that their license has been revoked, suspended or withdrawn must notify their employer within one day of notification. CDL holders must report all moving violation convictions to their employer and the state which issued their CDL.
- Drivers must annually furnish their employer a list of motor traffic violations (other than parking) of which the driver was convicted during the preceding 12 months.



Driver Impairment



- **§392.3:** No driver shall operate a vehicle while the driver's ability or alertness is impaired, or likely to become impaired, through fatigue, illness, or any other cause.
- **§392.4:** No driver shall possess, be under the influence of, or use, any Schedule 1 drug, a narcotic drug, an amphetamine including “pep pills”, or any other substances which renders them incapable of safely operating a vehicle.
- **§392.5:** No driver shall use alcohol or be under the influence of alcohol (any measured alcohol concentration) while on duty or within 4 hours of going on duty. No alcohol allowed in vehicle except as shipped cargo.
- **§382:** CDL holders are subject to additional drug and alcohol rules and testing.

Vehicle Inspections and Load Securement

- **§391 and §396:** A driver must complete pre- and post-trip inspections to assure safety equipment (fire extinguisher and warning triangles) is in place and the vehicle is in safe operating condition. Safety related defects must be documented and corrected before the vehicle is operated.
- **§396.17:** The vehicle's annual inspection should be in or on (sticker) the vehicle.
- **§392.9:** Drivers must ensure cargo is properly secured and re-check after every change in duty status as well as every three hours or 150 miles, whichever comes first.
- **§396.9:** Drivers must stop at DOT inspection stations when directed to do so. Inspection reports are to be submitted to employer within 24 hours. A driver must not operate the vehicle if issued an out-of-service order until repairs have been made.



Part §395: Hours of Service



Drivers are required to adhere to hours-of-service regulations which limit daily work (on-duty) hours and driving time and require drivers to complete a timecard or log.

[Summary of FMCSA Hours of Service Regulations](#)

Transportation of Hazardous Materials



Drivers hauling hazardous materials must comply with Part §397 and Parts §171-180 of the Hazardous Materials Regulations. Drivers hauling limited quantities of hazmat related to their operations may fall into the Materials of Trade Exception §173.6.

[Materials of Trade Summary](#)

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§392.14: Adverse Driving Conditions

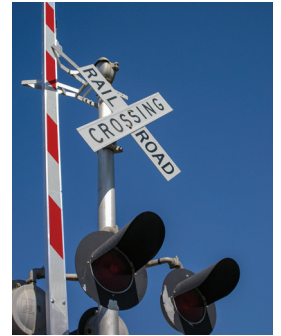
Drivers must use extreme caution when hazardous conditions, such as those caused by snow, ice, sleet, fog, mist, rain, dust, or smoke, adversely affect visibility or traction. Speed shall be reduced when such conditions exist. If conditions become sufficiently dangerous, the trip should be ended when at a safe location to stop.



§392.10, §392.11 and §392.12: Rail Crossings and Trains



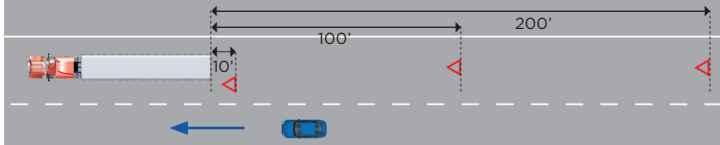
Drivers are to slow and use caution at rail crossings and not drive onto the crossing without having sufficient space to drive completely through without stopping or enough ground clearance. Drivers operating a bus or hauling placarded quantities of hazardous materials are required to stop 15-50 feet before tracks and check for trains.



§392.22 : Emergency Breakdowns

When stopped on a roadway or shoulder when broken down, hazard warning signal flashers (4-way) must be activated immediately and continue until warning devices (reflective triangles) are placed. Warning devices are to be placed out as soon as possible and generally follow the configurations below.

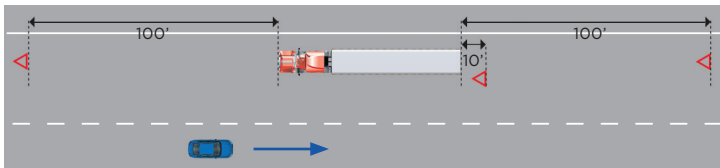
One-way or divided highway



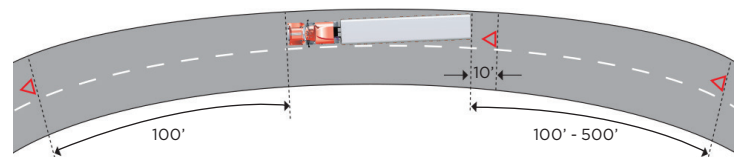
Obstructed view



Two-way or undivided highway



Obstructed view



Other Rules



§392.16: Seatbelts are required for the driver and all passengers sitting in seats equipped with them.



§392.80 and §392.802: No driver shall use a hand-held phone or text while driving.



§392.71: Use of radar detectors are prohibited.