



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

[4910-EX-P]

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-FMCSA- 2017-0326]

**Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Implantable Cardioverter
Defibrillators**

AGENCY: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of applications for exemption; request for comments.

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces receipt of applications from seven individuals for an exemption from the prohibition in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) against operation of a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) by persons with a current clinical diagnosis of myocardial infarction, angina pectoris, coronary insufficiency, thrombosis, or any other cardiovascular disease of a variety known to be accompanied by syncope, dyspnea, collapse, or congestive heart failure. If granted, the exemptions would enable these individuals with implantable cardioverter defibrillators (ICDs) to operate CMVs in interstate commerce.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before [Insert date 30 days after date of publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments bearing the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) Docket ID FMCSA-FMCSA-2017-0326 using any of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- **Mail:** Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

- Hand Delivery: West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.
- Fax: 1-202-493-2251.

Instructions: Each submission must include the Agency name and the docket number for this notice. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided. Please see the Privacy Act heading below for further information.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments, go to <http://www.regulations.gov>, at any time or Room W12-140 on the ground level of the West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The FDMS is available 24 hours each day, 365 days each year. If you want acknowledgment that we received your comments, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or postcard or print the acknowledgement page that appears after submitting comments online.

Privacy Act: In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553(c), DOT solicits comments from the public to better inform its rulemaking process. DOT posts these comments, without edit, including any personal information the commenter provides, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, as described in the system records notice (DOT/ALL-14 FDMS), which can be reviewed at <http://www.dot.gov/privacy>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Christine A. Hydock, Chief, Medical Programs Division, (202) 366-4001, fmcsamedical@dot.gov, FMCSA, Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Room W64-224, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

Office hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. If you have questions regarding viewing or submitting material to the docket, contact Docket Services, telephone (202) 366-9826.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, FMCSA may grant an exemption from the FMCSRs for a five-year period if it finds “such exemption would likely achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to or greater than the level that would be achieved absent such exemption.” The statute also allows the Agency to renew exemptions at the end of the five-year period. FMCSA grants exemptions from the FMCSRs for a two-year period to align with the maximum duration of a driver’s medical certification.

The seven individuals listed in this notice have requested an exemption from 49 CFR 391.41(b)(4). Accordingly, the Agency will evaluate the qualifications of each applicant to determine whether granting the exemption will achieve the required level of safety mandated by statute.

The physical qualification standard found in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(4) states that a person is physically qualified to drive a CMV if that person has no current clinical diagnosis of myocardial infarction, angina pectoris, coronary insufficiency, thrombosis, or any other cardiovascular disease of a variety known to be accompanied by syncope, dyspnea, collapse, or congestive cardiac failure.

In addition to the regulations, FMCSA has published advisory criteria¹ to assist Medical Examiners in determining whether drivers with certain medical conditions are qualified to

¹ See http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=e47b48a9ea42dd67d999246e23d97970&mc=true&node=pt49.5.391&rgn=div5#ap49.5.391_171.a and

operate a CMV in interstate commerce. [49 CFR part 391, APPENDIX A TO PART 391—
MEDICAL ADVISORY CRITERIA, section D. Cardiovascular: § 391.41(b)(4), paragraph 4.]

The advisory criteria states that ICDs are disqualifying due to risk of syncope.

II. Qualifications of Applicants

Frank D’Ercole

Mr. D’Ercole is a 77 year old CDL holder in New Jersey. An October 30, 2017 letter from his cardiologist states that his ICD was implanted in June 2017 and that since that time he has had no event on his AICD implant. His exercise test in May 2017 showed good exercise capacity.

Myles Goodwin

Mr. Goodwin is a 54 year old driver in New Hampshire. A May 2017 letter from his cardiologist states that his ICD was implanted in February 2015 and at the time of the letter had not deployed. As of February 2017, his cardiac issues were well controlled.

Cody Hairr

Mr. Hairr is a 23 year old driver in North Carolina. Medical documentation from his cardiologist dated September 2017 and a cardiologist letter without a date indicates that his ICD was implanted in 2013 and has not discharged since it was implanted. The letter states that he has no dizziness, lightheadedness, palpitations, chest pain, undue shortness of breath, exercise intolerance or syncope since ICD placement. His cardiologist states that from a cardiac standpoint, we have not limited [him] from any activities or concerns related to syncope.

Dennis R. Pickett

Mr. Pickett is a 78 year old Class A CDL holder in Indiana. An April 2017 letter from his cardiologist indicates that his permanent pacemaker was upgraded to a biventricular automatic implantable cardioverter defibrillator in February 2017 and has not deployed since that time. His cardiologist states that Mr. Pickett has not reported any syncopal episodes and that he plans to follow up visits for him every three months.

William E. Richardson, Jr.

Mr. Richardson is a 55 year old driver in Michigan. A December 20, 2017 letter from his cardiologist states that Mr. Richardson underwent ICD implant in August 2017 and that he has no history of ICD being deployed. At his last visit in November 2017 he had had almost complete resolution of symptoms and showed no arrhythmias since implant.

Terry Stephens

Mr. Stephens is a 54 year old Class A CDL holder in Virginia. An August 2017 letter from his cardiologist states that his biventricular ICD was implanted in April 2015. The cardiologist's letter also states that Mr. Stephens does not have symptoms related to his underlying condition, has not had any episodes of loss of consciousness, has an ejection fraction of 45 per cent on echocardiogram, and is NYHA class I symptomatically.

Jeffrey A. Weiner

Mr. Weiner is a 56 year old driver in Minnesota. A May 2017 letter from his cardiologist states that his ICD was implanted in July 2014, has not deployed since it was implanted, and is now asymptomatic. The letter states that his current underlying heart condition is well compensated.

III. Request for Comments

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, FMCSA requests public comment from all interested persons on the exemption petitions described in this notice. We will consider all comments received before the close of business on the closing date indicated in the dates section of the notice.

IV. Submitting Comments

You may submit your comments and material online or by fax, mail, or hand delivery, but please use only one of these means. FMCSA recommends that you include your name and a mailing address, an email address, or a phone number in the body of your document so that FMCSA can contact you if there are questions regarding your submission.

To submit your comment online, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and in the search box insert the docket number FMCSA-2017-0326 and click the search button. When the new screen appears, click on the blue "Comment Now!" button on the right hand side of the page. On the new page, enter information required including the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation. If you submit your comments by mail or hand delivery, submit them in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing. If you submit comments by mail and would like to know that they reached the facility, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope.

We will consider all comments and materials received during the comment period. FMCSA may issue a final determination any time after the close of the comment period.

V. Viewing Comments and Documents

To view comments, as well as any documents mentioned in this preamble, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and in the search box insert the docket number FMCSA-2017-0326 and click “Search.” Next, click “Open Docket Folder” and you will find all documents and comments related to this notice.

Issued on: January 25, 2018

Larry W. Minor
Associate Administrator for Policy

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