



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

[4910-EX-P]

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2011-0389; FMCSA-2012-0094; FMCSA-2013-0107; FMCSA-2014-0381; FMCSA-2015-0116]

Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Epilepsy and Seizure Disorders

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

ACTION: Notice of final disposition.

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces its decision to renew exemptions for six individuals from the requirement in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) that interstate commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers have “no established medical history or clinical diagnosis of epilepsy or any other condition which is likely to cause loss of consciousness or any loss of ability to control a CMV.” The exemptions enable these individuals who have had one or more seizures and are taking anti-seizure medication to continue to operate CMVs in interstate commerce.

DATES: The exemptions were applicable on November 6, 2017. The exemptions expire on November 6, 2019.

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. Electronic Access

You may see all the comments online through the Federal Document Management System (FDMS) at: <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and/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.

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 of records notice (DOT/ALL-14 FDMS), which can be reviewed at <http://www.dot.gov/privacy>.

II. Background

On December 13, 2017, FMCSA published a notice announcing its decision to renew exemptions for six individuals from the epilepsy and seizure disorders prohibition in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(8) to operate a CMV in interstate commerce and requested comments from the public (82 FR 58681). The public comment period ended on January 12, 2018 and one comment was received.

As stated in the previous notice, FMCSA has evaluated the eligibility of these applicants and determined that renewing these exemptions would achieve a level of safety equivalent to or greater than the level that would be achieved by complying with the current regulation 49 CFR 391.41(b)(8).

The physical qualification standard for drivers regarding epilepsy found in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(8) states that a person is physically qualified to drive a CMV if that person has no established medical history or clinical diagnosis of epilepsy or any other condition which is likely to cause the loss of consciousness or any loss of ability to control a CMV.

In addition to the regulations, FMCSA has published advisory criteria to assist Medical Examiners in determining whether drivers with certain medical conditions are qualified to operate a CMV in interstate commerce. [49 CFR part 391, APPENDIX A TO PART 391—MEDICAL ADVISORY CRITERIA, section H. Epilepsy: § 391.41(b)(8), paragraphs 3, 4, and 5.]

III. Discussion of Comments

FMCSA received one comment in this proceeding. The author wrote that exemptions to driving qualification tests should not be granted and that drivers should prove their ability to drive despite medical conditions. FMCSA interprets this comment as referring to necessity of drivers being required to demonstrate their ability to safely operate a commercial motor vehicle despite not meeting the physical qualification standards. The Agency only issues exemptions if the driver is likely to achieve a level of highway safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level if none were granted. Additionally, interstate commercial motor vehicle drivers who are granted medical exemptions must undergo the same driver qualification process as other interstate commercial motor vehicle operators.

IV. Conclusion

Based upon its evaluation of the six renewal exemption applications and the comment received, FMCSA announces its' decision to exempt the following drivers from the epilepsy and seizure disorders prohibition in 49 CFR 391.41 (b)(8):

As of November 6, 2017, and in accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, the following six individuals have satisfied the renewal conditions for obtaining an exemption from the epilepsy and seizure disorders prohibition in the FMCSRs for interstate CMV drivers. (82 FR 58681):

Christopher Bird, (OH)	Ronald Bohr, (IA)	Michael Breitbach, (IA)
William H. Brown, (NC)	Joseph D'Angelo, (NY)	Stephen Stawinsky, (PA)

The drivers were included in docket number FMCSA-2011-0389; FMCSA-2012-0094; FMCSA-2013-0107; FMCSA-2014-0381; FMCSA-2015-0116. Their exemptions are applicable as of November 6, 2017, and will expire on November 6, 2019.

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315, each exemption will be valid for two years from the effective date unless revoked earlier by FMCSA. The exemption will be revoked if the following occurs: (1) the person fails to comply with the terms and conditions of the exemption; (2) the exemption has resulted in a lower level of safety than was maintained prior to being granted; or (3) continuation of the exemption would not be consistent with the goals and objectives of 49 U.S.C. 31136 and 31315.

Issued on: February 7, 2018

Larry W. Minor
Associate Administrator for Policy

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