



DRIVER QUALIFICATION FILE REQUIREMENTS

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DRIVER QUALIFICATION FILES

WHAT ARE THEY?

Driver Qualification (DQ) Files are a record-keeping requirement for trucking companies. The FMCSA states a file must be kept on every employed driver that operates a CMV with a GVWR greater than 10,001 lbs. The requirements can be found in [Part 391](#) of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs). There are 8 main components of a complete DQ file.

EIGHT COMPONENTS

1. Application
2. Inquiry to Previous Employers
3. Inquiries into State Agencies
4. Medical Examiners Certificate (or Med Card)
5. Road Test Certification or Equivalent
6. Annual List of Violations
7. Annual Review of Driving Record
8. National Registry Certified Medical Examiner (NRCME) Verification

COMPONENT BREAKDOWNS

APPLICATION

The application must be kept for the lifetime of the driver's employment plus 3 years after termination.

REQUIRED INFORMATION

- a. The name and address of the employing motor carrier.
- b. The applicant's name, address, DOB, and SSN.
- c. The addresses at which the applicant has resided during the 3 years preceding the date which the application is submitted.
- d. The date on which the application is submitted.
- e. The issuing state, number, and expiration date of each unexpired CDL or CDLP that has been issued to the applicant.
- f. The nature and extent of the applicant's experience in the operation of CMV's (busses, trucks, tractor trailers, semitrailers, etc.) which the applicant has operated.
- g. A list of all accidents in which the applicant was involved during the 3 years preceding the date the application was submitted. Make sure to specify the date and nature of each accident, including any fatalities/personal injuries that were involved.
- h. A list of all violations of motor vehicle laws or ordinances (other than violations involving only parking) of which the applicant was convicted or forfeited bond or collateral during the 3 years preceding the date the application is submitted.
- i. A statement setting forth in detail the facts and circumstances of any denial, revocation, or suspension of any license, permit, or privilege to operate a motor vehicle that has been issued to the applicant, or a statement that no such denial, revocation, or suspension has occurred.

- j.** A list of the names and addresses of the applicant's employers during the 3 years preceding the date the application is submitted. Including:
 - i.** The dates they were employed by that employer.
 - ii.** The reason for leaving the employ of that employer.
 - iii.** Applicant was subject to the FMCSRs while employed by that previous employer.
 - iv.** Job was designated as a safety sensitive function in any DOT regulated mode subject to alcohol and controlled substances testing requirements as required by 49 CFR part 40.
- k.** A list of the names and addresses of the applicant's employers during the 7-year period preceding the 3 years contained in paragraph (b) of this section for which the applicant was an operator of a commercial motor vehicle, together with the dates of employment and the reasons for leaving such employment.
- l.** A signature line must appear at the end of the application, and must be dated.

INQUIRY TO PREVIOUS EMPLOYERS

On an FMCSA approved application, there is a section for the drivers to list all employers for the previous 3 years (*see section J of the driver application section above*). As a trucking company, it is your responsibility to follow up with the previous employers to check the potential hires employment history. These documents must be kept for the lifetime of the driver's employment plus 3 years after termination. They must also be placed in the DQ File within 30 days of the driver first performing safety sensitive functions.

Each attempt must be documented, and the FMCSA wants 3 "Good Faith Efforts" to acquire this information. All attempts to collect this information MUST be documented.

INVESTIGATION BREAKDOWN

The investigation to the previous employers can be done in a variety of ways which include:

- a.** *Personal Interviews*
- b.** *Telephone Interviews*
- c.** *Letters*
- d.** *Emails*
- e.** *Fax*

QUESTIONNAIRE MUST HAVES

The questionnaire must include the previous employers name and address, the date of contact (or the attempts made to contact), and the information received. The information that must be gathered include:

- a.** General driver I.D. and employment verification.
- b.** Accidents the applicant had while operating under the previous employer's authority.
- c.** Was the driver required to undergo controlled substance and alcohol testing as specified by 49 CFR part 40?

INQUIRIES INTO STATE AGENCIES

This is the drivers initial Motor Vehicle Record (MVR). This document must be kept for the lifetime of the driver's employment plus 3 years after termination. The carrier is required to acquire this document within 30 days of the driver first performing safety-sensitive functions.

MEDICAL EXAMINERS CERTIFICATE (OR MED CARD)

A copy of the Med Card must be placed in the DQ File. This is ongoing as medical cards can be issued for 24 months or less. They must be kept 3 years after the execution of the card.

ROAD TEST CERTIFICATION OR EQUIVALENT

A copy of the prospective employees CDL can take place of the road test and the certification of road test. If a road test is given, then a copy of the certification must be placed in the DQ File for the lifetime of the driver's employment plus 3 years. If a carrier decides that a copy of the CDL is sufficient, then each time the driver renews his CDL, the company must obtain a copy of it and place it in the DQ File. These documents can be discarded 3 years after the driver leaves the employ of the company.

ANNUAL LIST OF VIOLATIONS

At least once every 12 months, the driver must complete a list of all violations of motor traffic laws or ordinances of which the driver has been convicted of or on account of which the driver has forfeited bond or collateral on during the preceding 12 months. If the driver has not received any violations in the preceding 12-month period, they still need to certify. This needs to be completed whether the driver received a citation in a CMV or their personal vehicle. This list needs to be ongoing and kept for 3 years from the date of the execution.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF DRIVING RECORD

Once every 12 months a motor carrier shall pull an MVR on each driver employed. The motor carrier must review the MVR to ensure the driver meets the minimum requirements for safe driving. A note including the name of the person doing the review and the date of the review must be maintained and placed in the DQ File.

NRCME VERIFICATION

Once you have the drivers updated Med Card, the FMCSA requires you to verify with the Medical Examiners Qualifications. You can find the National Registry Certified Medical Examiners (NRCME) [HERE](#). This needs to be completed each time a driver receives a Med Card and is kept for 3 years after the date of the execution.