

General applicability

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) apply to all employers, employees, and commercial motor vehicles transporting property or passengers in interstate commerce.

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

Has a gross vehicle weight rating or gross combination weight rating, or gross vehicle weight or gross combination weight, of 4,536 kg (10,001 pounds) or more, whichever is greater; or

- Is designed or used to transport more than 8 passengers (including the driver) for compensation; or
- Is designed or used to transport more than 15 passengers, including the driver, and is not used to transport passengers for compensation; or
- Is used in transporting a quantity of hazardous material requiring placarding.

Exceptions to general applicability

Transportation provided by Federal, State, and local governments are exempt from the FMCSRs. Occasional transportation of personal property by individuals for non-commercial purposes, school bus operations, and transportation of human corpses, or sick and injured people are also exempt.

Transportation provided by commercial motor vehicles transporting between 9 and 15 passengers for compensation is exempt from the FMCSRs except for the requirements to file the Motor Carrier Identification Report (MCS-150), maintain an accident register, and mark the vehicles with the motor carrier identification number.

Accident register

Accident: An occurrence involving a commercial motor vehicle operating on a public road that results in at least one of the following:

A fatality,

- Bodily injury to a person who, as a result of the injury, immediately receives medical treatment away from the scene of the accident,
- Disabling damage to one or more motor vehicles, requiring the vehicle(s) to be towed or otherwise transported from the scene by a tow truck or other vehicle.

For a period of one year after an accident occurs, motor carriers are required to maintain an accident register containing the following information:

Date and place of accident,

- Driver's name,
- Number of injuries and fatalities,
- Hazardous materials (other than fuel) released, if any.

Motor carriers are also required to maintain copies of all accident reports required by State or other governmental entities or insurers for a period of one year after an accident occurs.

Vehicle identification

Every commercial motor vehicle operated by a motor carrier in interstate commerce must be marked, on BOTH sides of vehicle, with the following:

The motor carrier's name or trade name

- The city and State of its principal place of business
- The motor carrier's identification number, preceded by "US DOT."

Relief from regulations during emergencies

Relief from Parts 390-399 of the FMCSRs may be granted during declared emergencies to any motor carrier who provides emergency assistance.