



March 29, 2020

U.S. Governors

RE: New Hires / Seasonal Drivers / Restricted Agriculture CDL / CDL Endorsements

Dear Governors:

We are grateful for all the efforts being made by federal and state government agencies during these difficult times to ensure transportation safety is maintained on the roads while implementing emergency measures that prevents major disruptions in the transportation supply chain and allows for the timely delivery of essential products and services. A major issue that needs to be immediately addressed relates to new hires, seasonal drivers (ex. Restricted Ag CDL) and obtaining CDL endorsements. We are requesting state government agencies in coordination with the Federal Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) to approve alternative training and testing programs for new hire drivers, including seasonal drivers (ex. Restricted Agricultural CDL).

Without a functioning state agency, America's agribusinesses will not have the ability to obtain seasonal CDLS, Restricted Ag CDLs (which are temporary CDLs not carried over from year to year) and any necessary CDL endorsements for new hires. During the busy spring planting season, the industry hires thousands of seasonal drivers to help in the timely delivery of farm supplies to farmers and ranchers. Spring planting season for many areas of the country begins in full swing this week.

The [American Trucking Association](#) (ATA) has been providing helpful [updates on State Actions](#) related to commercial trucking. As you can see from the ATA list, there are many state drivers licensing agencies that are closed with only online services. These state DMV online services are currently not set up to handle new CDL drivers or process new CDL endorsements. We are requesting all states work with FMCSA on guidance that allows for an emergency and temporary alternative process in the absence of a functioning state DMV.

Agribusinesses could conduct their own training and testing for new hire drivers and put them to work. Our industry needs to be able to function and help the nation continue to produce safe, healthy, and abundant food, feed, fuel and fiber in the absence of a functioning state government agency. To the best of the industry's ability the CDL training and testing programs will mirror the normal requirements required by federal and state regulations to obtain a CDL. The only difference here is agribusinesses would be performing the training and testing themselves. The program will include:

- A written test
- A driving test
- Background Check
- Drug and alcohol test (if available)

They will also inform their insurance carriers regarding their programs. Once state DMV offices reopen, they can make sure all their new hire drivers obtain state issued documents.

March 30, 2020

Page 2 of 2

Thank you for any immediate assistance you can provide during these unprecedented times! The strains on the trucking industry will only increase as current drivers who get COVID-19 are forced into self-quarantine or hospitalization, depending on the severity of their illness.

Sincerely,

Agricultural Retailers Association