

SCHOOL BUS DRIVER LICENSING PROCESS FACT SHEET

April 2021

APPLICATION FOR A COMMERCIAL LEARNER'S PERMIT :

- ◆ Must be 18 years of age or older and have a valid driver's license
- ◆ Must obtain a commercial learner's permit
 - Submit a DL-31CD permit application, a Self-Certification form (DL-11CD), along with a School Bus Driver's Physical Examination (DL-704) and the appropriate fee.
 - Drivers who will be engaging in "Non-excepted" transportation will also be required to submit a valid Medical Examiner's Certificate prior to the issuance of a learner's permit.
 - The physical examination consists of:
 1. A vision screening and a check for hearing loss.
 2. A check for physical impairment(s).
 3. A semi-annual test for driver's with diabetes mellitus.
 4. An annual stress test for driver's with cardiovascular conditions.
 5. A check for uncontrolled hypertension and respiratory dysfunction.
 6. A check for rheumatic, arthritic, orthopedic, muscular, neuromuscular, or vascular disease.
 7. A check for seizure disorder(s).
 8. A check for drug or alcohol abuse.
 9. A check for mental, emotional or psychiatric disorder(s).
 10. A check for tuberculosis in a transmittable stage.
 11. A check for any other condition likely to impair the ability to drive a school bus safely.
- ◆ **Please Note:** Pennsylvania law requires certain commercial permit holders to wait at least 15-days before taking the examination to upgrade their driving privilege. Check the bottom of the learner's permit for the driver eligibility date. This date identifies the earliest date the driver is eligible to take the driving test.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS:

- ◆ Comply with Pennsylvania Department of Health and any local school district regulations and policies regarding communicable diseases.
- ◆ Pass a Federal criminal history check conducted by the FBI.
- ◆ Pass a criminal history check conducted by the Pennsylvania State Police.
- ◆ Pass a child abuse history check conducted by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare.
- ◆ Be drug and alcohol free when driving, and not consume any alcoholic beverages within 8 hours prior to operating a school bus.
- ◆ Submit a School Bus Driver's Physical Examination Form (DL-704) to PennDOT every thirteen months. The physical requirements are listed above.
- ◆ Pass an FBI Federal Criminal History check.
- ◆ Submit a Medical Examiner's Certificate for school bus drivers engaged in "Non-excepted" transportation.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- ◆ To initially obtain a school bus endorsement, the driver must complete a minimum of 20 hours of instruction, which includes 14 hours of classroom instruction and 6 hours of in-bus training. The driver becomes eligible to take the driving skills examination administered by a PennDOT Driver's License Examiner or a Third-party Tester after they have passed all applicable knowledge tests, waited the mandatory 15-days if applicable, and has completed the 20 hours of instruction. On successful completion of the driver's examination, the driver will be issued an S endorsement. The driver will have 120 days from the issue date of the S endorsement to complete the 20 hours of training.

The safety of school children is the main concern of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Compliance with every aspect of the School Bus Driver Trainer Program is essential to the safety of school children. You, the school bus driver, will be asked to initial and sign the School Bus Driver's Training Report Form (DL-714) verifying that the minimum training requirements have been met. Your signature on the Training Report Form certifies under penalty of law that the information contained on the form is true and correct. **If you are not given the minimum number of training hours, do not sign the Training Report Form. You may contact PennDOT's School Bus Safety Unit at (717) 787-6453 if you have any concerns associated with your school bus driver training.**

DRIVER'S TEST:

- ◆ The examination consists of:
 1. A vision screening.
 2. Knowledge tests, including but not limited to commercial general knowledge, passenger endorsement, school bus endorsement, and air brakes, if applicable.
 3. A skills test consisting of a pre-trip inspection, performance of basic maneuvers and an on-road driving test. In addition to all components of the commercial tests, drivers are required to successfully execute a simulated student discharge and a simulated or actual railroad crossing.

TO MAINTAIN CREDENTIALS:

- ◆ Every four years, a school bus driver must:
 1. Complete a minimum of 10 hours of refresher training, which includes 7 hours of classroom instruction and 3 hours of in-bus training.
 2. Pass the school bus endorsement knowledge examination.
 3. Pass a skills evaluation in a school bus representative of the class school bus the driver is licensed to operate.

**For Additional Information, please contact PennDOT's
School Bus Safety Unit at
(717) 787-6453**