

Important FMCSA Websites

FMCSA's official Website is linked to many related and subsidiary sites. Below are frequently asked questions and the corresponding sites:

- 1) What is the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's official **Website address**?
www.fmcsa.dot.gov
- 2) How can I locate the nearest **field office**?
www.fmcsa.dot.gov/about/aboutus.htm
- 3) Where can I obtain information about **Federal safety regulations and interpretations**?
www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rules-regulations.htm
- 4) Where can I find information about the transportation of **hazardous materials**?
www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety-security/hazmat/hm-theme.htm
- 5) How do I obtain a **US DOT number**?
www.fmcsa.dot.gov
- 6) Where can I find **statistics and analysis** regarding the truck and bus industries?
www.ai.fmcsa.dot.gov
- 7) How can I obtain a **motor carrier's profile**?
www.safer.fmcsa.dot.gov
- 8) Where can I find carrier **safety ratings, inspections, and accident summary data**?
www.safer.fmcsa.dot.gov
- 9) How do I report **safety violations**?
www.fmcsa.dot.gov
- 10) Where can I file forms and pay fees for **registration, insurance, and fines**?
www.safer.fmcsa.dot.gov
- 11) How can I **change the name and address** of my business online?
www.safer.fmcsa.dot.gov
- 12) Where can I find the latest information about **safety programs**?
www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetyprogs/saftprogs.htm
- 13) How can I learn about the **"Share the Road Safely" program**?
www.sharetheroadsafely.org
- 14) How can I obtain the **latest research and analysis on truck and bus safety**?
www.ai.fmcsa.dot.gov

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

www.fmcsa.dot.gov



This brochure is only intended to provide general regulatory information for passenger operations. It is not intended to be a substitute for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.

Guidelines for School Bus Operators

SCHOOL BUS



Guidelines for School Bus Operators

OVERVIEW

The applicability of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) varies depending on the type of transportation provided in a school bus. This document is designed to clarify what Federal regulations are applicable to school bus transportation. The FMCSRs only apply to a school bus operation when the school bus is a commercial motor vehicle (CMV).

DEFINITIONS

School bus means a passenger motor vehicle which is designed or used to carry more than 10 passengers in addition to the driver, and which the Secretary of Transportation determines is likely to be significantly used for the purpose of transporting pre-primary, primary, or secondary school students from home to school or school to home.

School bus operation means the use of a school bus to transport only school children and/or school personnel from home to school and from school to home.

A Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) includes -

(1) a vehicle designed or used to transport more than 8 passengers (including the driver) for compensation,

(2) a vehicle designed or used to transport more than 15 passengers (including the driver), and is not used to transport passengers for compensation, or

(3) a vehicle having a gross vehicle weight rating or gross weight more than 10,000 lbs.

Refer to § 390.5 for a complete CMV definition.

For hire motor carrier means a person engaged in the transportation of passengers for compensation.

WHEN IS SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION EXCEPTED FROM THE FMCSRs?

- When providing school bus operations as defined above. (However, the Drug and Alcohol Testing Regulations in Part 382 and the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Regulations in Part 383 may apply.)
- Transportation performed by the Federal Government, a State, or any political subdivision of a State (e.g., public school district).

- Limited exemptions and recordkeeping exemptions apply to private schools that are operating as non-business private motor carriers of passengers (PMCP). Non-business PMCPs are private entities that provide passenger transportation that is not available to the public at large and is not in furtherance of a commercial enterprise.

WHEN IS SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION SUBJECT TO THE FMCSRs?

The FMCSRs are applicable when a school bus provides for-hire interstate transportation outside of home to school and school to home transportation, and is not operated by a State or local government.

The following chart explains the applicability of the FMCSRs in the context of student/school-related transportation in interstate commerce.

	School to Home or Home to School	Extracurricular School Activities
Public School Transportation provided by Governmental Entities	Not Subject	Not Subject
Private School Transportation of Preprimary, Primary, and Secondary Students	Not Subject	Subject as non-business PMCP transportation*
Contract Transportation of Preprimary, Primary, and Secondary Students	Not Subject	Subject as for-hire transportation

*Refer to the PMCP educational pamphlet for more information about these motor carriers.

When a private college or university transports its students and/or personnel in CMVs, it is subject to the FMCSRs as a non-business PMCP. When a private college or university contracts with a company to transport students and/or personnel in CMVs, such company is subject to the FMCSRs as a for-hire motor carrier.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Part 387 requires for-hire motor carriers operating in interstate commerce to have minimum levels of public liability insurance in the amounts as follows:

- 1) Any vehicle with a seating capacity of 16 passengers or more – \$5,000,000.
- 2) Any vehicle with a seating capacity of 15 passengers or less – \$1,500,000.

Exceptions:

- 1) The financial responsibility requirements do not apply to a motor vehicle transporting only school children and teachers to or from school.
- 2) The financial responsibility requirements do not apply to a motor vehicle operated by a motor carrier under contract providing transportation of pre-primary, primary, and secondary students for extracurricular trips organized, sponsored, and paid by a school district.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Educational and technical assistance can be obtained from the FMCSA's website at www.fmcsa.dot.gov. Any person seeking additional assistance should contact the closest field office of the FMCSA.

