

# DOT PHYSICAL CERTIFICATION

For Illinois Farmers



Every holder of a CDL—whether required to have the CDL or not—must certify their status regarding the DOT physical (medical card) to the Illinois Secretary of State. This links the DOT physical to the CDL. CDL drivers who fail to certify could lose their CDL privileges. This certification does not alter the requirements or exemptions that apply to the DOT physical, either for the Farm Vehicle Driver or the Covered Farm Vehicle.

### CDL holders must comply

All drivers who have a CDL (whether you are required to have that CDL or not) had to appear in-person at one of [47 CDL testing facilities](#) to affirm whether they are required to have passed a recent DOT physical and whether they drive on an interstate or intrastate basis. Generally, those interstate drivers who are required by law to undergo a DOT physical had to have proof of compliance in-hand at the time of that visit.

This requirement kicked in January 30, 2012. Now, CDL drivers need to repeat the process every time their DOT physical is renewed.

**Failure to comply** will result in the driver's CDL status being reduced to Non-CDL. There will likely be a 30-day grace period in which to reclaim your CDL through certification. If not certified within the grace period, the CDL could be permanently forfeited and you'd need to start from scratch to get a new one.

### Requirement to Carry Medical Card

All drivers required to undergo a DOT physical must continue to carry a medical card with them unless they have been certified as "NI" (non-exempt interstate.) Those NI drivers may now leave their medical cards at home—their medical card record is included in the federal electronic database for CDL drivers known as CDLIS.

### Farmers are included

The requirement to certify the status of the DOT physical applies to farmers and non-farmers alike—all who have a CDL. Whether you're required to have the CDL is not the determining factor. Drivers without a CDL are not affected.

Applies only to drivers who have a CDL		
	Interstate Commerce	Intrastate Commerce
Medical Card Required	NI	NA
Excepted from Medical Card	EI	EA
Update before medical card expires		
Generally, the driver is being asked two questions: — 1) Are you an interstate or intrastate driver?; and, — 2) Are you required to have a medical card?		

### Why the certification?

It makes the medical record a part of the federal electronic database on CDL drivers known as CDLIS (Commercial Driver's License Information System.) For "NI" drivers, it eliminates the need to carry a medical card, relying instead on the electronic record.

### What is a medical card?

It's a document (typically wallet-sized) that has been signed by a qualified medical professional indicating that the driver has passed a [DOT Physical](#) and is generally physically qualified (under federal law) to drive a truck.

That DOT physical looks at a specified set conditions including such things as eyesight and hearing, range of motion in joints, loss of limbs, and the presence of potentially debilitating disorders such as diabetes or seizures. While most physicians are medically qualified to conduct the physical, not all offer the service. Special examination [forms](#) are available online.

### Medical examiner certification?

Since May 20, 2014, interstate drivers are allowed to use only those examiners who are USDOT certified to give the DOT physical. The restriction significantly cuts the availability of the service—especially in sparsely populated areas of the state.

# Exceptions from the DOT physical

Federal law [\[49 CFR 391\]](#) (and Illinois law) generally starts from the premise that virtually everyone who drives a truck or a truck-trailer combination of 10,001 pounds or more in commerce (including farming) is subject to the requirement. Then it lists exceptions. In this case there are two exceptions for farmers.

**#1 Certain farm vehicle drivers (FVD).** Generally, this exception is available only to a sub-set of those drivers who qualify as a FVD. That sub-set includes only those operating a straight truck. FVD drivers who operate a combination vehicle (i.e.: truck-trailer combination or a semi) are not eligible for this exception.

**#2 Covered farm vehicles (CFV).** This one is very simple. It applies the exception from the DOT physical to all drivers who operate a CFV, whether straight truck or a combination vehicle.

## The driver is to self-certify

It is up to the driver to make his or her own decision about which category to declare. The Secretary of State's staff has been instructed to not make that decision for the driver. There are four categories from which to choose.

1. **Non-excepted Interstate (NI)** – Drive on an interstate basis and meet 49 CFR 391 requirements (must have a medical certificate—must provide the state's Driver's License Agency with an original Copy of the Medical Certificate);
2. **Excepted Interstate (EI)** - Drive on an interstate basis and excepted from 49 CFR 391 requirements (does not need medical certificate to drive interstate)
3. **Non-excepted Intrastate (NA)** - Drive on an intrastate basis and subject to State medical card requirements as in law today.
4. **Excepted Intrastate (EA)** - Drive on an intrastate basis and excepted from all or part of State medical card requirements.

*(Refer also to chart on front page.)*

*If your driver status changes, you must notify the Secretary of State immediately.*

## Interstate v Intrastate

Though the language of the rule refers to "Interstate Commerce" and "Intrastate Commerce", the Illinois Secretary of State's Office has indicated it is focusing on the driver (not the commerce) and applying the inter and intra standard in the following way:

- If you physically drive a truck across the state boundary into another state, then report yourself as an Interstate Driver by selecting either "NI" or "EI".
- If you never physically drive a truck outside of Illinois, then report yourself as an Intrastate Driver by selecting either "NA" or "EA".

## "K" Restriction

If you have declared yourself to be an intrastate-only driver ("NA" or "EA"), then a "K" restriction will be added to your CDL. That prohibits the use of your CDL for operating a truck outside the state of Illinois.

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and provided by:

