



## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2013-0125; FMCSA-2014-0102; FMCSA-2014-0106; FMCSA-2014-0107; FMCSA-2014-0383; FMCSA-2014-0384; FMCSA-2015-0326; FMCSA-2018-0138]

### Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Hearing

**AGENCY:** Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

**ACTION:** Notice of final disposition.

**SUMMARY:** FMCSA announces its decision to renew exemptions for 13 individuals from the hearing requirement in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) for interstate commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers. The exemptions enable these hard of hearing and deaf individuals to continue to operate CMVs in interstate commerce.

**DATES:** The exemptions were applicable on June 17, 2023. The exemptions expire on June 17, 2025.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Christine A. Hydock, Chief, Medical Programs Division, FMCSA, DOT, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Room W64-224, Washington, DC 20590-0001, (202) 366-4001, [fmcsamedical@dot.gov](mailto:fmcsamedical@dot.gov). Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. If you have questions regarding viewing or submitting material to the docket, contact Dockets Operations, (202) 366-9826.

### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### I. Public Participation

##### A. Viewing Comments

To view comments go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). Insert the docket number (FMCSA-2013-0125, FMCSA-2014-0102, FMCSA-2014-0106, FMCSA-2014-0107, FMCSA-2014-0383, FMCSA-2014-0384, FMCSA-2015-0326, or FMCSA-2018-0138) in the keyword box and click “Search.” Next, sort the results by “Posted (Newer-Older),” choose the first notice listed, and click “Browse Comments.” If you do not have access to the internet, you may view the docket online by visiting Dockets Operations on the ground floor of the DOT West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 366-9317 or (202) 366-9826 before visiting Dockets Operations.

## **B. Privacy Act**

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315(b)(6), DOT solicits comments from the public on the exemption requests. DOT posts these comments, without edit, including any personal information the commenter provides, to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). As described in the system of records notice DOT/ALL 14 (Federal Docket Management System), which can be reviewed at <https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/privacy/privacy-act-system-records-notices>, the comments are searchable by the name of the submitter.

## **II. Background**

On May 24, 2023, FMCSA published a notice announcing its decision to renew exemptions for 13 individuals from the hearing standard in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(11) to operate a CMV in interstate commerce and requested comments from the public (88 FR 33661). The public comment period ended on June 23, 2023, and no comments were received.

FMCSA has evaluated the eligibility of these applicants and determined that renewing these exemptions would likely achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level that would be achieved by complying with § 391.41(b)(11).

The physical qualification standard for drivers regarding hearing found in § 391.41(b)(11) states that a person is physically qualified to drive a CMV if that person first perceives a forced whispered voice in the better ear at not less than 5 feet with or without the use of a hearing aid or, if tested by use of an audiometric device, does not have an average hearing loss in the better ear greater than 40 decibels at 500 Hz, 1,000 Hz, and 2,000 Hz with or without a hearing aid when the audiometric device is calibrated to American National Standard (formerly ASA Standard) Z24.5—1951.

This standard was adopted in 1970 and was revised in 1971 to allow drivers to be qualified under this standard while wearing a hearing aid (35 FR 6458, 6463 (Apr. 22, 1970) and 36 FR 12857 (July 8, 1971), respectively).

**III. Discussion of Comments**

FMCSA received no comments in this proceeding.

**IV. Conclusion**

Based upon its evaluation of the 13 renewal exemption applications, FMCSA announces its decision to exempt the following drivers from the hearing requirement in § 391.41 (b)(11).

As of June 17, 2023, and in accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315(b), the following 13 individuals have satisfied the renewal conditions for obtaining an exemption from the hearing requirement in the FMCSRs for interstate CMV drivers (88 FR 33662):

Kevin Ballard (TX)	Herbert Crowe (MO)	Mark Dickson (TX)
Jacob Gadreault, (MA)	David Garland (ME)	Lane Grover, (IN)
Paul Langlois (OH)	Billie Jo Martinez, (TX)	David Shores (NC)
Kirk Soneson (OH)	James Thomason, (MO)	Ramarr Wadley (PA)
Jeffrey Webber (OK)		

The drivers were included in docket numbers FMCSA-2013-0125, FMCSA-2014-0102, FMCSA-2014-0106, FMCSA-2014-0107, FMCSA-2014-0383, FMCSA-2014-0384, FMCSA-2015-0326, or FMCSA-2018-0138. Their exemptions were applicable as of June 17, 2023 and will expire on June 17, 2025.

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315(b), each exemption will be valid for 2 years from the effective date unless revoked earlier by FMCSA. The exemption will be revoked if the following occurs: (1) the person fails to comply with the terms and conditions of the exemption; (2) the exemption has resulted in a lower level of safety than was maintained prior to being granted; or (3) continuation of the exemption would not be consistent with the goals and objectives of 49 U.S.C. 31136, 49 U.S.C. chapter 313, or the FMCSRs.

**Larry W. Minor,**  
*Associate Administrator for Policy.*

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