



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2025-0084]

Entry-Level Driver Training: William Cole; Application for Exemption

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

ACTION: Notice of application for exemption; request for comments.

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces that William Cole, Safety Coordinator for the Montana Trucking Association, has requested an exemption from the entry-level driver training (ELDT) regulations requirement that classroom or theory instructors for individuals seeking the hazardous materials (HM) endorsement have at least two years of driving experience of the same or higher class and/or the same endorsement level as the commercial motor vehicle (CMV) for which training is to be provided. Mr. Cole believes his knowledge and experience concerning the HM safety regulations and the transportation of such materials on CMVs enable him to provide the theory training for individuals seeking an HM endorsement. FMCSA requests public comment on the applicant's request for an exemption.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by Docket Number FMCSA-2025-0084 by any of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** www.regulations.gov. See the Public Participation and Request for Comments section below for further information.
- **Mail:** Dockets Operations, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building, Ground Floor, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

- **Hand Delivery or Courier:** 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building, Ground Floor, Washington, DC 20590-0001, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.
- **Fax:** (202) 493-2251.

Each submission must include the Agency name and the docket number (FMCSA-2025-0084) for this notice. Note that DOT posts all comments received without change to www.regulations.gov, including any personal information included in a comment. Please see the Privacy Act heading below.

Docket: To view any documents mentioned as being available in the docket, go to <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/FMCSA-2025-0084> document and choose the document to review. To view comments, click this notice, then click “Browse Comments.” If you do not have access to the internet, you may view the docket 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., 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.

Privacy Act: In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315(b), DOT solicits comments from the public to better inform its exemption process. DOT posts these comments, including any personal information the commenter provides, to www.regulations.gov, as described in the system of records notice DOT/ALL-14 FDMS (Federal Docket Management System (FDMS)), which can be reviewed at <https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/privacy/privacy-act-system-records-notices>. The comments are posted without edit and are searchable by the name of the submitter.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Bernadette Walker, Driver, and Carrier Operations Division; Office of Carrier, Driver and Vehicle Safety Standards,

FMCSA; (202) 385-2415; bernadette.walker@dot.gov. If you have questions on viewing or submitting material to the docket, contact Dockets Operations at (202) 366-9826.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Public Participation and Request for Comments

FMCSA encourages you to participate by submitting comments and related materials.

A. Submitting Comments

If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this notice (FMCSA-2025-0084), indicate the specific section of this document to which the comment applies, and provide a reason for suggestions or recommendations. You may submit your comments and material online or by fax, mail, or hand delivery, but please use only one of these means. FMCSA recommends that you include your name and a mailing address, an email address, or a phone number in the body of your document so the Agency can contact you if it has questions regarding your submission.

To submit your comment online, go to <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/FMCSA-2025-0084/document>, click on this notice, click “Comment,” and type your comment into the text box on the following screen.

If you submit your comments by mail or hand delivery, submit them in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing.

FMCSA will consider all comments and material received during the comment period. Comments received after the comment closing date will be filed in the public docket and will be considered to the extent practicable.

B. Confidential Business Information (CBI)

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552),

CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to the notice contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to the notice, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission that constitutes CBI as “PROPIN” to indicate it contains proprietary information. FMCSA will treat such marked submissions as confidential under the Freedom of Information Act, and they will not be placed in the public docket of the notice. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Brian Dahlin brian.g.dahlin@dot.gov, Chief, Regulatory Evaluation Division, Office of Policy, FMCSA, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001 or via email at brian.g.dahlin@dot.gov. At this time, you need not send a duplicate hardcopy of your electronic CBI submissions to FMCSA headquarters. Any comments FMCSA receives not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this notice.

II. Legal Basis

FMCSA has authority under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315(b) to grant exemptions from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. FMCSA must publish a notice of each exemption request in the Federal Register (49 CFR 381.315(a)). The Agency must provide the public an opportunity to inspect the information relevant to the application, including the applicant’s safety analysis. The Agency must provide an opportunity for public comment on the request.

The Agency reviews the application, safety analyses, and public comments submitted and determines whether granting the exemption would likely maintain a level of safety equivalent to, or greater than, the level that would be achieved absent such exemption, pursuant to the standard set forth in 49 U.S.C. 31315(b)(1). The Agency must publish its decision in the Federal Register (49 CFR 381.315(b)). If granted, the notice will identify the regulatory provision from which the applicant will be exempt, the

effective period, and all terms and conditions of the exemption (49 CFR 381.315(c)(1)).

If the exemption is denied, the notice will explain the reason for the denial (49 CFR 381.315(c)(2)). The exemption may be renewed (49 CFR 381.300(b)).

III. Applicant's Request

William Cole, Safety Coordinator for the Montana Trucking Association, seeks an exemption from the requirement in the ELDT regulations in 49 CFR 380.605 that HM theory instructors have at least two years of driving experience of the same or higher class and/or the same endorsement level for which training is to be provided.

The applicant states that the exemption would enable him to provide HM training while maintaining the highest level of safety and compliance standards.

Mr. Cole has served for 15 years as a CMV enforcement officer with the state's Motor Carrier Services agency and is currently the Safety Coordinator for Montana Trucking Association, which provides HM training to motor carriers, conducts FMCSA compliance audits, and assists industry leaders in understanding and implementing HM safety protocols. Mr. Cole believes his qualifications "exceed the necessary knowledge and instructional standards for ELDT theory training." The following is a list of Mr. Cole's credentials included in the exemption application request:

- CVSA Advanced Hazmat Instructor
- Certified Safety & Health Official (CSHO) - Construction
- Specialist in Safety & Health (SSH) - General Industry
- OSHA Outreach Trainer - Construction
- Member of the ATA Law Enforcement Advisory Board
- Facilitator of the Montana Trucking Association Safety Council

A copy of Mr. Cole's exemption application is available for review in the docket for this notice.

IV. Request for Comments

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315(b), FMCSA requests public comment from all interested persons on Mr. Cole's application for an exemption from the requirements in

49 CFR 380.605 from the definition of “theory instructor,” which would allow him to become an ELDT theory instructor for HM endorsements. All comments received before the close of business on the comment closing date will be considered and will be available for examination in the docket at the location listed under the Addresses section of this notice. Comments received after the comment closing date will be filed in the public docket and will be considered to the extent practicable. In addition to late comments, FMCSA will also continue to file, in the public docket, relevant information that becomes available after the comment closing date. Interested persons should continue to examine the public docket for new material.

Larry W. Minor,
Associate Administrator of Policy.

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