This document is scheduled to be published in the Federal Register on 2026-11-18 and available online at https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2026-23409, and on https://govinfo.gov

[4910-EX-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2026-2642]

Commercial Driver's License: Saia LTL Freight; 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 requests public comment on Saia LTL Freight's (Saia) application for an exemption to allow commercial learner's permit (CLP) holders enrolled in its driver training program to operate commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) configured with double trailers without holding a commercial driver's license (CDL) with a doubles/triples (T) endorsement, while under the direct supervision of a qualified CDL holder with a T endorsement. FMCSA is required by statute to publish a notice explaining each exemption request. This notice does not indicate what decision FMCSA will ultimately reach on the request. After reviewing the application, safety analyses, and public comments submitted, FMCSA will grant or deny the 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-2026-2642 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, W58-213, West Building, Washington, DC 20590-0001.
- **Hand Delivery or Courier:** 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, W58-213, West Building, 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-2026-2642) 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.

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, FMCSA Driver and Carrier Operations Division; Office of Carrier, Driver and Vehicle Safety Standards; Bernadette.walker@dot.gov.

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-2026-2642), indicate the specific section of this document to which the comment applies, and provide a reason for your 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-2026-2642/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 Sarah Stella, Chief, Regulatory Development Division, Office of Policy, FMCSA, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001 or via email at sarah.stella@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.

C. Viewing Comments and Documents

To view comments, as well as any documents mentioned in this preamble as being available in the docket, go to https://www.regulations.gov, insert FMCSA-2026-2642 in the keyword box, select the document tab 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 in the DOT West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, W58-213, Washington, DC 20590-0001, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

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 (FMCSRs). 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 achieve 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(s) from which the exempted party 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

Current Regulatory Requirements

Under 49 CFR 383.37(a), employers are prohibited from allowing a driver to operate a CMV if the driver does not have a CLP or CDL with the proper class or endorsements. Under 49 CFR 383.93(b)(1), a driver must obtain an endorsement to his or her CDL to operate a CMV with a double or triple trailer. Drivers are required to pass the applicable knowledge test before obtaining a doubles/triples (T) endorsement on their CDL (49 CFR 383.93(c)(1)). In addition, the regulations prohibit State Driver's Licensing Agencies from issuing a doubles/triples endorsement to CLP holders (49 CFR 383.25(a)(5)(iv) and 383.93(a)(2)).

Applicant Request

Saia LTL Freight (USDOT No. 029124), headquartered in John Creek, Georgia, has requested a 5-year exemption from the requirements in 49 CFR 383.93(b)(1) and 49 CFR 383.37(a). Saia requests relief from these requirements to permit CLP holders participating in its driver training program to receive behind-the-wheel training while operating combination vehicles configured with double trailers under the direct supervision of an experienced CDL holder who possesses a valid double/triples endorsement. Saia states that the exemption would apply to approximately 300 trainees annually using a fleet of approximately 19 training vehicles, with a gross vehicle weight of 80,000 lbs. or less. According to the application, the exemption would streamline the training pipeline and allow its trainees (CLP holders) to gain on-the-road experience with doubles under expert supervision before taking the final CDL test, thereby increasing the supply of qualified drivers for its operations.

Applicant's Equivalent Level of Safety

Saia states that it would maintain a level of safety equivalent to or greater than the level of safety that would be maintained by compliance with the current regulations by implementing several safeguards, including:

- All trainees must pass a company-administered knowledge test that mirrors the state CDL doubles/triples exam.
- Trainees must demonstrate proficiency in coupling, uncoupling, and maneuvering doubles in a closed-yard environment before entering public roads.
- All on-road training will be conducted under the direct supervision of a certified trainer/instructor who holds a valid Class A CDL with a T endorsement.
- Training will be restricted to vehicles with a gross vehicle weight of 80,000 lbs or less.

- Drivers will carry proof of their completed internal training and the company-administered exam at all times while operating.

A copy of Saia's application for exemption 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 Saia's application for an exemption from the requirements in 49 CFR 383.93(b)(1) and 49 CFR 383.37(a) to allow Saia's driver trainees to operate commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) configured with double trailers while under the direct supervision of a qualified CDL holder with a T endorsement, before the CLP holder has obtained a CDL or the endorsement. 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 for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2026-23409 Filed: 11/17/2026 8:45 am; Publication Date: 11/18/2026]