

range of 6 to 39 years. Although each applicant has one eye which does not meet the vision requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10), each has at least 20/40 corrected vision in the other eye, and in a doctor's opinion, has sufficient vision to perform all the tasks necessary to operate a CMV.

Doctors' opinions are supported by the applicants' possession of a valid license to operate a CMV. By meeting State licensing requirements, the applicants demonstrated their ability to operate a CMV, with their limited vision in intrastate commerce, even though their vision disqualified them from driving in interstate commerce. We believe that the applicants' intrastate driving experience and history provide an adequate basis for predicting their ability to drive safely in interstate commerce. Intrastate driving, like interstate operations, involves substantial driving on highways on the interstate system and on other roads built to interstate standards. Moreover, driving in congested urban areas exposes the driver to more pedestrian and vehicular traffic than exists on interstate highways. Faster reaction to traffic and traffic signals is generally required because distances between them are more compact. These conditions tax visual capacity and driver response just as intensely as interstate driving conditions.

The applicants in this notice have driven CMVs with their limited vision in careers ranging for 3 to 80 years. In the past three years, two drivers were involved in crashes, and no drivers were convicted of moving violations in CMVs. All the applicants achieved a record of safety while driving with their vision impairment, demonstrating the likelihood that they have adapted their driving skills to accommodate their condition. As the applicants' ample driving histories with their vision deficiencies are good predictors of future performance, FMCSA concludes their ability to drive safely can be projected into the future.

Consequently, FMCSA finds that in each case exempting these applicants from the vision requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10) is likely to achieve a level of safety equal to that existing without the exemption.

#### V. Conditions and Requirements

The terms and conditions of the exemption are provided to the applicants in the exemption document and includes the following: (1) Each driver must be physically examined every year (a) by an ophthalmologist or optometrist who attests that the vision in the better eye continues to meet the

standard in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10) and (b) by a certified Medical Examiner who attests that the individual is otherwise physically qualified under 49 CFR 391.41; (2) each driver must provide a copy of the ophthalmologist's or optometrist's report to the Medical Examiner at the time of the annual medical examination; and (3) each driver must provide a copy of the annual medical certification to the employer for retention in the driver's qualification file, or keep a copy in his/her driver's qualification file if he/she is self-employed. The driver must also have a copy of the exemption when driving, for presentation to a duly authorized Federal, State, or local enforcement official.

#### VI. Preemption

During the period the exemption is in effect, no State shall enforce any law or regulation that conflicts with this exemption with respect to a person operating under the exemption.

#### VII. Conclusion

Based upon its evaluation of the 12 exemption applications, FMCSA exempts the following drivers from the vision requirement, 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10), subject to the requirements cited above:

Mark F. Besco (IA)  
 William T. Cummins (KY)  
 Aaron L. Fox (OH)  
 Ryan N. Goynes (AR)  
 Eric M. Kohrs (IL)  
 Michael P. Mazza (WA)  
 James L. Okonek (WI)  
 Jeffrey S. Rockhill (KS)  
 Travis D. Summerville (IL)  
 Lora D. Swindall (AL)  
 Francis J. Toth (PA)  
 Joseph A. Zaccaro (AL)

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, each exemption will be valid for two 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 and 31315.

Issued on: August 30, 2018.

**Larry W. Minor,**

*Associate Administrator for Policy.*

[FR Doc. 2018-19579 Filed 9-7-18; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-EX-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2018-0017]

#### Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Vision

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

**ACTION:** Notice of applications for exemption; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** FMCSA announces receipt of applications from 12 individuals for an exemption from the vision requirement in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) to operate a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) in interstate commerce. If granted, the exemptions will enable these individuals to operate CMVs in interstate commerce without meeting the vision requirement in one eye.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before October 10, 2018.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments bearing the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) Docket No. FMCSA-2018-0017 using any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

- *Mail:* Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

- *Hand Delivery:* West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.

- *Fax:* 1-202-493-2251.

*Instructions:* Each submission must include the Agency name and the docket number(s) for this notice. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided. Please see the Privacy Act heading below for further information.

*Docket:* For access to the docket to read background documents or comments, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> at any time or Room W12-140 on the ground level of the West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The FDMS is available 24 hours each day, 365 days each year. If you want

acknowledgment that we received your comments, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or postcard or print the acknowledgement page that appears after submitting comments online.

*Privacy Act:* In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553(c), DOT solicits comments from the public to better inform its rulemaking process. DOT posts these comments, without edit, including any personal information the commenter provides, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, as described in the system of records notice (DOT/ALL-14 FDMS), which can be reviewed at <http://www.dot.gov/privacy>.

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

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **I. Background**

Under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, FMCSA may grant an exemption from the FMCSRs for a five-year period if it finds “such exemption would likely achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to or greater than the level that would be achieved absent such exemption.” The statute also allows the Agency to renew exemptions at the end of the five-year period. FMCSA grants exemptions from the FMCSRs for a two-year period to align with the maximum duration of a driver’s medical certification.

The 12 individuals listed in this notice have requested an exemption from the vision requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10). Accordingly, the Agency will evaluate the qualifications of each applicant to determine whether granting an exemption will achieve the required level of safety mandated by statute.

The physical qualification standard for drivers regarding vision found in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10) states that a person is physically qualified to drive a CMV if that person has distant visual acuity of at least 20/40 (Snellen) in each eye without corrective lenses or visual acuity separately corrected to 20/40 (Snellen) or better with corrective lenses, distant binocular acuity of at least 20/40 (Snellen) in both eyes with or without corrective lenses, field of vision of at least 70° in the horizontal

Meridian in each eye, and the ability to recognize the colors of traffic signals and devices showing standard red, green, and amber.

In July 1992, the Agency first published the criteria for the Vision Waiver Program, which listed the conditions and reporting standards that CMV drivers approved for participation would need to meet (Qualification of Drivers; Vision Waivers, 57 FR 31458, July 16, 1992). The current Vision Exemption Program was established in 1998, following the enactment of amendments to the statutes governing exemptions made by § 4007 of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), Public Law 105-178, 112 Stat. 107, 401 (June 9, 1998). Vision exemptions are considered under the procedures established in 49 CFR part 381 subpart C, on a case-by-case basis upon application by CMV drivers who do not meet the vision standards of 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10).

To qualify for an exemption from the vision requirement, FMCSA requires a person to present verifiable evidence that he/she has driven a commercial vehicle safely with the vision deficiency for the past three years. Recent driving performance is especially important in evaluating future safety, according to several research studies designed to correlate past and future driving performance. Results of these studies support the principle that the best predictor of future performance by a driver is his/her past record of crashes and traffic violations. Copies of the studies may be found at Docket Number FMCSA-1998-3637.

FMCSA believes it can properly apply the principle to monocular drivers, because data from the Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) former waiver study program clearly demonstrated the driving performance of experienced monocular drivers in the program is better than that of all CMV drivers collectively (See 61 FR 13338, 13345, March 26, 1996). The fact that experienced monocular drivers demonstrated safe driving records in the waiver program supports a conclusion that other monocular drivers, meeting the same qualifying conditions as those required by the waiver program, are also likely to have adapted to their vision deficiency and will continue to operate safely.

The first major research correlating past and future performance was done in England by Greenwood and Yule in 1920. Subsequent studies, building on that model, concluded that crash rates for the same individual exposed to certain risks for two different time periods vary only slightly (See Bates

and Neyman, University of California Publications in Statistics, April 1952). Other studies demonstrated theories of predicting crash proneness from crash history coupled with other factors. These factors—such as age, sex, geographic location, mileage driven and conviction history—are used every day by insurance companies and motor vehicle bureaus to predict the probability of an individual experiencing future crashes (See Weber, Donald C., “Accident Rate Potential: An Application of Multiple Regression Analysis of a Poisson Process,” Journal of American Statistical Association, June 1971). A 1964 California Driver Record Study prepared by the California Department of Motor Vehicles concluded that the best overall crash predictor for both concurrent and nonconcurrent events is the number of single convictions. This study used three consecutive years of data, comparing the experiences of drivers in the first two years with their experiences in the final year.

##### **II. Qualifications of Applicants**

###### *John A. Edison*

Mr. Edison, 66, has had a macular scar in his left eye since 2001. The visual acuity in his right eye is 20/20, and in his left eye, 20/80. Following an examination in 2018, his optometrist stated, “With both eyes working together, Mr. Edison has sufficient vision to operate and drive a commercial vehicle.” Mr. Edison reported that he has driven straight trucks for 50 years, accumulating 600,000 miles, and tractor-trailer combinations for 20 years, accumulating 1.92 million miles. He holds a Class A CDL from Georgia. His driving record for the last three years shows no crashes and no convictions for moving violations in a CMV.

###### *Rodney P. Hains*

Mr. Hains, 58, has had a retinal detachment in his left eye since 2003. The visual acuity in his right eye is 20/15, and in his left eye, no light perception. Following an examination in 2018, his optometrist stated, “Based on that history and experience it would appear to me that he has sufficient visual capability to safely operate a commercial vehicle.” Mr. Hains reported that he has driven straight trucks for five years, accumulating 5,000 miles, and tractor-trailer combinations for 20 years, accumulating 1.4 million miles. He holds a Class A CDL from North Dakota. His driving record for the last three years shows no crashes and no

convictions for moving violations in a CMV.

*Darryl D. Kelley*

Mr. Kelley, 46, has had a macular hole in his right eye since childhood. The visual acuity in his right eye is 20/100, and in his left eye, 20/25. Following an examination in 2018, his optometrist stated, "My medical opinion is that he has sufficient vision to perform all driving tasks for a commercial vehicle." Mr. Kelley reported that he has driven buses for 23 years, accumulating 1.42 million miles. He holds a Class B CDL from Texas. His driving record for the last three years shows no crashes and no convictions for moving violations in a CMV.

*Thomas J. Knapp*

Mr. Knapp, 58, has had amblyopia in his left eye since birth. The visual acuity in his right eye is 20/15, and in his left eye, 20/150. Following an examination in 2018, his optometrist stated, "It is my professional opinion that Mr. [sic] Knapp has sufficient vision to perform the driving tasks required to operate a commercial vehicle." Mr. Knapp reported that he has driven buses for three years, accumulating 60,000 miles. He holds a Class A CDL from Washington. His driving record for the last three years shows no crashes and no convictions for moving violations in a CMV.

*Darrell D. Kropf*

Mr. Kropf, 43, has had amblyopia in his left eye since childhood. The visual acuity in his right eye is 20/20, and in his left eye, 20/400. Following an examination in 2018, his ophthalmologist stated, "In my opinion the patient has sufficient vision to perform the driving tasks required to operate a commercial vehicle." Mr. Kropf reported that he has driven tractor-trailer combinations for 21 years, accumulating 945,000 miles. He holds a Class A CDL from California. His driving record for the last three years shows no crashes and no convictions for moving violations in a CMV.

*Nathanael Lee*

Mr. Lee, 22, has had amblyopia in his left eye since childhood. The visual acuity in his right eye is 20/20, and in his left eye, 20/400. Following an examination in 2018, his ophthalmologist stated, "In my opinion he does have sufficient vision and is well adapted to his vision in order to operate a commercial vehicle for driving tasks." Mr. Lee reported that he has driven straight trucks for two years, accumulating 9,000 miles, and tractor-

trailer combinations for three years, accumulating 75,000 miles. He holds a Class A CDL from Minnesota. His driving record for the last three years shows no crashes and no convictions for moving violations in a CMV.

*John G. Mudd*

Mr. Mudd, 53, had his left eye enucleated due to a traumatic incident in 2015. The visual acuity in his right eye is 20/20, and in his left eye, no light perception. Following an examination in 2018, his optometrist stated, "Mr. Mudd has sufficient vision to perform the driving tasks required to operate a commercial vehicle." Mr. Mudd reported that he has driven straight trucks for five years, accumulating 50,000 miles, and tractor-trailer combinations for five years, accumulating 75,000 miles. He holds a Class DA CDL from Kentucky. His driving record for the last three years shows no crashes and no convictions for moving violations in a CMV.

*Jeffrey Ridenhour*

Mr. Ridenhour, 48, has a macular scar in his right eye due to a traumatic incident in 1998. The visual acuity in his right eye is 20/80, and in his left eye, 20/20. Following an examination in 2018, his optometrist stated, "In my medical opinion, Mr. Ridenhour has sufficient enough vision to perform the driving tasks required to operate a commercial vehicle." Mr. Ridenhour reported that he has driven tractor-trailer combinations for four years, accumulating 32,000 miles. He holds a Class A CDL from Arkansas. His driving record for the last three years shows no crashes and no convictions for moving violations in a CMV.

*John R. Russ II*

Mr. Russ, 71, has a prosthetic left eye due to a traumatic incident in 2010. The visual acuity in his right eye is no light perception, and in his left eye, 20/20. Following an examination in 2018, his ophthalmologist stated, "In my opinion, his vision in the left eye is sufficient to perform the driving tasks required to operate a commercial vehicle." Mr. Russ reported that he has driven straight trucks for 45 years, accumulating 675,000 miles, and tractor-trailer combinations for 35 years, accumulating 350,000 miles. He holds a Class A CDL from North Carolina. His driving record for the last three years shows no crashes and no convictions for moving violations in a CMV.

*Gary A. Ulitsch*

Mr. Ulitsch, 64, has had amblyopia in his left eye since birth. The visual acuity

in his right eye is 20/25, and in his left eye, 20/160. Following an examination in 2018, his optometrist stated, "In my medical opinion, he has vision sufficient [sic] to operate a commercial vehicle." Mr. Ulitsch reported that he has driven straight trucks for 46 years, accumulating 460,000 miles. He holds an operator's license from Connecticut. His driving record for the last three years shows no crashes and no convictions for moving violations in a CMV.

*Casey O. Wootan*

Mr. Wootan, 48, has had amblyopia in his left eye since childhood. The visual acuity in his right eye is 20/15, and in his left eye, 20/200. Following an examination in 2018, his optometrist stated, "In my medical opinion, Casey Wootan has sufficient vision to perform the driving tasks required to operate a commercial vehicle." Mr. Wootan reported that he has driven straight trucks for 20 years, accumulating 100,000 miles, and tractor-trailer combinations for 15 years, accumulating 600,000 miles. He holds a Class A CDL from Montana. His driving record for the last three years shows no crashes and no convictions for moving violations in a CMV.

*James C. Wright*

Mr. Wright, 42, has a retinal scar in his right eye due to a traumatic incident in 2008. The visual acuity in his right eye is 20/200, and in his left eye, 20/20. Following an examination in 2018, his optometrist stated, "Mr. Wright's condition is stable and I feel he should be able to operate a commercial vehicle safely without correction." Mr. Wright reported that he has driven straight trucks for ten years, accumulating 50,000 miles. He holds a Class B CDL from Minnesota. His driving record for the last three years shows no crashes and no convictions for moving violations in a CMV.

### III. Request for Comments

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, FMCSA requests public comment from all interested persons on the exemption petitions described in this notice. We will consider all comments and material received before the close of business on the closing date indicated in the dates section of the notice.

### IV. Submitting Comments

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 that FMCSA can contact you if there are questions regarding your submission.

To submit your comment online, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and in the search box insert the docket number FMCSA-2018-0017 and click the search button. When the new screen appears, click on the blue "Comment Now!" button on the right hand side of the page. On the new page, enter information required including the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation. 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. If you submit comments by mail and would like to know that they reached the facility, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope.

We will consider all comments and materials received during the comment period. FMCSA may issue a final determination at any time after the close of the comment period.

#### V. Viewing Comments and Documents

To view comments, as well as any documents mentioned in this preamble, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and in the search box insert the docket number FMCSA-2018-0017 and click "Search." Next, click "Open Docket Folder" and you will find all documents and comments related to this notice.

Issued on: August 30, 2018

Larry W. Minor,

Associate Administrator for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018-19581 Filed 9-7-18; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2015-0328]

#### Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Hearing

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

**ACTION:** Notice of final disposition.

**SUMMARY:** FMCSA announces its decision to renew exemptions for 3 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 May 18, 2018. The exemptions expire on May 18, 2020.

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

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Electronic Access

You may see all the comments online through the Federal Document Management System (FDMS) at: <http://www.regulations.gov>.

*Docket:* For access to the docket to read background documents or comments, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and/or Room W12-140 on the ground level of the West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

*Privacy Act:* In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553(c), DOT solicits comments from the public to better inform its rulemaking process. DOT posts these comments, without edit, including any personal information the commenter provides, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, as described in the system of records notice (DOT/ALL-14 FDMS), which can be reviewed at <http://www.dot.gov/privacy>.

##### II. Background

On June 18, 2018, FMCSA published a notice announcing its decision to renew exemptions for 3 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 (83 FR 28319). The public comment period ended on July 18, 2018, and no comments were received.

As stated in the previous notice, FMCSA has evaluated the eligibility of these applicants and determined that renewing these exemptions would achieve a level of safety equivalent to or greater than the level that would be achieved by complying with the current regulation 49 CFR 391.41(b)(11).

The physical qualification standard for drivers regarding hearing found in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(11) states that a

person is physically qualified to driver 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.

49 CFR 391.41(b)(11) was adopted in 1970, with a revision in 1971 to allow drivers to be qualified under this standard while wearing a hearing aid, 35 FR 6458, 6463 (April 22, 1970) and 36 FR 12857 (July 3, 1971).

##### III. Discussion of Comments

FMCSA received no comments in this preceding.

##### Conclusion

Based upon its evaluation of the 3 renewal exemption applications, FMCSA announces its' decision to exempt the following drivers from the hearing requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(11):

As of May 18, and in accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, the following 3 individuals have satisfied the renewal conditions for obtaining an exemption from the hearing requirement in the FMCSRs for interstate CMV drivers (83 FR 28319).

Tom Buretz, (FL); James Dalrymple, (AZ); and Derron Washington, (IL).

The drivers were included in docket number FMCSA-2015-0328. Their exemptions are applicable as of May 18, 2018, and will expire on May 18, 2020.

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315, each exemption will be valid for two 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 and 31315.

Issued on: August 30, 2018.

Larry W. Minor,

Associate Administrator for Policy.

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