

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1058

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to streamlining the licensing process for a commercial driver's license by allowing the department to waive requirements for applicants that previously surrendered the license, allowing the license to be renewed online, and modifying the license test fees.

Brief Description: Streamlining the licensing process for a commercial driver's license by allowing the department to waive requirements for applicants that previously surrendered the license, allowing the license to be renewed online, and modifying the license test fees.

Sponsors: Representatives Paul, Orcutt, Simmons, Ryu, Reed, Ramel, Lekanoff, Sandlin, Macri, Timmons, Wylie, Shavers, Kloba and Ormsby; by request of Department of Licensing.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 1/25/23, 1/26/23 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Removes the requirement that a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) applicant submit a renewal application to the Department of Licensing (DOL) in person.
- Authorizes the DOL to waive all or part of CDL standards for CDL applicants who have previously voluntarily surrendered their CDL.
- Modifies the CDL skills exam fee from \$250 for up to two CDL exams to \$175 per exam.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 29 members: Representatives Fey, Chair;

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Donaghy, Vice Chair; Paul, Vice Chair; Timmons, Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Hutchins, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Low, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Robertson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Berry, Bronoske, Chapman, Cortes, Dent, Doglio, Duerr, Entenman, Goehner, Griffey, Hackney, Klicker, Mena, Orcutt, Ramel, Ramos, Schmidt, Taylor, Volz, Walsh and Wylie.

Staff: Jennifer Harris (786-7143).

Background:

To operate a commercial motor vehicle in Washington, a person must hold a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) or Commercial Learner's Permit (CLP) issued by the Washington State Department of Licensing (DOL) with the applicable endorsements for the vehicle that is being driven. To obtain a CDL from the DOL, an individual must satisfy the following requirements:

1. be a resident of the state;
2. have successfully completed a course of instruction in the operation of a commercial motor vehicle approved by the DOL or have been certified by an employer as having the skills and training necessary to operate a commercial motor vehicle safely;
3. have been issued a CLP, if he or she does not hold a valid CDL of the appropriate classification; and
4. have passed both a knowledge and skills examination for driving a commercial motor vehicle that comply with federal and state requirements.

When applying for a renewal CDL, an applicant must:

- complete an application form, providing updated information and required certifications;
- submit the application to the DOL in person; and
- take and pass the written test for the hazardous materials endorsement, if the applicant wishes to retain the endorsement.

The fee for up to two CDL skills exams is no more than \$250. If the applicant's primary use of a CDL is to drive a school bus, the fee for up to two CDL skill exams is no more than \$100. If the applicant's primary use of a CDL is to drive for a non-profit entity that operates federally supported head start programs or early childhood education programs that qualify under state law, the fee for up to two CDL skills exams is no more than \$225.

State law does not specify the requirements for obtaining a new CDL after a CDL has been voluntarily surrendered. The DOL's current practice is to allow individuals who surrender their CDL to obtain a reinstated CDL without additional testing or training, provided they do so within a year of CDL surrender. For individuals who would like to have their CDL reinstated after a year's time, the DOL requires that the process for obtaining a new CDL be repeated.

Summary of Bill:

When applying for a renewal CDL, an applicant is no longer required to submit the application to the DOL in person and can do so online.

Beginning January 1, 2024, the fee for a CDL skills exam is no more than \$175 per exam. If the applicant's primary use of a CDL is to drive a school bus, the fee for up to two CDL skill exams remains no more than \$100.

For CDL applicants who have previously voluntarily surrendered a CDL to have their CDL reinstated, the DOL may waive all or part of new CDL or CLP qualification standards, including applicable testing and education requirements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2024.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) There is a supply chain business workforce shortage and more commercial vehicle drivers are needed. It is a common experience for people to wait on deliveries that are delayed, sitting on the back of a truck somewhere. The bill will have a positive impact on the supply chain and the overall economy.

This bill allows drivers who have voluntarily surrendered their CDL to be able to get it back through a streamlined process. The bill changes the CDL test fee and how it is structured, so that people have more of an incentive to pass the test on the first try. The bill also allows drivers to renew their CDL online, aligning state law with current practices (which began during the pandemic).

The bill is agency request legislation from the DOL that is the product of a strong partnership between the DOL and industry. It will help more drivers get their CDL reinstated without compromising safety. The DOL will be able to extend the time during which a CDL that has been voluntarily surrendered can be reinstated without training and testing requirements applying. Some drivers have to travel across the state to avoid facing a delay in CDL testing because of the current process and fee structure. Under this bill, drivers will not be required to retest with the same exam administrator that they used for their first test. The bill attempts to make this testing policy change revenue neutral for independent businesses that conduct CDL exams.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Dave Paul, prime sponsor; Jeff DeVere, Washington Trucking Associations; Beau Perschbacher, Washington Department of Licensing; and Mike Ennis, Association of Washington Business.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.