

# Commercial Driver Medical Exam — Department of Transportation (DOT) Physical Requirement

## Do You Need a DOT Physical?

You are required to have a DOT physical if you:

- operate a motor vehicle for interstate commerce with a maximum gross vehicle weight rating over 10,000 pounds
- operate a motor vehicle designed to carry more than 15 people
- are paid to operate a motor vehicle designed to carry more than eight people
- transport hazardous material that requires the vehicle to have a placard

## What to Expect at a DOT Physical

You will be examined by a medical clinician (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) who is a Certified Medical Examiner listed on the National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners.

You will be asked to change into shorts or a gown for the exam. Your vital signs will be taken, including blood pressure, pulse, vision, and hearing. You will also provide a urine sample to check for sugar and protein. Your employer may also request a drug test during your DOT physical.

You must have an in-person physical exam that includes, but is not limited to, an evaluation of your:

- abdomen
- back, neck, and spine
- ears and eyes
- extremities
- heart
- hernias
- lungs and chest
- mouth and throat
- nervous system
- skin

## What to Bring and How to Prepare for a DOT Physical

All drivers must bring a complete list of all medications, including doses and what they are used for.

If any of the conditions below apply to you, be prepared for additional requirements and documentation.

### Drivers With Corrective Vision and/or Hearing

- Bring your glasses, contacts and/or hearing aids. If you forget them, you may not pass your DOT physical.

### Drivers With Monocular Vision (Vision in Only One Eye)

- Bring a copy of Form *MCSA 5871 Vision Evaluation Report* completed by your eye doctor that is dated no more than 45 days before your DOT physical.
- Without this form, federal regulations require disqualification.
- Having one eye corrected for distance and the other for near vision is not acceptable.

### Drivers With High Blood Pressure

- Take your medication as prescribed on the day of your DOT physical.
- The blood pressure goal is below 140/90.
- Higher readings may result in limited certification or disqualification.

### Drivers With Diabetes

- Your blood sugar must be controlled.
- Bring your most recent Hemoglobin A1C results, blood sugar logs, or related records.
- If you use insulin, bring Form *MCSA-5870* completed by your treating doctor and dated no more than 45 days before your DOT physical. Without this form, federal regulations require disqualification.

## Drivers With Sleep Apnea

- If you use a CPAP, BiPAP, APAP, or Hypoglossal Nerve Stimulator such as Inspire, please bring a reading from your device. Digital and/or app-based logs are acceptable.
- A letter from your sleep specialist may also be requested.
- Minimum compliance is an average of 4 hours per night on 70% of nights.
- One year of data is recommended.
- Data of less than 90 days may result in shorter certification or disqualification.

## Drivers With Permanent Loss of a Hand, Arm, Foot, or Leg

You may need a Skilled Performance Examination in addition to your medical card.

## Drivers Taking Medications That May Cause Drowsiness or Impairment

- If you take medications that cause drowsiness, dizziness, or are controlled substances (e.g., narcotics, sleeping pills, anxiety or ADHD medications), bring a note and relevant records from your doctor confirming your ability to drive safely.
- Many of these medications are not recommended for commercial drivers and having a letter from your doctor is helpful but not a guarantee of passing the DOT physical. Discuss alternatives with your doctor before your DOT physical.

## Additional Guidance

This information serves as a general guide and is not all-inclusive. Your examiner may require additional testing or documentation.

Drivers should understand that they are responsible for the cost of the exam, which does not guarantee certification.

If you are unsure whether you will qualify for a DOT card, consult your healthcare provider before your exam.

## Marijuana and CBD

While marijuana is legal for adult recreational use in Michigan, it remains illegal under federal law and is prohibited for commercial drivers. Drivers should not use marijuana in any form, on or off duty.

Drug testing may be required during your DOT physical, as part of pre-employment screening, or randomly. Your examiner may also request testing if there is concern about marijuana use.

If you use CBD products, please note that CBD is unregulated and may contain THC, even when labeled otherwise. The DOT does not accept CBD use as a defense for a positive drug test.

Drivers should use caution when taking any CBD product. Your examiner will also ask why you use it.