exemption from the vision requirement in the FMCSR for interstate CMV drivers (77 FR 23799; 77 FR 33558; 79 FR 27365; 81 FR 28138):
Richard Doroba, (IL); and Tommy Thomas, (CA).
The drivers were included in docket number FMCSA–2012–0040. Their exemptions are applicable as of June 6, 2018, and will expire on June 6, 2020.

As of June 27, 2018, and in accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, the following two individuals have satisfied the renewal conditions for obtaining an exemption from the vision requirement in the FMCSR for interstate CMV drivers (77 FR 27847; 77 FR 38386; 79 FR 29495; 81 FR 28138):
Matthew G. Epps, (FL); and James E. Sikkink, (IL).
The drivers were included in docket number FMCSA–2012–0104. Their exemptions are applicable as of June 27, 2018, and will expire on June 27, 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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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA–2018–0012]
Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Vision

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

ACTION: Notice of final disposition.

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces its decision to exempt 12 individuals from the vision requirement in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR) to operate a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) in interstate commerce. They are unable to meet the vision requirement in one eye for various reasons. The exemptions enable these individuals to operate CMVs in interstate commerce without meeting the vision requirement in one eye.

DATES: The exemptions were applicable on July 19, 2018. The exemptions expire on July 19, 2020.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Christine A. Hydock, Chief, Medical Programs Division, (202) 366–4001, fmcsamedical@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. 552a(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 receipt of applications from 12 individuals requesting an exemption from vision requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10) and requested comments from the public (83 FR 28320). The public comment period ended on July 18, 2018, and two comments were received.

FMCSA has evaluated the eligibility of these applicants and determined that granting the exemptions to these individuals 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)(10).

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 a 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 red, green, and amber.

III. Discussion of Comments

FMCSA received two comments in this proceeding. Lora Swindall submitted a comment of encouragement for the drivers listed in this notice. Christopher Craine submitted a comment asking for assistance applying for a medical exemption. This is outside the scope of the current announcement. Information regarding all medical exemptions, including application packages, is available on the FMCSA website at https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/medicals/driver-medical-requirements/driver-exemption-programs.

IV. Basis for Exemption Determination

Under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, FMCSA may grant an exemption from the vision standard in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10) if the exemption is likely to achieve an equivalent or greater level of safety than would be achieved without the exemption. The exemption allows applicants to operate CMVs in interstate commerce.

The Agency’s decision regarding these exemption applications is based on medical reports about the applicants’ vision as well as their driving records and experience driving with the vision deficiency. The qualifications, experience, and medical condition of each applicant were stated and discussed in detail in the June 18, 2018, Federal Register notice (83 FR 28320) and will not be repeated in this notice.

FMCSA recognizes that some drivers do not meet the vision requirement but have adapted their driving to accommodate their limitation and demonstrated their ability to drive safely. The 12 exemption applicants listed in this notice are in this category. They are unable to meet the vision requirement in one eye for various reasons, including amblyopia, aphakia, chorioretinal scar, complete loss of vision, enucleation, macular scar, and retinal scarring. In most cases, their eye conditions were not recently developed. Eight of the applicants were either born with their vision impairments or have had them since childhood. The four individuals that sustained their vision conditions as adults have had it for a
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 that all comments received will be posted without change to http://www.regulations.gov.

VII. Conclusion

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

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

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31313(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.