

# ENTRY-LEVEL DRIVER TRAINING:

## UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT TO YOUR FLEET





An entry-level driver must successfully complete theory and behind-the-wheel instruction from an approved training provider before taking the CDL skills test.

As of February 7, 2022, compliance with all aspects of the entry-level driver training rule is required. The entry-level driver training rule establishes minimum training standards for drivers:

- Applying for their initial CDL;
- Upgrading their current CDL; or
- Obtaining a passenger, school bus, or hazardous materials endorsement for the first time.

An entry-level driver must complete a prescribed program of theory and behind-the-wheel instruction provided by a school or other entity listed on the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) Training Provider Registry (TPR) prior to taking a skills test for a:

- Class A CDL
- Class B CDL
- Passenger endorsement, or
- School bus endorsement

A prescribed program of theory instruction provided by a school or other entity listed on the TPR must be completed prior to an individual taking a hazardous materials endorsement knowledge test.

## THEORY INSTRUCTION – CLASS A AND CLASS B CDL

The rule does not include a minimum number of hours that driver-trainees must spend on theory instruction.

Theory instruction is defined in the rule as “knowledge instruction on the operation of a CMV and related matters provided by a theory instructor through lectures, demonstrations, audio-visual presentations, computer-based instruction, driving simulation devices, online training, or similar means.”

The rule prescribes specific topics for each of five areas of instruction. The instructor must cover all of the topics in the curriculum. The five areas of instruction, including the training topics, are as follows:

### 1. Basic Operation

- Orientation
- Control Systems/Dashboard
- Pre-Trip Inspections and Post-Trip Inspections
- Basic Control
- Shifting/Operating Transmissions
- Backing and Docking
- Coupling and Uncoupling (Class A only)

### Update Your Training Program!

J. J. Keller can advise you on how to update your current curriculum to meet the ELDT rule.

**Call 833.982.1236**





## 2. Safe Operating Procedures

- Visual Search
- Communication
- Distracted Driving
- Speed Management
- Space Management
- Night Operation
- Extreme Driving Conditions

## 3. Advanced Operating Practices

- Hazard Perception
- Railroad-Highway Grade Crossing
- Skid Control/Recovery, Jackknifing, and Other Emergencies

## 4. Vehicle Systems and Reporting Malfunctions

- Identification and Diagnosis of Malfunctions
- Roadside Inspections
- Maintenance

## 5. Non-Driving Activities

- Handling and Documenting Cargo
- Environmental Compliance Issues
- Hours-of-Service Requirements
- Fatigue and Wellness Awareness
- Post-Crash Procedures
- External Communications
- Whistleblower/Coercion
- Trip Planning
- Drugs/Alcohol
- Medical Requirements

The instructor must use an assessment to determine the driver-trainee's proficiency for each unit of instruction. Driver-trainees must demonstrate their understanding of the material by achieving an overall minimum score of 80 percent on the theory assessment.

### Need Help Delivering This Training?

Let us train your  
drivers to deliver  
J. J. Keller's  
best-in-class ELDT  
Curriculum.

**Call 833.982.1236**



## BEHIND-THE-WHEEL INSTRUCTION – CLASS A AND CLASS B CDL

The rule does not require a minimum number of behind-the-wheel (range and over-the-road) instruction hours. The instructor must cover all topics listed in the behind-the-wheel curriculum. The training topics are as follows:

### 1. Range

- Vehicle Inspection  
Pre Trip/En Route/Post Trip
- Straight Line Backing
- Alley Dock Backing (45/90 Degree)
- Off-Set Backing
- Parallel Parking Blind Side
- Parallel Parking Sight Side
- Coupling and Uncoupling (Class A only)

### 2. Public Road

- Vehicle Controls Including: Left Turns, Right Turns, Lane Changes, Curves at Highway Speeds, and Entry and Exit on the Interstate or Controlled Access Highway
- Shifting/Transmission
- Communications/Signaling
- Visual Search
- Speed and Space Management
- Safe Driver Behavior
- Hours-of-Service Requirements
- Hazard Perception\*
- Night Operation\*
- Railroad-Highway Grade Crossing\*
- Extreme Driving Conditions\*
- Skid Control/Recovery, Jackknifing, and Other Emergencies\*

\*These topics must be discussed during public road training, but not necessarily performed. Driver-trainees are not required to demonstrate proficiency in these skills.

The training must be completed in a vehicle of the same group or type that the driver-trainee intends to use for the CDL skills test.

During all behind-the-wheel, public road training sessions, the instructor must engage in active two-way communication with driver trainees.

The proficient completion of the behind-the-wheel training is based solely on the instructor's assessment of each driver-trainee's performance of the required elements of behind-the-wheel training on the range and public road.

This determination of proficiency is based on the instructor's professional judgment. In its final rule, FMCSA states that it "believes that demonstrated proficiency requires some level of successful repetition of the required behind-the-wheel curricula elements, as determined by the instructor. In other words, performing each required maneuver correctly one time does not mean that the trainee has demonstrated proficiency."

Instructors must document the total number of clock hours each driver-trainee spends to complete the behind-the-wheel curriculum.

The total number of clock hours spent completing behind-the-wheel training must be documented.



## Have Your Trainers Certified!

We'll certify your trainers to train entry-level drivers according to the new rule.

Call 833.982.1236

## PASSENGER AND SCHOOL BUS ENDORSEMENTS

A specific curriculum that includes theory and behind-the-wheel instruction must be completed in order to obtain a passenger or school bus endorsement.

The rule does not include a minimum number of hours that driver-trainees must spend on theory instruction. The driver-trainee must complete a theory assessment and receive a score of at least 80 percent.

There is no required minimum number of instruction hours for behind-the-wheel training for the passenger or school bus endorsement, but training providers must determine whether driver-trainees have demonstrated proficiency in all elements of the behind-the-wheel curriculum.

## HAZMAT ENDORSEMENT

A specific curriculum that includes theory instruction must be completed in order to obtain a hazardous materials endorsement.

The instructor must cover all of the following topics:

- Basic Introductory Hazardous Materials Requirements
- Operational Hazardous Materials Requirements
- Reporting Hazardous Materials Crashes and Releases
- Tunnels and Railroad-Highway Grade Crossing Requirements
- Loading and Unloading Hazardous Materials
- Hazardous Materials on Passenger Vehicles
- Bulk Packages
- Operating Emergency Equipment
- Emergency Response Procedures
- Engine (Fueling)
- Tire Check
- Routes and Route Planning
- Hazardous Materials Safety Permits

There is no required minimum number of instruction hours for theory training, but the driver-trainee must complete a theory assessment and receive a score of at least 80 percent.

Theory instruction must be completed to obtain a hazmat endorsement.



# THE TRAINING PROVIDER REGISTRY (TPR)

In order to provide entry-level driver training, a training provider must be listed on FMCSA's Training Provider Registry (TPR). To be eligible for listing on the TPR, the training provider must:

- Follow the curriculum that meets the criteria listed in Part 380, Appendices A through E;
- Use classroom and range facilities that comply with all federal, state and/or local statutes and regulations;
- Use vehicles in behind-the-wheel training that comply with all federal, state, and/or local statutes and regulations;
- Use theory instructors who meet the definition in §380.605;
- Use behind-the-wheel instructors who meet the definition in §380.605; and
- Be licensed, certified, registered, or authorized to provide training in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations of any state where in-person training is conducted.

Facilities and equipment must comply with all applicable federal, state, and/or local statutes and regulations.

Training providers will need to complete an electronic application on FMCSA's website in order to be listed on the TPR. FMCSA will not accept any other form of application.

The TPR application may be accessed at: <https://tpr.fmcsa.dot.gov/>.



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## INSTRUCTOR REQUIREMENTS

Theory and behind-the-wheel instructors must hold an appropriate class of CDL (including appropriate endorsement(s)) and have either:

1. A minimum of two years of experience driving a commercial motor vehicle requiring the CDL (including appropriate endorsement(s)); or
2. A minimum of two years of experience as a behind-the-wheel commercial motor vehicle instructor.

These individuals must also meet all applicable state qualification requirements for commercial motor vehicle instructors.

There are exceptions to these requirements for theory and behind-the-wheel range instructors who previously possessed a CDL, but no longer possess a CDL. There are also prohibitions for theory and behind-the-wheel instructors who have had their CDL canceled, suspended, or revoked per the disqualification provisions in §383.51.





The ELDT rule  
went into effect on  
February 7, 2022.

## CERTIFICATION/RECORDKEEPING

After an individual completes training administered by a provider listed on the TPR, that provider must, by **midnight of the second business day after the driver-trainee completes the training**, electronically transmit training certification information through the TPR website.

All training providers on the TPR must retain the following records:

- Self-certifications by all accepted applicants for behind-the-wheel training, attesting that they will comply with the regulations in Parts 40, 382, 383, and 391, as well as state and/or local laws related to alcohol and controlled substances testing, age, medical certification, licensing, and driver records;
- A copy of the driver-trainee's commercial learner's permit (CLP) or CDL, as applicable;
- Instructor qualification documentation indicating driving and/or training experience, as applicable, for each instructor, and copies of CDLs and applicable endorsements held by behind-the-wheel instructors or theory instructors, as applicable;
- The Training Provider Registration form, submitted to the TPR;
- The lesson plans for theory and behind-the-wheel (range and public road) training curricula, as applicable; and
- Records of individual entry-level driver training assessments.

### Let J. J. Keller Review Your Certification & Recordkeeping

We'll verify your required records are properly maintained and training certifications are submitted to the TPR on time.

Call 833.982.1236

Training providers listed on the TPR must keep training-related records for at least three years from the date each required record is generated or received. If a record, such as a behind-the-wheel instructor's CDL, has expired or has been canceled, the most recent, valid CDL should be kept.

Note that if local, state, or federal requirements prescribe longer retention periods for any category of records described, the records should be kept under those guidelines.

## IMPORTANT DATES AND RESOURCES

Compliance with the requirements is required as of February 7, 2022.

The 72-page final rule may be accessed via the [Federal Register website](https://www.federalregister.gov/).

The first part of the document (pages 88732-88790) provides the background and analysis of the requirements. The actual regulations and curriculum (Part 380, Subparts E, F, and G and Appendix A, B, C, D, and E to Part 380) begin on page 88790.

Also, additional resources addressing the entry-level driver training rule are available via <https://tpr.fmcsa.dot.gov/>.

# HOW WE CAN HELP

## The New Entry-Level Driver Training Rule is Now In Effect

### J. J. Keller Makes Compliance Easy!

We have everything you need to comply with the new entry-level driver training (ELDT) rule that went into effect on February 7, 2022.

#### Our services include:

- **Trainer Certification Program** certifies your trainers to train entry-level drivers according to the new rule. An expert J. J. Keller instructor will educate your trainers on how to effectively deliver both the theory and behind-the-wheel entry-level driver training. Plus, we'll provide full support to ensure your company is registered on the Training Provider Registry (TPR).
- **ELDT Program Assessment** reviews your entry-level driver training program to verify that it meets or exceeds the FMCSA's ELDT final rule. This includes an assessment of your facilities, vehicles, trainers, certifications, documentation and recordkeeping, training curriculum and more. We'll also assist you with getting registered on the TPR.
- **ELDT Curriculum** provides you with our best-in-class ELDT program covering the required theory and behind-the-wheel training. It consists of 200 hours of regulatory-compliant training materials, including driver and trainer textbooks, online courses, and instruction for conducting range and road exercises.



Get your entry-level drivers on the road to a safer career with help from J. J. Keller!

Contact us for more information.

833.982.1236

[JJKellerSafeandSmart.com/ELDT](http://JJKellerSafeandSmart.com/ELDT)



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

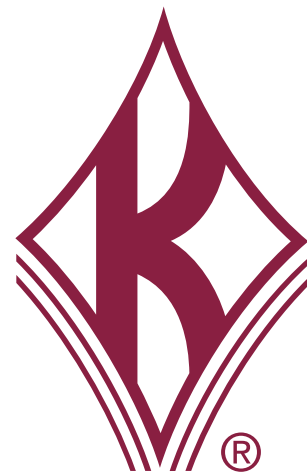
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Jill joined J. J. Keller in 1993 with a background in journalism and experience as a news reporter and anchor. At J. J. Keller, she specializes in both the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations and state intrastate safety regulations, covering topics that include driver qualification, hours of service, and alcohol and controlled substance regulations. Jill is the editor of several J. J. Keller transportation safety and regulatory-related publications, and her work has also been published in industry trade journals and association publications. She is the author of a number of transportation-related whitepapers. Jill serves on the board of the National Association of Publicly Funded Truck Driving Schools (NAPFTDS).



## ABOUT J. J. KELLER

Since its beginning as a one-man consulting firm in 1953, J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc. has grown to become the most respected name in safety and regulatory compliance. Now over 1,500 associates strong, J. J. Keller serves over 500,000 customers – including over 90% of the Fortune 1000® companies. The company's subject-matter expertise spans nearly 1,500 topics and its diverse solutions include training via online courses, streaming video or DVD; online management tools; managed services; advisory services; publications; ELogs and mobile technology; and forms and supplies. Transport professionals rely on J. J. Keller's in-house expertise and wide selection of products and services to reduce risk and improve regulatory compliance, performance management, and operational efficiency. For more information, visit [JJKeller.com](http://JJKeller.com).



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66029