

Issue Date: May 9, 2023

New Information

Effective July 2023, several changes will be made to the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Skills Tests. The new Vehicle Inspection (VI) and Basic Control Skills (BCS) tests will provide a more streamlined and efficient testing experience for CDL applicants and examiners. The modernization of the VI and BCS testing requirements ensures the continued safety of California drivers and roadways. There will be **no** changes to the CDL road test.

Helpful Links

- dmv.ca.gov/portal/driver-education-and-safety/special-interest-driver-guides/truck-drivers/#guides
- dmv.ca.gov/portal/driver-education-and-safety/special-interest-driver-guides/truck-drivers/commercial-driver-information/
- dmv.ca.gov/portal/file/vehicle-inspection-checklist-pdf/

The Department of Motor Vehicles website will identify which CDL testing locations offer modernized testing, and which locations follow the current (2005) testing model.

VI Test Changes

- Every applicant will perform a full VI.
- Fewer inspection items, with a focus on items critical to safety.
- VI checklist is available for applicants to use during the new exam.
- CDL Handbook addendum will include “Why Inspect” rationale.
- Revised coupling system criteria.

NOTE: Scoring criteria and automatic failures remain the same.

BCS Test Changes

- Smaller footprint.
- Forward stop box.
- Forward offset tracking.
- Scoring-clearance on forward offset tracking.
- Scoring-back up on forward moving exercises.
- Reverse offset tracking versus parallel and alley dock.

NOTE: No changes have been made to pull-ups, encroachments, looks, final position, and stopping the drive on encroachment to return to boundaries. Automatic failures remain the same.

Background

The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) started a CDL testing pilot in 2019 in Maryland, New Hampshire, and Virginia. On August 11, 2022, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) approved the modernized CDL skills testing. California is implementing those changes using a phased approach. The modernized test incorporates the same high standards for assessing entry level commercial driver ability using up-to-date technology and improves test administration effectiveness and efficiency.