

CDL for training purposes, while you are awaiting your commercial driving test.

Example: For a restricted firefighter Class B upgrading to a commercial Class B, a driving test **is not** required. For restricted firefighter Class B upgrading to a commercial Class A, a driving test **is** required.

NOTE: A Certificate of Driving Skill (DL 170) form is acceptable in lieu of a driving test.

Q: Does a mechanic need to have an “F” firefighter endorsement?

A: No, a mechanic does not need an “F” firefighter endorsement. The mechanic must be properly licensed for the type of vehicle he/she is operating, including any endorsements that would also be required.

Q: Will drivers who choose to apply for a noncommercial Class C driver license be required to enroll in the pull notice program?

A: Yes, all drivers with an “F” firefighter endorsement must enroll in the pull notice program.

Q: What is the definition of fire fighting equipment?

A: Fire fighting equipment is a motor vehicle that meets the definition of a Class A or Class B vehicle described in CVC §12804.9(b), that is used to travel from the scene of an emergency situation, or to transport equipment used in the control of an emergency situation, and is owned, leased, rented by, or under the exclusive control of a federal or state agency, a regularly organized fire department of a city, county, city and county, or district, or a volunteer fire department having official recognition of the city, county, city and county, or district in which the department is located.

Q: Do I need an “F” firefighter endorsement to operate a Class C type vehicle owned by the fire department, such as a battalion chief’s pickup?

A: No, see prior question for the definition of “fire fighting equipment.”

Q: Do I need to have the “F” firefighter endorsement for training purposes?

A: No, you are not required to obtain an “F” firefighter endorsement to operate fire fighting equipment for training purposes, during a nonemergency, or while under the direct supervision of a fire department employee who is properly licensed and is authorized by the fire department to provide training.

Q: What do I do as a tiller operator if I currently hold a Class C driver license?

A: Tiller operators are also required to have the “F” firefighter endorsement.

Q: I have a Class A driver license with an “automatic transmission” restriction. Will I be able to drive a vehicle with a manual transmission?

A: Yes, if you have an “F” firefighter endorsement on your driver license, while on duty, you can operate any Class A or B fire fighting equipment, no matter what type of transmission it has.

Q: If I hold a restricted firefighter CDL, will it automatically be grandfathered in with the endorsement?

A: Yes, if you currently hold a restricted firefighter CDL, your driver record has been updated with a restriction 50 and a comment “firefighter endorsement valid.” The restricted firefighter CDL will be honored until the time of renewal. A Health Questionnaire (DL 546) form must be maintained.

Q: Will I need to retake the firefighter endorsement written test every time my driver license is renewed?

A: If you are eligible for a “renewal by mail” or “vision test only” renewal, all written tests can be waived (with the exception of hazardous materials). If you are not eligible

for a “renewal by mail” or “vision test only” renewal, all written tests are applicable.

Q: As a firefighter, do I need to meet Transportation Security Administrations (TSA) fingerprinting requirements that are associated with the hazardous materials endorsement?

A: If you hold a commercial Class A, B, or C driver license with a hazardous materials endorsement, you are required to be cleared through TSA. If you hold a noncommercial Class C driver license with an “F” firefighter endorsement, you can operate fire fighting equipment with hazardous materials while on duty and the TSA clearance is not required.

Q: I am a firefighter with a noncommercial Class C driver license and an “F” firefighter endorsement. If my driver license is suspended for traffic violations, is the “F” firefighter endorsement also suspended?

A: Yes, if the Class C driving privilege is suspended, then so is the “F” firefighter endorsement. If eligible, you may be issued a restricted driver license to drive during the course of employment. The “F” firefighter endorsement would be valid only for use with a course of employment restriction.

Q: Can I get a restricted driver license if my CDL is suspended?

A: No, a driver is not eligible to receive a restricted CDL. If you choose to apply for a restricted driver license, you will need to downgrade to a Class C driver license. If you want the CDL back after your full driving privilege is reinstated, all the commercial tests will be required, including a driving test.

Firefighter Endorsement Training Requirements

Fast Facts



Firefighter Endorsement Training Requirements

On January 01, 2011, *California Vehicle Code* (CVC) §12804.11(a) required an individual who has a noncommercial driver license or a commercial Class C driver license and operates fire fighting equipment, including a tiller operator, to have a firefighter endorsement “F.” Restricted commercial firefighter driver licenses are no longer issued.

Current Holders of a Restricted Commercial Firefighter License

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has added the firefighter endorsement to the driver record of an employee or volunteer firefighter who holds a restricted commercial firefighter driver license. The current restricted commercial firefighter driver license will be honored until the time of renewal. It *is not* necessary to obtain a new driver license for this purpose.

Current Holders of a Commercial Driver License

Firefighters with a Class A or B commercial driver license (CDL) are not required to add the “F” endorsement to continue operating fire fighting equipment, as long as their CDL includes all applicable endorsements for the vehicle they are operating.

Applicants for an Original Firefighter Endorsement

All applicants must apply in person at a local DMV office, meet all licensing requirements, and must:

1. Submit an Original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification letter, on fire department letterhead containing:
 - Certification of employment as a firefighter or proof of registration as a volunteer firefighter.

- Certification of completion of fire equipment operator training.
 - Signature of the fire chief or designee.
2. Successfully pass the written firefighter endorsement test.
 3. Submit a completed Health Questionnaire (DL 546) form.

Training Requirements for Firefighter Endorsement Applicants

All applicants for a firefighter endorsement must have either:

- Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator 1A training administered by an instructor registered with the Office of the State Fire Marshal,

OR

- Fire department driver training that meets the following requirements:
 - Meets or exceeds the standards outlined in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1002, Chapter 4 (2008 version) or the Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator 1A course adopted by the Office of the State Fire Marshal.
 - Prepares the applicant to safely operate the department’s fire equipment that the applicant will be authorized to operate.
 - Includes a classroom (cognitive) portion of at least 16 hours.
 - Includes a practical portion of at least 14 hours, which includes directly supervised behind-the-wheel driver training.

Firefighter trainees are not required to obtain a firefighter endorsement prior to training, as long as the trainer is properly licensed and is an authorized fire department employee.

Questions regarding the new law may be directed to the DMV Commercial Licensing Policy Unit at (916) 657-6550.

Firefighter Endorsement Q & A

Q: What is required to apply for an original firefighter “F” endorsement?

A: You must have a commercial or noncommercial Class A, B, or C driver license and submit:

- An “Original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification” letter, on fire department letterhead containing:
 - Certification of employment or registration as a volunteer firefighter.
 - Certification of completion of fire equipment operator training.
 - Signature of the fire chief or designee.
- A Medical Examination Report (DL 51) form for CDL (available at www.dmv.ca.gov/forms/dl/dl51.htm) or a DL 546 form for a noncommercial driver license (available at <http://apps.dmv.ca.gov/forms/dl/dl546.pdf>).

Q: I have a CDL. What is required to downgrade to a noncommercial Class C driver license with a firefighter endorsement?

A: You will be required to:

- Complete a Driver License or Identification Card Application (DL 44) form.
- Have the comment “firefighter endorsement valid” or an “F” firefighter endorsement on your driver record, or provide a completed Firefighter Endorsement Card (DL 88) form, or provide an Original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification letter on fire department letterhead signed by the chief or designee.
- Have a valid DL 51 or DL 546 form on your driver license record.
- Pay the applicable fee.
- Pass any required knowledge test(s). A driving test is not required.

Q: I have a restricted firefighter driver license. What is required to downgrade to a noncommercial Class C driver license with an “F” firefighter endorsement?

A: You will be required to:

- Complete a DL 44 form.
- Submit a DL 546 form.
- Pay the applicable fee.
- Pass any applicable written test(s). A driving test is not required.

Q: I have a restricted firefighter driver license. What is required to upgrade to a full CDL with an “F” firefighter endorsement?

A: You will be required to:

- Have the comment “firefighter endorsement valid” or an “F” firefighter endorsement on your driver record, or you will need to provide a completed DL 88 form or submit an original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification letter on fire department letterhead signed by your fire chief or designee.
- Complete a Commercial Driver License Application (DL 44C) form.
- Submit a valid DL 51 form.
- Pay the applicable fee.
- Pass any knowledge test for the unrestricted commercial class license. The firefighter written test may be waived.
- For a restricted firefighter driver license applying for the same class of an unrestricted commercial driver license, once the applicable written tests are passed, the driving test will be waived.
- For a restricted firefighter driver license applying for a higher class unrestricted CDL, the driving test is required. Once the written tests are passed, an instruction permit is issued for the higher class of a