

MVD Procedural Quick Update

#10

RE: CDL – School Bus Driver Retest
Effective date: Immediate

Date: August 22, 2006
To: All MVD
From: Mac Lewis, MVD Policy and Procedures Manager

[This is the latest in a series of procedural updates. These updates deal with specific MVD procedures and practices. Managers and Supervisors should consistently distribute the updates to all personnel and integrate them into regular information and training sessions.]

Effective immediately retesting is no longer required for drivers who are renewing their CDLs with the “S” school bus endorsement.

Drivers who have retested and failed will still be required to pass the school bus test before their “S” endorsement can be renewed.

Some time ago the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) questioned the adequacy of New Mexico's testing procedures for adding the “S” school bus endorsement to a Commercial Drivers License (CDL). Now, after more than a year of back and forth with the federal regulators, during which school bus drivers have been notified first that they would all have to retest by September, 2005 to keep the “S” endorsement, then that the deadline had been extended to September, 2006, the FMCSA has finally concluded that,

“... our office has reviewed the information you sent us on the school bus testing issue and we feel what NM provides to school bus drivers is more than adequate to address this issue, so we are finding them in compliance and closing out this topic.”

Translation: A driver who has previously satisfied all of our requirements for adding the “S” school bus endorsement to his or her CDL, and has a valid, current “S” endorsement, is no longer required to retest as a condition for keeping or renewing the endorsement.

In the meantime some drivers have retested, and some of those have failed. Despite the subsequent elimination of the retest requirement, we unfortunately have no choice but to require that those individuals who have failed the retest must pass the test before their “S” endorsements can be renewed.

Moreover, because New Mexico statute (66-5-60D) requires that a CDL applicant shall not take a CDL knowledge or skills test more than three times within one year, any driver who fails the test three times will have to wait a full year from the date of the first test before he or she can take it again.

Please refer any comments or questions regarding this Quick Update to Mac Lewis, Policy and Procedure Manager at mac.lewis@state.nm.us.
