



Reid Health

Occupational Medicine

DOT physicals - Preparing for your exam

The DOT clearance process does not have to be a daunting task. With proper preparation, you can be cleared and back on the road without hassle.

Consider the below tips to prepare for your exam.

Don't wait until the last minute.

Consider scheduling your exam three to four weeks before your current card expires. This will allow extra time for you to obtain additional information from your treating provider, if needed. Waiting until the day of expiration to come in for a new exam may result in a lapse of certification that will render you unable to drive a commercial motor vehicle. On average, it takes primary care physicians and specialty offices 7-10 days to complete DOT information request forms on behalf of the driver.

Consider your medical conditions and prepare accordingly.

- If you are currently prescribed a medication that could cause side effects, such as sedation, fatigue, dizziness, decreased attention, or anything that could interfere with safely driving a commercial motor vehicle, it is recommended prescribing provider(s) complete the [FMCSA Medication Form](#).
- Reid Health Occupational Medicine providers follow the FMCSA requirement to screen for sleep apnea as well as any other respiratory medical condition that could interfere with safe driving. Those drivers meeting the evidence-based criteria for increased risk of sleep apnea will be certified for six months to allow time for evaluation and initiation of treatment if needed. The Sleep Apnea Evaluation Form will be reviewed during the visit. This form will help you understand risk factors and the evidence-based criteria Reid Health Occupational Medicine providers follow in determining your sleep apnea risk. If you fit the criteria in the table below, you will be required to have a sleep study.

Column A	Column B
BMI \geq 40	<p>BMI \geq33 but less than 40 AND 3+ of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treated and untreated high blood pressure • Treated and untreated Type 2 diabetes • Neck size \geq 17" (male); \geq 15.5" female • Loud snoring • Mallampati Classification of Class III or IV • Male or post-menopausal female • Witnessed apneas • History of stroke/arrhythmia/coronary artery disease • Micrognathia or retrognathia • Hypothyroidism (untreated) • Age 42 and above

- If you have a current diagnosis of OSA and/or use a CPAP machine, complete the [Obstructive Sleep Apnea Form](#) and provide a printout of a recent compliance download. Newly diagnosed OSA requires a minimum of 30 days of compliance downloads and previously diagnosed OSA requires a minimum of 90 days of compliance downloads.

- If you use insulin for diabetes, complete the [Diabetes Assessment Form](#) and include a Hemoglobin A1C test result within three months of the time of your exam.
- **Regarding vision**, drivers who do not meet the vision standard in both eyes will need to have an optometrist or ophthalmologist complete the [Vision Evaluation Form](#) prior to your DOT exam.
- If you have any of the following medical conditions, please have your provider complete the [DOT Medical Information Request Form](#):
 - **Diabetes** - Have your treating provider complete the DOT medical information request form and provide a copy of a Hemoglobin A1C blood test result within three months of the time of your exam.
 - **Heart attack/stent** - Have your treating provider complete the DOT medical information request form and, if available, provide a copy of a stress test (treadmill or nuclear/chemical) completed in the last two years.
 - **Other cardiac conditions** (atrial fibrillation, murmur, or valve replacement) - Have your treating provider complete the DOT medical information request form and, if available, provide a copy of a recent echocardiogram.
 - **History of stroke/mini stroke** - Have your treating neurologist complete the DOT medical information request form.
 - **Return to work after personal illness and/or surgery** - Have your treating provider complete the DOT medical information request form to obtain clearance from your treating physician/surgeon. Drivers must be released to full duty without restrictions to be able to be certified.

Be prepared on the day of your exam.

- Please bring a list of ALL medications to your exam. In addition, please ensure you have taken all medications as directed the day before and the day of your exam.
- If you wear glasses or hearing aids, bring them to your exam.
- Regarding hypertension (high blood pressure): Drivers with this medical condition should consider coming in for their exam on a day off to avoid feeling rushed or pressed for time. Failing to do so could result in a high blood pressure reading at your exam that may effect your certification.
 - An initially elevated reading (above 140/90) does not automatically disqualify a driver. We will attempt several readings to assess your blood pressure.
 - The CDME per FMCSA may only use blood pressure readings that are obtained in the clinic to make certification decisions. Blood pressure readings taken outside of our clinic will not be considered when making certification decisions.
- If you have diabetes, take your medication as prescribed. In addition, avoid high-sugar foods for several days prior to your exam date and ensure you are consuming plenty of water.
- When you do not make an appointment for a DOT physical, this practice causes interruption to normal clinic flow and subtracts from time spent with patients who have an appointment.
- We will not check blood pressure or vision for drivers wanting to see “if they will pass” to determine if they want to complete the DOT exam on that day. Blood pressure and vision will be taken after completion of all paperwork and (if applicable) providing payment for a DOT exam.

What to expect after your exam.

Certified drivers - after receiving your DOT certification:

- Send a copy of your physical and certification card to the state that issues your CDL. Reid Health Occupational Medicine will not provide this service for you.
- Ensure your employer receives a copy of your certification card. Employers will not receive a copy of your full physical unless you provide consent at the time of your appointment or provide the copy yourself. You will be given two copies of your full physical.
- Continue taking care of yourself by partnering with your primary care provider and specialists to stay on top of any issues that may arise prior to your next certification exam.
- Follow any recommendations given by your Reid Health Occupational Medicine medical examiner to avoid interruptions to your certification.

Drivers placed in “determination pending”:

- “Determination pending” means the medical examiner requires additional information about your medical condition(s) to make a final certification decision.
- To ensure completion of your certification, have your treating provider(s) complete the [DOT Medical Information Request Form](#) and submit any other information requested by Reid Health Occupational Medicine. Once submitted, you may then be required to schedule an appointment to return to Reid Health Occupational Medicine.
- To prevent “determination pending” status, refer to the “Consider your medical conditions and prepare accordingly” section on Page 1 and begin preparing three to four weeks in advance of your exam.

Important: Per the FMCSA, the medical examiner may allow up to 45 days from the date of the exam to allow for the driver to return the additional information needed to make a certification decision. If the required information is not returned to the medical examiner within the allotted time frame up to 45 days, the initial exam is invalidated by the FMCSA and a new exam will be required for certification.