

What Drivers Should Know About the FMCSA Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse

On January 6, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s (FMCSA) Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse becomes operational. Here’s what drivers should know about this new tool:

What it is: A secure online database, the clearinghouse will give the FMCSA, state driver’s license agencies, state law enforcement personnel and employers real-time information about any commercial driver’s license (CDL) or commercial learner’s permit (CLP) holder’s drug and alcohol record. It will include information about positive drug test results, drug test refusals, return-to-duty (RTD) test results or follow-up drug testing.

Why it exists: The clearinghouse aims to improve highway safety. It’s designed to eliminate the possibility of drivers job-hopping to another employer or another state after failing a drug-and-alcohol test in their home state.

Who must use it: All companies that hire drivers with CDLs or CLPs must report any drug-and-alcohol violations to the clearinghouse. Employers must check the clearinghouse each year for drivers they currently employ. They also must check the clearinghouse before hiring any new drivers. Medical review officers, substance abuse professionals (SAPs) and other third-party administrators must also report any driver drug-and-alcohol violation.

Do drivers need to sign up? Drivers are not required to register. However, you may do so if you wish to access your record in the clearinghouse. You also must register to give electronic consent for an employer or prospective employer to view your full record.

How do drivers register? Visit clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov/register and follow the instructions. Once registered, drivers will receive notification by mail or email of any changes made to their record.



How do I keep my record clean?

Avoid alcohol, drugs and controlled substances while on or off duty.

Regardless of state law, all CDL holders must follow FMCSA and Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations. DOT regulations list marijuana as a Schedule 1 drug. That means U.S. truck drivers **cannot use marijuana for recreational or medical reasons**. Nor may they transport marijuana across state lines. A positive test result will not be downgraded because a driver has a medical marijuana prescription.

Per DOT regulations, drivers who fail drug tests may be referred to an SAP for evaluation. They may be asked to complete an RTD test and follow-up testing, or they may be terminated based on their employers’ drug-and-alcohol policy.

Stay road worthy. Avoid drugs, including marijuana, and keep your record clean.