

# School Bus Driver Qualifications & Requirements:

***For those interested in becoming a school bus driver, please, read the following information.***

- The primary goal of the Transportation Department is to promote safety, insuring all students receive the safest transportation possible.
- All school bus drivers receive extensive training in current laws, regulations and behind-the-wheel training as mandated by Federal and State regulations.
- School bus drivers are required by law to receive more training than any other driver in this state.
- A school bus driver's background is checked by the Department of Justice and/or the FBI prior to receiving a license to drive a school bus.
- School bus drivers must have a current Department of Transportation Medical Certificate (DL-51).
- School bus drivers must pass the written CHP First Aid Test or have a current Red Cross First Aid Card.
- School bus drivers must participate in a pre-employment drug and alcohol test and are randomly tested thereafter.
- All school bus drivers must attend regularly scheduled safety meetings and attend additional training sessions to maintain the skills needed to safely transport students.
- School bus drivers must have and maintain a clean driving record, both professionally and personally.

## **Minimum Course Work to become a School Bus Driver - 40082 E.C.**

- Every school bus driver must successfully complete a minimum of 40 hours of course instruction.
- The course shall include a minimum of 20 hours of classroom instruction in, but not limited to, all units of the Instructor's Manual for California's School Bus Driver's Training Course.
- The course shall also include a minimum of 20 hours of behind-the-wheel training from the Instructor's Behind-the-Wheel Guide for California's Bus Driver's Training Course.

*(A typical training course requires: Average of 34 hours of instruction in the classroom and an average time of 26 hours spent in behind-the-wheel instruction)*

## **Development or Approval of Training Courses: Instructional Personnel – 40081 E.C.**

The California Department of Education School Transportation Division, with the advice and assistance of the California Department of Motor Vehicles and California Highway Patrol, develop and approve courses for training school bus drivers.

These courses provide school bus drivers with the skills and knowledge necessary to prepare for certification and endorsement pursuant to Sections 12517, 12519, and 12804.6 of the California Vehicle Code.

All courses of study and training activities are approved by the California Department of Education and given by, or in the presence of, an instructor in possession of a valid school bus driver instructor certificate of the appropriate classification.

**Renewal Training Requirements - 40085 E.C.**

- For license renewal the bus driver will successfully complete 10 hours of original or renewal classroom instruction or behind-the-wheel training during each 12 months of certificate validity.
- During the last 12 months of the special driver certificate validity, the 10 hours shall consist of classroom instruction covering, but not limited to, current laws and regulations, defensive driving, accident prevention, emergency procedures, and passenger loading and unloading.
- Failure to successfully complete the required training, during any 12 month period of certificate validity, is cause for the Department of Motor Vehicles to cancel the school bus certificate.

**Qualifications of School Bus Driver - 12517 V.C.**

***School bus drivers must have and maintain:***

- Class A or B license, with a Passenger Endorsement, issued by the DMV
- School Bus Certificate, issued by the DMV
- Physical every two years (Annually, if over 65 years of age)
- First Aid Certificate every three years (when required)
- Department of Justice Fingerprint clearance at the CHP
- Department of Justice Fingerprint clearance at the District Office
- Pass pre-employment drug testing and random drug & alcohol testing thereafter
- Demonstrate proficiency in driving skills

**The following are a few laws and regulation that govern those who are school bus drivers or wish to become school bus drivers.**

**VEHICLE CODE SECTIONS**

**12516.** It is unlawful for any person under the age of 18 years to drive a school bus transporting pupils to or from school.

**12517.** No person shall operate a school bus unless that person has in his or her immediate possession a valid driver's license for the appropriate class of vehicle to be driven endorsed for passenger transportation.

· When transporting one or more pupils at or below the 12th-grade level to or from a public or private school or to or from public or private school activities, the person shall also have in his or her immediate possession a certificate issued by the department to permit the operation of school buses.

· The applicant for a certificate to operate a school bus shall meet the eligibility and training requirements specified for school bus drivers in this code, the Education Code and regulations adopted by the Department of the California Highway Patrol, and, shall pay a fee.....

**12517.2.** Applicants for an original or renewal certificate to drive a school bus shall submit a report of a medical examination of the applicant given not more than two years prior to the date of the application by a physician licensed to practice medicine.

· The report shall be on a form approved by the department, the *Federal Highway*administration, or the Federal Aviation Administration.

· School bus drivers, within the same month of reaching the age of 65 and each 12th month thereafter, shall undergo a physical examination and submit a report of medical examination on a form as specified.

**12517.3.** Applicants for an original certificate to drive a school bus, shall be fingerprinted by the Department of the California Highway Patrol, on a form provided the Department of the California Highway Patrol for submission to the Department of Justice.

**12517.4.** The school bus driver certificate shall be issued only to applicants meeting all applicable provisions of this code and passing the examinations prescribed by the DMV and the Department of the California Highway Patrol.

**13369.** The DMV shall refuse to issue or renew, or shall revoke for any of the following causes, the school bus certificate of any person who:

· Within the preceding three years, has committed any violation which results in a conviction assigned a violation point count of two or more.

· Within the preceding three years, has had his or her driving privilege suspended, revoked, or on probation for any reason involving unsafe operation of a motor vehicle.

The DMV may refuse to issue or renew, or may suspend or revoke the certificate or endorsement of any person who:

- Within the preceding 12 months, has been involved as a driver in three accidents in which the driver caused or contributed to the causes of the accidents.
- Within the preceding 24 months, as a driver, caused or contributed to the cause of an accident resulting in a fatality or serious injury or serious property damage in excess of seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750).
- Has violated any provision of this **code**, or any rule or regulation pertaining to the safe operation of a **vehicle** for which the certificate or endorsement was issued.
- Has violated any restriction of the certificate, endorsement, or commercial driver's license.
- Has knowingly made a false statement or concealed a material fact on an application for a certificate or endorsement.
- Has been determined by the department to be a negligent or incompetent operator.
- Has demonstrated irrational behavior to the extent that a reasonable and prudent person would have reasonable cause to believe that the applicant's ability to perform the duties of a driver may be impaired.
- Excessively or habitually uses, or is addicted to, alcoholic beverages, narcotics, or dangerous drugs.
- Does not meet the minimum medical standards established or approved by the department.

**13370.** The DMV shall deny or revoke a school bus driver certificate if any of the following causes apply to the applicant or certificate holder:

- Has been convicted of any sex offense.
- Has been convicted, within the two years preceding the application date, of any offense specified in Section 11361.5 of the Health and Safety Code (Marijuana).
- Has failed to meet prescribed testing or training requirements for certificate issuance.

The DMV may deny, suspend, or revoke a school bus driver certificate if any of the following causes apply to the applicant or certificate holder:

- Has been convicted of any crime specified in Section 44424 of the Education Code within the seven years preceding the application date. This paragraph does not apply if denial is mandatory.
- Has committed any act involving moral turpitude.
- Has been convicted of any offense, not specified in this section and other than a sex offense that is punishable as a felony, within the seven years preceding the application date.
- Has been dismissed as a driver for a cause relating to pupil transportation safety.

· Has been convicted, within the seven years preceding the application date, of any offense relating to the use, sale, possession, or transportation of narcotics, habit-forming drugs, or dangerous drugs.