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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE BILL

No. 1295 Session of  
2026

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INTRODUCED BY J. WARD, BARTOLOTTA, PHILLIPS-HILL, HUTCHINSON,  
LANGERHOLC, STEFANO, MARTIN AND BAKER, APRIL 17, 2026

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REFERRED TO TRANSPORTATION, APRIL 17, 2026

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AN ACT

1 Amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated  
2 Statutes, in commercial drivers, further providing for  
3 purpose and construction of chapter, for definitions and for  
4 commercial driver's license qualification standards,  
5 providing for English proficiency standard, further providing  
6 for nonresident CDL, for application for commercial driver's  
7 license and for disqualification and providing for annual  
8 report; and imposing penalties.

9 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
10 hereby enacts as follows:

11 Section 1. Section 1602 of Title 75 of the Pennsylvania  
12 Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding a subsection to read:  
13 § 1602. Purpose and construction of chapter.

14 \* \* \*

15 (c) Federal law.--To the extent that this chapter conflicts  
16 with Federal law or regulation, the Federal law or regulation  
17 shall prevail. Notice of nonapplicability shall be transmitted  
18 by the department to the Legislative Reference Bureau for  
19 publication in the next available issue of the Pennsylvania  
20 Bulletin.

21 Section 2. Section 1603 of Title 75 is amended by adding

1 definitions to read:

2 § 1603. Definitions.

3 The following words and phrases when used in this chapter  
4 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
5 context clearly indicates otherwise:

6 \* \* \*

7 "Evidence of lawful immigration status." As defined in 49  
8 CFR 383.5 (relating to definitions).

9 \* \* \*

10 "Nondomiciled CDL" or "nondomiciled CLP." As defined in 49  
11 CFR 383.5.

12 \* \* \*

13 Section 3. Section 1607(a)(3), (6), (7) and (9), (b)(1), (c)  
14 (3) and (d)(1) and (5) of Title 75 are amended and subsections  
15 (a), (c) and (d) are amended by adding paragraphs to read:

16 § 1607. Commercial driver's license qualification standards.

17 (a) Testing.--

18 \* \* \*

19 (3) The department may authorize a person, including an  
20 agency of this or another state, an employer, a private  
21 institution, association or driver training school, or a  
22 department, agency or instrumentality of local government to  
23 administer the skills test specified by this section,  
24 provided:

25 (i) The test is the same as that which would  
26 otherwise be administered by the department.

27 (ii) The third party has entered into an agreement  
28 with the department.

29 (iii) The third party administers tests to meet the  
30 English proficiency standard under section 1607.1

1 (relating to English proficiency standard).

2 \* \* \*

3 (6) The department shall provide applicants for  
4 commercial driver's licenses with the choice of selecting a  
5 knowledge test administered in either a written or an oral  
6 format:

7 (i) The department shall administer the knowledge  
8 tests in [both the English and Spanish languages] the  
9 English language.

10 (ii) An applicant requesting the oral [or Spanish]  
11 version of the knowledge test in the English language  
12 must schedule for the examination at a testing site  
13 authorized by the department.

14 [(iii) The department shall offer alternate testing  
15 formats to avoid discrimination against drivers with  
16 limited literacy or verbal comprehension skills.]

17 (iv) The alternative of an oral version of the  
18 knowledge test in the English language shall not be  
19 available to persons seeking a hazardous materials  
20 endorsement on a commercial driver's license.

21 (v) The use of interpreters shall not be permitted.

22 (7) The department shall accept the results of skills  
23 tests administered in other states and sent electronically by  
24 the other state, provided that the skills test administered  
25 meets Federal testing standards and the individual meets the  
26 English proficiency standard under section 1607.1.

27 \* \* \*

28 (8.1) In addition to any other penalty that may be  
29 imposed, a person providing false entries on the application  
30 for a commercial driver learner's permit or commercial

1 driver's license or any documentation required for the permit  
2 or license shall be, upon conviction, guilty of a misdemeanor  
3 of the third degree.

4 (9) [Interpreters shall not be permitted during the  
5 administration of the skills test. Neither the commercial  
6 driver learner's permit holder nor the test examiner may  
7 communicate in a language other than English during the  
8 skills test.] The following apply during the administration  
9 of the skills test:

10 (i) Interpreters shall not be permitted.

11 (ii) A test examiner shall affirm that the  
12 commercial driver learner's permit holder meets the  
13 English proficiency standard under section 1607.1.

14 (b) Waiver of test.--The department shall waive the skills  
15 test specified in this section for a commercial driver's license  
16 applicant:

17 (1) Holding a valid Class 2, 3 or 4 license who meets  
18 the requirements of Federal regulations and the English  
19 proficiency standard under section 1607.1. If permitted by  
20 Federal regulation, the department may waive the written test  
21 requirement for a commercial driver's license applicant  
22 holding a valid Class 2, 3 or 4 license if the applicant  
23 meets the English proficiency standard.

24 \* \* \*

25 (c) Limitations on issuance of license.--

26 \* \* \*

27 (3) A commercial driver's license or commercial driver  
28 learner's permit shall not be issued to a person while the  
29 person is subject to a disqualification from driving a  
30 commercial motor vehicle or while the person's driver's

1 license is suspended, revoked or canceled in any state; nor  
2 shall a commercial driver's license or commercial driver  
3 learner's permit be issued to a person who has a commercial  
4 driver's license or commercial driver learner's permit issued  
5 by any other state unless the person first surrenders all  
6 such licenses and permits, which shall be returned to the  
7 issuing state for cancellation.

8 \* \* \*

9 (5) A person must complete entry-level driver training  
10 consistent with 49 CFR Pt. 380 Subpt. F (relating to entry-  
11 level driver training requirements on and after February 7,  
12 2022) before taking the knowledge test.

13 (d) Commercial driver learner's permit.--

14 (1) The department shall issue a commercial driver  
15 learner's permit in accordance with section 1505 (relating to  
16 learners' permits) if the individual meets the English  
17 proficiency standard under section 1607.1.

18 \* \* \*

19 (5) An applicant for a commercial driver learner's  
20 permit must have a valid driver's license or commercial  
21 driver's license issued by the department[.] or any other  
22 jurisdiction.

23 \* \* \*

24 (6.1) The validity of a commercial driver learner's  
25 permit and commercial driver's license, which is also a  
26 nondomiciled CLP and nondomiciled CDL, shall not exceed the  
27 official expiration date of a person's authorized stay in the  
28 United States or expiration date of evidence of lawful  
29 immigration status.

30 \* \* \*

1 Section 4. Title 75 is amended by adding a section to read:

2 § 1607.1. English proficiency standard.

3 (a) Requirement.--To operate a commercial motor vehicle in  
4 this Commonwealth, an individual must meet the English  
5 proficiency standard under subsection (b).

6 (b) Standard defined.--

7 (1) An individual can read and speak the English  
8 language sufficiently to:

9 (i) Converse with the general public.

10 (ii) Understand highway traffic signs and signals in  
11 the English language.

12 (iii) Respond to official inquiries.

13 (iv) Make entries on reports and records.

14 (2) The applicability of an individual's qualification  
15 to speak in the English language shall not apply to hearing-  
16 impaired drivers in accordance with Federal regulation.

17 (c) Offense defined.--An individual who operates a  
18 commercial motor vehicle and fails to meet the English  
19 proficiency standard under subsection (b) commits a summary  
20 offense and, upon conviction, shall be subject to:

21 (1) A fine of \$500 for a first offense and a  
22 disqualification under section 1611 (relating to  
23 disqualification).

24 (2) A fine of \$1,000 for a second or subsequent offense  
25 and a disqualification under section 1611.

26 (d) Operating prohibition.--

27 (1) A driver found to be in violation of this section  
28 shall be prohibited from operating a commercial motor vehicle  
29 within this Commonwealth.

30 (2) If the commercial motor vehicle is owned by an

1 employer, the employer shall be notified of the location of  
2 the commercial motor vehicle involved in a violation.

3 (3) If the vehicle is not towed, the employer may only  
4 take possession following presentation of a driver who meets  
5 the requirements of this chapter.

6 (4) In coordination with the employer, the cargo owner  
7 may be notified and allowed to arrange for the transfer of  
8 the cargo to another vehicle with a driver properly licensed  
9 to operate the commercial motor vehicle, if applicable.

10 (e) Seizure of registration plate.--A person authorized to  
11 enforce the provisions of this chapter shall seize the  
12 registration plate and impound the commercial motor vehicle if  
13 the individual is in violation of this section and the owner of  
14 the vehicle is the driver. The individual may petition the  
15 department for the return of the registration plate and pay a  
16 processing fee of \$500.

17 (f) Additional penalties.--

18 (1) An individual convicted under subsection (c) and  
19 found to be operating a commercial motor vehicle in this  
20 Commonwealth commits a misdemeanor.

21 (2) An individual operating a commercial motor vehicle  
22 in this Commonwealth in violation of this section who causes  
23 serious bodily injury or death commits a misdemeanor of the  
24 third degree.

25 (g) Employer penalty.--An employer whose driver is convicted  
26 under this section shall be subject to a fine of \$3,000 for each  
27 violation.

28 (h) Contractor penalty.--A prime contractor whose  
29 subcontractor is a driver and convicted under this section shall  
30 be subject to a fine of \$3,000 for each violation.

1 Section 5. Section 1608 of Title 75 is amended to read:

2 § 1608. [~~Nonresident~~] Nondomiciled CDL and CLP.

3 [(a) Issuance of nonresident CDL.--The department may issue  
4 a nonresident CDL to a resident of a foreign jurisdiction. The  
5 following apply:

6 (1) The word "nondomiciled" shall appear on the face of  
7 the nonresident CDL.

8 (2) An applicant shall surrender any nonresident CDL  
9 issued by another state.

10 (3) Prior to issuing a nonresident CDL, the department  
11 shall establish the practical capability of revoking,  
12 suspending or canceling the nonresident CDL and disqualifying  
13 the commercial motor vehicle driving privilege of that  
14 person.

15 (b) Other provisions applicable.--All provisions of this  
16 chapter applicable to the commercial driver's license for a  
17 resident of this Commonwealth, except the residency requirement,  
18 and all provisions of this title applicable to drivers' licenses  
19 shall be applicable to a nonresident CDL.

20 (c) Waiver of testing requirement.--The department may issue  
21 a nonresident CDL to a resident of a foreign jurisdiction  
22 without requiring additional testing if the driver possesses a  
23 valid CDL issued by another state or by the foreign jurisdiction  
24 of the driver and the United States Secretary of Transportation  
25 has determined that the commercial motor vehicle testing and  
26 licensing standards in the foreign jurisdiction meet the testing  
27 standards established in Federal regulations.]

28 (a) Issuance of nondomiciled CDL and CLP.--The department  
29 may issue a nondomiciled CDL and nondomiciled CLP to a resident  
30 of a foreign jurisdiction. The following apply:

1       (1) To be eligible for a nondomiciled CDL and  
2 nondomiciled CLP, an applicant domiciled in a foreign  
3 jurisdiction shall:

4           (i) Have lawful immigration status in the United  
5 States.

6           (ii) Provide evidence of lawful immigration status.

7       (2) The word "nondomiciled" shall appear on the face of  
8 the nondomiciled CDL and nondomiciled CLP.

9       (3) An applicant shall immediately surrender any  
10 nondomiciled CDL or nondomiciled CLP issued by another state  
11 to the department.

12       (4) Prior to issuing a nondomiciled CDL or nondomiciled  
13 CLP, the individual must apply for a commercial driver's  
14 license under section 1609 (relating to application for  
15 commercial driver's license) or commercial driver learner's  
16 permit under section 1607(d) (relating to commercial driver's  
17 license qualification standards) as determined by the  
18 department, provided that the individual meets the English  
19 proficiency standard under section 1607.1 (relating to  
20 English proficiency standard).

21       (5) The department may revoke, suspend or cancel the  
22 nondomiciled CDL or nondomiciled CLP and disqualify the  
23 commercial motor vehicle driving privilege of a person.

24       (6) Under no circumstance shall the department issue a  
25 nondomiciled CDL and nondomiciled CLP with "no name given."

26       (7) Prior to issuing, transferring, renewing or  
27 upgrading a nondomiciled CLP or nondomiciled CDL, the  
28 department shall comply with the document verification and  
29 retention requirements in 49 CFR 383.73 (relating to state  
30 procedures).

1       (8) Prior to issuing, transferring, renewing or  
2 upgrading a nondomiciled CLP or nondomiciled CDL, the  
3 department shall query the Systematic Alien Verification for  
4 Entitlements system to review the evidence of lawful  
5 immigration status of an applicant.

6       (9) If, after issuing, transferring, renewing or  
7 upgrading a nondomiciled CLP or nondomiciled CDL, the  
8 department receives information from the Federal Government  
9 that the applicant no longer has lawful immigration status in  
10 the United States, the department shall initiate established  
11 department procedures for downgrading the nondomiciled CLP or  
12 nondomiciled CDL.

13       (10) The department shall require every nondomiciled CLP  
14 or nondomiciled CDL issuance, transfer, renewal or upgrade be  
15 conducted in-person only and may not permit issuance,  
16 transfer, renewal or upgrade by mail or electronic means

17       (11) The department shall ensure the period of validity  
18 of the nondomiciled CDL and nondomiciled CLP does not exceed  
19 the official expiration date of the applicant's authorized  
20 stay in the United States or expiration date on the  
21 applicant's documentation or one year, whichever is sooner.  
22 The department may not issue a nondomiciled CDL and  
23 nondomiciled CLP with a period of validity longer than one  
24 year.

25       (12) The department may not issue a nondomiciled CDL or  
26 nondomiciled CLP that is a REAL ID.

27       (b) Other provisions applicable.--All provisions of this  
28 chapter applicable to the commercial driver's license for a  
29 resident of this Commonwealth, except the residency requirement  
30 unless the evidence of lawful immigration status expires, and

1 all provisions of this title applicable to drivers' licenses  
2 shall be applicable to a nondomiciled CDL or nondomiciled CLP,  
3 unless the individual fails to meet the English proficiency  
4 standard.

5 (c) Waiver of testing requirement.--The department may issue  
6 a nondomiciled CDL and nondomiciled CLP to a resident of a  
7 foreign jurisdiction without requiring additional testing if the  
8 United States Secretary of Transportation has determined that  
9 the commercial motor vehicle testing and licensing standards in  
10 the foreign jurisdiction meet the testing standards established  
11 in Federal regulations, unless the individual fails to meet the  
12 English proficiency standard.

13 Section 6. Section 1609(a) of Title 75 is amended by adding  
14 paragraphs to read:

15 § 1609. Application for commercial driver's license.

16 (a) Contents of application.--The application for a  
17 commercial driver's license or commercial driver learner's  
18 permit shall include the following:

19 \* \* \*

20 (6.1) Evidence of lawful immigration status. The  
21 department shall reject any application without evidence of  
22 lawful immigration status.

23 (6.2) Self-certification of the applicant's ability to  
24 meet the English proficiency standard.

25 \* \* \*

26 Section 7. Section 1611(a) and (j) of Title 75 are amended  
27 to read:

28 § 1611. Disqualification.

29 (a) First violation of certain offenses.--Upon receipt of a  
30 report of conviction, the department shall, in addition to any

1 other penalties imposed under this title, disqualify any person  
2 from driving a commercial motor vehicle or school vehicle for a  
3 period of one year for the first violation of:

4 (1) section 3802 (relating to driving under influence of  
5 alcohol or controlled substance) or former section 3731,  
6 where the person was a commercial driver at the time the  
7 violation occurred;

8 (2) section 3742 (relating to accidents involving death  
9 or personal injury), where the person was a commercial driver  
10 at the time the violation occurred;

11 (3) section 3743 (relating to accidents involving damage  
12 to attended vehicle or property), where the person was a  
13 commercial driver at the time the violation occurred;

14 (4) section 3745 (relating to accidents involving damage  
15 to unattended vehicle or property), where the person was a  
16 commercial driver at the time the violation occurred;

17 (5) any felony in the commission of which a court  
18 determines a motor vehicle was essentially involved and where  
19 the person was a commercial driver at the time the violation  
20 occurred, except as described in subsection (e);

21 (6) section 1606(c) (relating to requirement for  
22 commercial driver's license); [or]

23 (7) any offense wherein the person caused the death of a  
24 person as a result of a motor vehicle accident through the  
25 negligent operation of a commercial motor vehicle, including,  
26 but not limited to, a violation of 18 Pa.C.S. § 2504  
27 (relating to involuntary manslaughter) or a violation of  
28 section 3732 (relating to homicide by vehicle) [.] or

29 (8) section 1607.1 (relating to English proficiency  
30 standard).

1 \* \* \*

2 (j) Updating driving record.--After disqualifying,  
3 suspending, revoking, recalling or canceling a commercial  
4 driving privilege, the department shall update its records to  
5 reflect that action. After disqualifying, suspending, revoking,  
6 recalling or canceling a commercial driving privilege issued by  
7 another state, the department shall notify the licensing  
8 authority of the state which issued the commercial driver's  
9 license or [nonresident commercial driver's license]  
10 nondomiciled CDL and nondomiciled CLP. In addition to any other  
11 records required or authorized to be kept by the department, the  
12 department shall file or make suitable notation in its records  
13 thereof all reports of the conviction of any violation, in any  
14 motor vehicle, of a State or local traffic control law, except a  
15 parking violation, and also for any other report of conviction  
16 or report of test refusal that results in disqualification  
17 pursuant to this chapter, of a person who was a commercial  
18 driver at the time of the violation that are received by the  
19 department from any court or administrative body of the  
20 Commonwealth, another state or the Federal Government. Such  
21 reports or suitable notations may be stored and admitted into  
22 evidence by the department as provided in section 1516(b)  
23 (relating to department records). Notwithstanding any other  
24 provision of law, no record maintained by the department in  
25 accordance with the provisions of this subsection may be  
26 expunged by order of court.

27 \* \* \*

28 Section 8. Title 75 is amended by adding a section to read:  
29 § 1623. Annual report.

30 The department shall provide the chairperson and minority

1 chairperson of the Transportation Committee of the Senate and  
2 the chairperson and minority chairperson of the Transportation  
3 Committee of the House of Representatives with an annual report  
4 that mirrors the Annual Program Review conducted by the Federal  
5 Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

6 Section 9. This act shall take effect as follows:

7 (1) The following provisions shall take effect  
8 immediately:

9 The amendment of 75 Pa.C.S. § 1607(a)(6).

10 This section.

11 (2) The remainder of this act shall take effect in 60  
12 days.