

California Department of Motor Vehicles

Change in Restricted Firefighter License - 2011

Effective February 8, 2011 New Policy

When a current holder of a restricted firefighter license converts to a commercial driver license (CDL) within the same class, the driving test is waived.

Example: A current holder of a class B restricted firefighter driver license applies for an unrestricted commercial class B driver license; a driving test is not administered.

When a holder of a restricted firefighter driver license converts to a higher CDL class than his/her current class license; i.e., class “B” to a class “A”, a driving test is required.

Procedures at DMV:

- Complete and submit the application. The drive test will be waived when converting within the same CDL class.
- A Firefighter Certificate of Driving Skill (DL 170F), will be accepted in lieu of a driving test, **only** if the certificate is dated 12/31/2010, or prior.
 - **NOTE:** A driving test is not required when a restricted firefighter driver license holder is converting to a noncommercial class C driver license with a firefighter endorsement.

Background Current procedures require the administration of a driving test, when a restricted firefighter license holder is converting to an unrestricted commercial license.

New DMV Policy (Implementation Date: January 1, 2011)

Effective January 1, 2011, a driver may operate firefighting equipment with a noncommercial or commercial class A, B, or C driver license with a new firefighter “F” endorsement. Class A and B **restricted firefighter** driver licenses will no longer be issued.

IMPORTANT: Current restricted firefighter licenses will remain valid until the expiration date of the license.

New Information

When applying for the new firefighter “F” endorsement, customers must have a commercial **or** noncommercial class A, B, or C driver license. A customer with a class C driver license with the firefighter “F” endorsement may drive all firefighting equipment.

Applicants must also:

- Submit or have a medical report on the DMV database before the application can be started. If the application is for a:
 - Commercial** Class A, B, or C driver license, a Medical Examination Report (DL 51) is required.

—**Noncommercial** class A, B, or C driver license, a Physician’s Health Report (DL 546A) is required. Ensure the box “Operating Firefighting Equipment” is checked. The DL 546A is available on the DMV website at www.dmv.ca.gov/forms/dl/dl546a.pdf.

- Submit an “Original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification” letter if he/she is applying for an original driver license **or** adding the new firefighter endorsement to an existing license. The letter **must** be on fire department letterhead and include the following:
 - Certification of employment **or** registration as a volunteer firefighter.
 - Certification of completion of fire equipment operator training.
 - Signature of the fire chief or designee.

A driving test is **not** required for the firefighter endorsement.

DMV Procedures to add a firefighter “F” endorsement to a new or existing driver license:

For an original commercial **or** noncommercial class A, B, or C driver license with firefighter “F” endorsement:

In addition to all driver license application, fees, and testing requirements, the applicant must

- Submit the “Original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification” letter (see new information),
- the DL 51 or DL 546A, as appropriate,
- must take the “Firefighters Noncommercial Driver License Knowledge Test, Section 1” only (test sections 2, 3, or 4 are not required).
- If you **pass** the “Firefighters Noncommercial Driver License Knowledge Test” and **all** other licensing requirements have been completed:
 - DMV will provide you with a Firefighter Endorsement card, (DL 88 NEW 10/2010). When you return to the station, obtain the signature of your fire chief on the DL 88 to validate the card.
- The DMV will complete a Transmittal Form (DL 11) requesting the comment “firefighter endorsement valid” be added to the driver record.
- You will be issued an interim driver license in the DMV office. The driver license you receive in the mail will **not** reflect the “F” endorsement, but the endorsement will be reflected on his/her driver record.
- If you **do not** pass the “Firefighters Noncommercial Driver License Knowledge Test”:
 - The DMV will hold the original application (DL44/DL44C), “Original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification” letter, the failed written test, and DL 546A (if applicable) in the DMV field office. You will need to return to the same field office to re-test. I

- If the test failure your third test attempt, you may continue the application without the firefighter endorsement or reapply and pay a new application fee.

To add a firefighter “F” endorsement to a driver license renewed within the last 12 months, follow all current driver license application requirements:

- Submit the “Original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification” letter and DL 51 or DL 546A for DMV to review.
- If you **pass** the “Firefighters Noncommercial Driver License Knowledge Test” and all other licensing requirements have been completed:
 - You will receive the Firefighter Endorsement card, (DL 88 NEW 10/2010). When you return to the station, obtain the signature of your fire chief on the DL 88 to validate the card. The card must be carried your license.
- If you **do not** pass the “Firefighters Noncommercial Driver License Knowledge Test”:
 - The DMV hold the original application (DL44/DL44C), “Original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification” letter, the failed written test, and DL 546A (if applicable) in the DMV field office. You will need to return to the same field office to re-test.
 - If the test failure is your third test attempt, the application will be voided. You will be required to reapply and pay a new application fee.

Renewing your current restricted firefighter driver license:

- **It cannot be** renewed. You must either upgrade your driver license to a commercial class A, B, or C **or** downgrade to a noncommercial class A, B, or C.

If you **upgrade** to a commercial A, B, or C driver license, follow current driver license application and testing requirements:

- Submit the DL 51 for DMV to review
- Take the “Firefighters Noncommercial Driver License Knowledge Test, Section 1”. You **are not required** to take sections 2, 3, or 4.
- If you **pass** the “Firefighters Noncommercial Driver License Knowledge Test” and all other licensing requirements have been completed:
 - You will receive a Firefighter Endorsement card, (DL 88). When you return to the station, obtain the signature of your fire chief on the DL 88 to validate the card. The card must be carried your license.

NOTE: The DMV will update your driving record to add “firefighter endorsement valid” comment to your driver record.

- You will be issued an interim driver license. The driver license you receive in the mail will **not** reflect the “F” endorsement, but the endorsement will be reflected on your driver record.
- If you **do not** pass the “Firefighters Noncommercial Driver License Knowledge Test”:

- The DMV hold the original application (DL44/DL44C), “Original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification” letter, the failed written test, and DL 546A (if applicable) in the DMV field office. You will need to return to the same field office to re-test.
- If the test failure is your third test attempt, you may continue the application without the firefighter endorsement or reapply and pay a new application fee.

If you **downgrade** to a noncommercial A, B, or C driver license, and are eligible for renewal by mail, all written tests will be waived including the firefighter noncommercial driver license knowledge test.

- Follow current driver license application and testing requirements
- Submit the DL 546A to DMV for review.
- If you are not eligible for renewal by mail, you will have to take the class C test and “Firefighters Noncommercial Driver License Knowledge test, section 1” You are not required to take sections 2, 3, or 4.
- If the applicant **passes** the Firefighters Noncommercial Driver License Knowledge Test **or** is eligible for renewal by mail and all other licensing requirements have been completed:
 - You will be issued a Firefighter Endorsement card, (DL 88 NEW 10/2010) When you return to the station, obtain the signature of your fire chief on the DL 88 to validate the card. The card must be carried your license. **NOTE:** The DMV will update your driving record to add “firefighter endorsement valid” comment to your driver record.
 - An interim driver license will be issued to you. The driver license you receive in the mail will **not** reflect the “F” endorsement, but the endorsement will be reflected on your driver record.
- If you **do not** pass the “Firefighters Noncommercial Driver License Knowledge Test”:
 - The DMV hold the original application (DL44/DL44C), “Original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification” letter, the failed written test, and DL 546A (if applicable) in the DMV field office. You will need to return to the same field office to re-test.
 - If the test failure is your third test attempt, you may continue the application without the firefighter endorsement or reapply and pay a new application fee.

Proof of Firefighter Endorsement

If you require proof of the firefighter endorsement, the DMV will verify FIREFIGHTER ENDORSEMENT VALID appears in the COMMENTS section of the record before processing a fee-paid driver record transaction.

Background

New legislation authorizes the operation of firefighting equipment by a licensed driver who meets specific knowledge and training requirements, regardless of the driver license class.