FMCSA Cancels Vision Exemption Program

Monocular Drivers Can Be Certified for Interstate Commerce Without an Exemption!

"The new alternative vision standard replaces the current vision exemption program as the basis for determining the physical qualification of these individuals."

Like with insulin-treated diabetes, there is a *Vision Evaluation Report (Form MCSA-5871)* that must be completed by an ophthalmologist or optometrist PRIOR TO the physical qualification exam.

The basic vision standards still apply... but only for one eye
(Similar to the hearing standard)

- In the better eye, distant visual acuity of at least 20/40 (Snellen), with or without corrective lenses, and field of vision of at least 70 degrees in the horizontal meridian
- In the better eye, be able to recognize the colors of traffic signals and devices showing standard red, green, and amber
- Have a stable vision deficiency
- Have had sufficient time pass since the vision deficiency became stable to adapt to and compensate for the change in vision
  - There must be a period for the individual to adapt to and compensate for the vision loss after the vision deficiency is deemed stable by a medical professional

The medical certificate may be issued for a maximum of 12 months

The Final Step

The employing motor carrier conducts the road test in accordance with the road test already required by § 391.31.

This does not apply to individuals who have 3 years of intrastate or specific excepted interstate CMV driving experience with the vision deficiency, hold a valid Federal vision exemption, or are medically certified under the previously administered vision waiver study program.

Current vision exemption holders will no longer have to apply for an exemption and have 1 year after the effective date of this rule to comply with the alternative vision standard, at which time all previously issued exemptions become void.

This new rule will be effective on March 22, 2022.

Follow this link for more information:
federalregister.gov/d/2022-01021

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