

Maryland Regulations on Transporting Horses

If you are hauling horses, you may be subject to licensing and vehicle registration regulations beyond those required for operating a passenger car. If your horse enterprise involves any exchange of money, or if your vehicle or combination is over a certain size, you may be required to obtain a United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) number, a Motor Carrier (MC) number, and/or a Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

This publication outlines the state and federal regulations that may apply if you live in Maryland and/or operate vehicles that are tagged with Maryland license plates. This material is a guide to assist you in understanding the regulations but should not be quoted as law. There may be other requirements that apply to your specific situation that are not discussed in this publication.

For the most accurate information regarding how the transportation regulations relate to your specific situation, or for assistance in obtaining any of the requirements detailed below, contact the State Highway Administration, Motor Carrier Division of the Office of Traffic and Safety, or the Maryland State Police, Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division. Contact information for these agencies is included at the end of this publication.

If you live or operate vehicles tagged outside of Maryland, the truck and bus enforcement section of your state police will be able to provide additional information specific to your state.

State and Federal Regulations Define Commercial Motor Vehicle and Commercial Carrier

The Federal Motor Carrier regulations (§390.5), as adopted by the state of Maryland, state that a commercial motor vehicle is any self-propelled or towed motor vehicle used on a highway in interstate (or intrastate, as adopted by Maryland) commerce to transport passengers or property when the vehicle has either a gross vehicle weight rating, gross combination weight rating, gross vehicle weight or gross combination weight, of 10,001 pounds or more.

If your horse-hauling vehicle or combination is part of a business, you are considered a commercial carrier, and the vehicles you use for your business are considered commercial motor vehicles. According to state of Maryland and federal definitions, your horse enterprise is considered a business if it generates any amount of income.

A business doesn't need to be profitable to generate income. If you accept money from in

exchange for goods or services, regardless of whether you make a profit, your enterprise is considered commercial. Horse boarding, training, lessons, breeding, racing, and sales are inherently commercial. You also may be considered a commercial enterprise if you win money at competitions, even if you compete on your own horses solely as a hobby.

Police may stop and ticket you if they believe you are a commercial carrier and are not carrying the required licensing and/or registrations. The police will base their assessment of whether you are a commercial carrier on how your vehicle or combination looks and/or your destination. For example, if you are operating a very large vehicle or combination, hauling a large number of horses, or transporting horses to a racetrack or auction, you are most likely engaging in some type of commercial activity.

Commercial Carriers Must Display DOT Number

If you are a commercial carrier operating a vehicle or combination with weight rating of 10,001 pounds or more, you are required to obtain a DOT number and properly display that number, along with some other information, on your vehicle.

If you are hauling interstate (between a place in Maryland and a place outside of Maryland) and meet the definition of a commercial motor vehicle, you will need to obtain a USDOT number from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). There is no fee for this number.

If you are hauling only within the state of Maryland, you can obtain a Maryland-specific identification number (MD DOT #) from the State Highway Administration, Motor Carrier

Division of the Office of Traffic and Safety. There is no fee for this number.

Both USDOT and MD DOT numbers are available online at fmsca.dot.gov by clicking the “Register Online” tab. A Maryland-only ID number is obtained by indicating “Intrastate Operation” on the application before submitting. DOT number applicants are encouraged to apply for a DOT number on the FMCSA website; online application enables motor carriers to update their own company information every two years as required or if there are changes in the company.

State Licensing Requirements Depend on Weight of Your Vehicle

Most Maryland drivers have a non-commercial class C license. A class C license allows you to operate a vehicle weighing up to 26,000 pounds or a combination weighing up to 26,001 pounds, given that the trailer is 10,000 pounds or less.

If you are operating a vehicle with a weight rating of 26,001 or more pounds or a combination rated greater than 26,001 or more pounds where the trailer weighs or is rated more than 10,000 pounds, you will need to obtain a different license (see charts below). The weights are based on the gross vehicle weight ratings and gross combination weight ratings provided by the manufacturer.

A class A or class B license is most commonly issued as commercial driver’s license (CDL) because most vehicles and combinations over 26,000 pounds are operated as part of a business. If you are a commercial carrier and need a license higher than a class C, you will need to obtain a CDL of the correct class. If you are not a commercial carrier and need a license higher than a class C, you can obtain a non-commercial license of the correct class.

Maryland Commercial Driver's Licenses¹

With this class	You may drive	And you may tow	You may not drive the following listed vehicles
A	Any single vehicle or combination of vehicles*	Any trailer*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motorcycles
B	Motor vehicles 26,001 or more pounds (GVWR)*	Trailers not in excess of 10,000 pounds GVWR*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combinations of Class "F" truck tractor and Class "G" trailer Combinations of vehicles where the GCWR is 26,001 pounds or more and towing a vehicle in excess of 10,000 pounds GVWR Motorcycles
C	Motor vehicles less than 26,001 pounds (GVWR)*	Trailers not in excess of 10,000 GVWR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combinations of Class "F" truck tractor and Class "G" trailer Vehicles with a GVWR 26,001 pounds or more Any combination of vehicles with a GCWR of 26,001 pounds or more and towing a vehicle in excess of 10,000 pounds Motorcycles

*Endorsements are required for tank vehicles, doubles, hazardous materials, passengers, and school busses.

Maryland Non-Commercial Driver's Licenses²

With this Class	You may drive	And you may tow	You may not drive the following listed vehicles.
A	Any non-commercial vehicle	Any non-commercial trailer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial motor vehicles Motorcycles
B	Any single non-commercial vehicle with a GVWR of 26,001 pounds or more, or combination of vehicles with a GCWR of 26,001 pounds or more	Any non-commercial trailer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial motor vehicles Class "F" truck tractor in combination with a Class "G" trailer Motorcycles
C	Any single non-commercial vehicle with a GVWR of less than 26,001 pounds or combination of vehicles with a GCWR of less than 26,001 pounds	Any non-commercial trailer as long as the vehicle combination GCWR is less than 26,001 pounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial motor vehicles Class "F" truck tractor & Class "G" trailer Vehicles and vehicle combinations where the GVWR is 26,001 pounds or more Motorcycles
M	Motorcycles	M/C trailer	Any other vehicle

GVWR = Gross Vehicle Weight Rating provided by the manufacturer.

^{1,2} These charts have been reprinted, with permission, from the Maryland Motor Carrier Handbook.

Businesses Also May Need to Obtain a Motor Carrier Number

If you haul for hire or transport horses interstate as a business, you are required to obtain a motor carrier number from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. This requirement is independent of the USDOT number requirement. There is a one-time fee of \$300 for this number.

Farmers Operating Farm Vehicles are Exempt from Some Commercial Carrier Regulations

Maryland law (Transportation §13-911) defines a farmer as a person who raises, grows, or produces products on at least 3 acres. Some horse farm operators, such as those producing horses via breeding, are considered farmers. However, those who do not produce a product, such as boarding farm operators, are not considered farmers.

A farmer may register class E vehicles (trucks) three-quarter ton and larger and class F vehicles (tractors) as farm vehicles. Farm vehicles must: 1) be owned by a farmer; 2) be used only as part of the farmer's farming business; and 3) not be used to haul previously acquired products for resale or to haul farm products for hire for another person who is not a farmer.

Maryland vehicles registered as farm trucks (as defined in Maryland law, Transportation §13-921) or farm truck tractors (as defined in Maryland law, Transportation §13-924) and operated only within Maryland (intrastate) are not required to obtain US or MD DOT numbers.

You May Be Required to Stop at Weigh and Inspection Stations

All vehicles and combinations rated over 10,000 pounds are required to stop at all weigh stations. Operators of horse and livestock

trailers are also required to stop at all agricultural inspection stations, even if the trailer is empty or hauling non-agricultural cargo.

References

Annotated Code of Maryland.

<http://mgaleg.maryland.gov>

Maryland Commercial Driver License Manual.

American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators. 2005.

<http://www.mva.maryland.gov/Resources/DL-151.pdf>

Maryland Motor Carrier Handbook. Maryland Department of Transportation, State Highway Administration. 2012.

<http://www.sha.maryland.gov/OOTS/motorcarrierhandbook.pdf>

MFB Ag Trucking Guide. Maryland Farm

Bureau. <http://www.mdfarmbureau.com/Files/ResourceCenter/MFBaAgTruckingGuide.pdf>

Maryland State Highway Administration

Motor Carrier Division

7491 Connelley Drive

Hanover, MD 21076

1-800-543-4564 (toll-free within MD only)

410-582-5734

Fax: 410-787-2863

<http://www.roads.maryland.gov>

Maryland State Police

Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division

901 Elkridge Landing Road, Suite 300

Linthicum Heights, MD 21090

410-694-6100

Fax: 410-694-6139

<http://www.mdsp.org/>

Agency Contact Information

Federal Motor Carrier Administration

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE

Washington, DC 20590

1-800-832-5660

<http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov>

Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration

6601 Ritchie Highway NE

Glen Burnie, MD 21062

410-768-7000

<http://www.mva.maryland.gov/>

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