

DRIVERS OF FARM COVERED VEHICLES NOW EXEMPT FROM COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Legislative Bill 983 was signed into Nebraska law by Governor Heineman on March 29, 2014 and became effective March 30, 2014. Among the provisions of LB 983 was the implementation of Federal MAP 21 legislation regarding drivers of Covered Farm Vehicles.

Covered Farm Vehicle means a motor vehicle, including an articulated motor vehicle that:

- Is operated by a farm/ranch owner or operator, or an employee or a family member of the farmer or rancher.
- Transports agricultural commodities, livestock or machinery or supplies to and from a farm or ranch.
- Is equipped with a special license plate or other designation by the state in which the vehicle is registered to allow for the identification of the vehicle as a farm vehicle by law enforcement.

Covered Farm Vehicle does NOT include:

- Vehicles for hire.
- A combination of truck-tractor and semitrailer which is operated by a person under eighteen years of age.
- A combination of truck-tractor and semitrailer transporting hazardous materials in quantities requiring placarding.

Where can covered farm vehicles be operated?

- 26,000 pounds or less – anywhere in Nebraska and in any other state.
- 26,001 pounds or more – anywhere in Nebraska
- 26,001 pounds or more – may cross state lines, provided it is operated within 150 miles of the farm/ranch's operation.

If you plan to travel in other states using the covered farm exemption, be sure that you know what regulations apply in those states:

- Wyoming Department of Transportation **307.777.4375**
- Missouri State Patrol Commercial Vehicle Enforcement **573.526.6128**
- South Dakota Motor Carrier Headquarters **605.773.4578**
- Iowa Department of Transportation **800.925.6469**
- Kansas Transportation Division **785.271.3145**

FAQ's about Covered Farm Vehicle Law Change

1. I drive a farm-plated tractor-trailer placarded for hazmat. Do I need a CDL?
Yes. Tractor-trailer drivers of vehicles placarded for hazmat are not exempt from CDL requirements under LB983.
2. I've been exempt from CDL requirements for years driving my farm-plated straight truck that hauls placardable amounts of hazmat. Has anything changed?
No. Drivers of farm-plated straight trucks can continue to operate without a CDL even when hauling placardable amounts of hazmat.
3. I am 19 years old and previously needed a Class A CDL to drive my farm-plated tractor-trailer. I have a K restriction (no interstate driving). Am I now allowed to drive across state lines with my farm-plated tractor-trailer? How does the K restriction figure into this? **Since your tractor-trailer now falls under the Covered Farm Vehicle definition, as long as your vehicle is not placarded for hazmat and you stay within the state of Nebraska or within 150 of the farm/ranch, you may operate this vehicle since it is not considered a commercial vehicle. The K restriction is not germane to non-commercial vehicles. A Nebraska Class O license is required to operate a Covered Farm Vehicle.**
4. Do I have to give up my CDL now that the only vehicle I drive is exempt from CDL requirements?
There is no need to surrender your CDL, unless you want to. Keep in mind, if you drop your CDL, you'll have to start all over if you ever want to drive vehicles requiring a CDL in the future.
5. I want to keep my CDL, but I cannot determine on the Self Certification Categories chart how I medically qualify? I am now exempt from CDL requirements and only drive a Covered Farm Vehicle. How should I medically certify?
The decision on the proper category to medically certify is completely up to you, the driver. Keep in mind, certifying Category A (Interstate Non-Excepted) or Category C (Intrastate Non-Excepted) requires having an updated Medical Examiner's Certification.