Certifying Commercial Schools for Road Tests

The purpose of these policies is to outline the procedures commercial driver training schools must follow in order to conduct road tests for both Under- and Over-18 customers.

Definitions:

The following definitions shall apply for purposes of these policies:

1. "Division" means the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles.
2. "Commissioner" means the North Carolina Commissioner of Motor Vehicles.
3. "Commercial driver training school" means a private for-profit business licensed to conduct non-commercial vehicle driver education training as authorized in Article 14 of the Chapter 20 of the North Carolina General Statutes.
4. "Commercial driver training school examiner" means an individual who is a licensed instructor employee of a commercial driver training school, who is currently licensed by the Division as a commercial driver training school instructor, and who has been issued an examiner certificate to conduct the non-commercial vehicle road test required in G.S. 20-11(d)(3) of the North Carolina General Statutes AND as outlined in G.S. 20-7(c).
5. "Class C Learner's Permit" means a learner's permit issued to an applicant over the age of 18, allowing for operation of a Class C vehicle while accompanied by a licensed driver as outlined by DMV policy.
6. "Level 1" means a Level 1 Limited Learner's Permit as described in Chapter 20-11 of the North Carolina General Statutes.
7. "Level 2" means a Level 2 Limited Provisional License as described in Chapter 20-11 of the North Carolina General Statutes.
8. "Over-18" means an applicant for a Class C driver license that is 18 years of age or older and is therefore exempt from the graduated licensing process.
9. "Road test" or "road tests" means the examination required to progress from a Limited Learner's Permit to a Limited Provisional License as required in G.S. 20-11(d)(3) of the North Carolina General Statutes AND the examination required by G.S. 20-7(c) for issuance to an applicant who is 18 years old or over.
10. "Under-18" means an applicant for a driver license who is under the age of 18 and falls under the graduated license process as outlined in G.S. 20-11.
11. "Examiner Certificate" means the document issued to a licensed commercial driver training school examiner authorizing them to administer the road test required for a Level 2 Limited Provisional License AND the road test required to progress from a Class C learner's permit to a Class C non-commercial license.
12. "Examiner License" means the document issued to a commercial driver training school authorizing it to employ commercial driver training school examiners.
13. "Testing Location" means the commercial driver training school office or branch office from which the road test originates and terminates.

Commercial Driver Training School Eligibility:

Any commercial driver training school seeking to conduct road tests must meet the following requirements to be issued an examiner license:

1. The commercial driver training school must have at least one instructor certified to conduct road tests as outlined further in these policies in its employ;
2. Only commercial driver training school examiners who are certified by the Division to conduct road tests may do so; and
3. The commercial driver training school must meet all other requirements as set forth in 19A NCAC 03I.

Commercial Driver Training School Examiner Eligibility:

a. Commercial driver training school examiners may conduct a road test on behalf of only one commercial driver training school at any given time. That commercial driver training school must hold a valid examiner license. If a commercial driver training school examiner leaves the employ of a commercial driver training school they must reapply with the Division to conduct a road test on behalf of a new commercial driver training school.
b. To qualify as a commercial driver training school examiner, an individual must:

    1. Be currently licensed as a commercial driver training school instructor (meeting all requirements found in 19A NCAC 03I);
    2. Be a licensed instructor employee of a commercial driver training school that holds a valid examiner license;
    3. Possess a valid North Carolina Driver's License;
    4. Have completed the commercial driver training school examiner training course conducted by the Division;
    5. Take part in all Division required training courses, workshops, seminars, and commercial driver training school examiner updates;
    6. Conduct road tests on behalf of the licensed commercial driver training school in accordance with these policies and in accordance with current instructions provided by the Division.

Display of Certifications:

a. A copy of the examiner license shall be displayed in the office and branch offices of the commercial driver training school. The license shall be effective on the date of issuance and remain in effect unless the business license expires and permanently lapses, the commercial driver training school surrenders the license to the Division, surrenders its business license to the Division, the business has no examiners employed, or until the license has been revoked or cancelled by the Division as provided in 19A NCAC 03I .0800.
b. A copy of each examiner certificate shall be displayed in the office and branch offices of the commercial driver training school. The certificate shall be effective on the date of issuance and remain in effect unless the instructor license expires and permanently lapses, the commercial driver training school examiner surrenders the license to the Division, surrenders their instructor license to the Division, leaves the employ of the commercial

driver training school, or until the certificate has been revoked or cancelled by the Division as provided in 19A NCAC 03I .0800.

c. All examiner licenses and examiner certificates shall be non-transferable.
d. Upon separation of an employee, the employing commercial driver training school must notify the Division by email at the schoolbustrafficsafety@ncdot.gov address within 24 hours so that the employee's access to the testing materials can be removed. The employee's examiner license must be surrendered and returned to the Division within 5 business days of separation.
e. Certifications must be returned to the Division within 5 business days if the criteria described in 'a' or 'b' are met.

Applying for a Commercial Driver Training School Road Test License:

Before an examiner license is issued to a commercial driver training school, an SBTS-630 form must be filled out and submitted to the Division by email. In addition to the SBTS-630 form, the commercial driver training school must also provide:

a. The address of each North Carolina location where the commercial driver training school intends to conduct road tests;
b. A computer-generated map and written description of each proposed road test route;
c. The names and instructor license numbers of each licensed instructor employee of the commercial driver training school who wish to be approved as commercial driver training school examiners; and
d. An SBTS-660 form in which the commercial driver training school agrees, at a minimum, to comply with all applicable General Statutes, Administrative Code Rules, and audit procedures.

Applying for a Commercial Driver Training School Examiner Certificate:

Application for a commercial driver training school examiner certificate shall be made on an SBTS-631 form and submitted to the Division by email.

Road Test Route Requirements:

Road tests are only to be conducted along a road test route that must be located in the county in which the certified commercial driver training school has an established main or branch office.

The road test route must start and end at the commercial driver training school office or branch office and meet all other requirements of the Division.

The primary and secondary road test routes must be filed and approved with the Division at least 10 business days before testing begins. Approval must be granted by the Division before testing can begin.

Any changes to the road test route must be filed with the Division and must be approved before the road test route can be altered.

Vehicles Used for Road Tests:

All vehicles used in road tests must meet all other requirements as outlined in Chapter 20 of the North Carolina General Statutes.

All vehicles used in road tests must pass the required pre-test inspection as outlined in the training materials.

The applicant may use either their own vehicle or a vehicle provided by the Commercial Driver Training School for the road test. Either vehicle must meet the guidelines above. A Commercial Driver Training School may charge a reasonable fee for the use of their vehicle in testing.

Updates to Fees and Documentation:

Commercial driver training schools certified to conduct and offering road tests must update the documentation required under 19A NCAC 03I .0202 (11) and must display those fees as required under 19A NCAC 03I .0305.

Advertising:

A commercial driver training school may advertise their ability to give road tests by whatever means it sees fit, as long as said advertisements follow the requirements outlined in 19A NCAC 03I .0703 and with the following exceptions:

1. The advertisement may only mention that the commercial driver training school offers road tests;
2. The advertisement may not promise or guarantee successful completion of the road test;
3. The advertisement may not offer success rates of testing conducted by the commercial driver training school ("95% of our customers pass the road test", for example).

Contracts:

A commercial driver training school certified to conduct and offering road tests shall offer a contract between the school and the test taker. The contract must meet all other requirements found in 19A NCAC 03I .0600. The contract must also contain (but is not limited to) the following information:

1. The agreed total contract charges and full term of the payment thereof;
2. The date, time, and county location the test will be given;
3. A statement that reads substantially as follows: "This agreement constitutes the entire contract between the school and test taker, and any verbal assurances or promises not contained herein shall bind neither the school nor the student."
4. A statement which reads as follows: "Under this agreement a commercial driver training school may not provide road tests to more than one customer at a time."
5. A statement which reads as follows: "This commercial driver training school is licensed to conduct road tests by the State of North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles."

6. A statement which reads as follows: “Any unsuccessful test taker must wait a minimum of 48 hours before retaking the test.”
7. A statement which reads as follows: “This contract is valid for one road test. Any subsequent road tests will require a separate contract under the same terms.”

Commercial driver training school contracts for road tests shall not contain the following:

1. The statement “no refunds” or its equivalent. The contract may, however, contain a statement that reads “The school will not refund any testing fees when the testing service has been rendered, regardless of testing outcome.”
2. Any statement to the effect that a driver’s license is guaranteed or otherwise promised as a result of the road test, or that passing the road test is guaranteed.

Conducting Under-18 Road Tests:

All Under-18 road tests must be conducted as follows:

1. Road tests may not be scheduled to start before local sunrise and must conclude before local sunset. The NOAA Solar Calculator found at https://gml.noaa.gov/grad/solcalc/ shall be the site of record for determining appropriate local times.
2. After scheduling the road test with the customer, the commercial driver training school shall send an email to the CDTSRoadTests@ncdot.gov email address. This notification must be sent by email, must be sent at least 24 hours before the scheduled road test, and must include the date, time, and location of the scheduled road test.
3. The Division may choose to audit or observe the scheduled testing session by sending a representative to either ride along in the testing vehicle, follow the test in a state vehicle overtly, or follow the test covertly in another vehicle.
4. The test taker must have a valid Level 1 North Carolina limited learner’s permit in their actual possession.
    a. Commercial driver training schools may only provide road tests for teen drivers who have no restrictions (indicated by a ‘0’ in the restrictions field) or corrective lenses (indicated by a ‘1’ in the restrictions field). Any teen driver with other restrictions must submit the required confidential medical documentation to the driver license office and undergo road testing with a DMV examiner.
5. The commercial driver training school instructor must have a valid North Carolina Driver License and a copy of their commercial driver training school instructor’s license in their actual possession.
6. Each road test may only be given to one customer at a time. The testing vehicle may only be occupied by the test taker and the commercial driver training instructor, unless the Division has sent an authorized representative to audit the test by riding as a third occupant or as listed below:
    a. In the event that a customer has a documented medical condition that requires the aid or presence of an assistive animal, that assistive animal shall be allowed to accompany them while taking the road test.
    b. The registered owner or management of the commercial driver training school may ride in the testing vehicle as needed to observe employee activities.

7. Each road test must follow the test route on file with the Division, unless conditions warrant deviating from the route as outlined in the training materials.
8. Each road test result must be recorded electronically on Minor Consent Form/Road Test Results Form DL-3A-CDTS workflow as covered in the training materials. These forms must be submitted to the Division electronically through the SimpliGov system as covered in the training materials.
9. All passing road test results are valid for 180 calendar days from the date the test is given.

Conducting Over-18 Road Tests:

1. Road tests may not be scheduled to start before local sunrise and must conclude before local sunset. The NOAA Solar Calculator found at https://gml.noaa.gov/grad/solcalc/ shall be the site of record for determining appropriate local times.
2. After scheduling the road test with the customer, the commercial driver training school shall send an email to the CDTSRoadTests@ncdot.gov email address. This notification must be sent by email, must be sent at least 24 hours before the scheduled road test, and must include the date, time, and location of the scheduled road test.
3. The Division may choose to audit or observe the scheduled testing session by sending a representative to either ride along in the testing vehicle, follow the test in a state vehicle overtly, or follow the test covertly in another vehicle.
4. The test taker must have a valid North Carolina Class C Learner's Permit in their actual possession.
    a. Commercial driver training schools may only provide road tests for drivers who have no restrictions (indicated by a '0' in the restrictions field) or corrective lenses (indicated by a '1' in the restrictions field). Any Over-18 driver with other restrictions must submit the required confidential medical documentation to the driver license office and undergo road testing with a DMV examiner.
5. The commercial driver training school instructor must have a valid North Carolina Driver License and a copy of their commercial driver training school instructor's license in their actual possession.
6. Each road test may only be given to one customer at a time. The testing vehicle may only be occupied by the test taker and the commercial driver training instructor, unless the Division has sent an authorized representative to audit the test by riding as a third occupant or as listed below:
    a. In the event that a customer has a documented medical condition that requires the aid or presence of an assistive animal, that assistive animal shall be allowed to accompany them while taking the road test.
    b. The registered owner or management of the commercial driver training school may ride in the testing vehicle as needed to observe employee activities.
7. Each road test must follow the test route on file with the Division, unless conditions warrant deviating from the route as outlined in the training materials.
8. Each road test result must be recorded electronically on Road Test Results Form DL-3A-CDTS workflow as covered in the training materials. These forms must be submitted to the Division electronically through the SimpliGov system as covered in the training materials.
9. All passing road test results are valid for 180 calendar days from the date the test is given.

Passing Road Test Scores:

All passing road test scores, whether given for an Under- or Over-18 applicant, are good for 180 calendar days from the date the test is given. Calculate that date and enter it in the applicable field of the DL-3A-CDTS form.

In the event that an Under-18 applicant passes the road test while not yet 18 years of age but does not make it to a Driver License Office until after they turn 18 (but still within the 180 days of score validity), the road test scores are still valid and may be used for a full Class C driver license issuance.

This will require new paperwork at the driver license office since the paperwork used for an Under-18 road test is for issuance of a Level 2 Provisional License, which cannot be issued to someone 18 years of age or older.

Compliance Policies and Audit Guidelines:

All guidelines and requirements as outlined in 19A NCAC 03I .0800 apply to road tests. Minor violations of testing policy will start with review/counseling provided by the Division. Continued or major testing violations will increase to suspension of examiner licenses and/or certifications and may result in revocation of business and/or instructor licenses. Specific to road tests, business and/or instructor licenses may be suspended or revoked for the following violations:

1. Conducting road tests by a commercial driver training school not licensed to do so.
2. Conducting road tests by a commercial driver training school examiner not certified to do so.
3. Conducting road tests for an Under-18 customer that does not have a valid North Carolina Limited Learner's Permit.
4. Conducting road tests for an Over-18 customer that does not have a valid North Carolina Class C Learner's Permit.
5. Conducting road tests on routes not approved by the Division.
6. Conducting road tests without notifying the Division as outlined in training materials.
7. Releasing any testing materials to the public, including but not limited to road test routes, testing forms, or recordings of road tests (in this case revocation will be permanent).
8. Passing any test taker without giving the full road test (in this case revocation will be permanent).
9. Issuing a failing result for any test taker who passed the road test (in this case revocation will be permanent).
10. Falsifying any paperwork required by the Division (in this case revocation will be permanent).

Audits will be conducted at least twice a year of all testing facilities and examiners. Facility audits will be conducted on SBTS-662 forms; examiner audits will be conducted on SBTS-663 forms.

Audit results of ‘Meets Standards’ require no corrective action.

Audit results of ‘Needs Improvement’ require mandatory counseling/retraining/review session with Division representative. Required reaudit within 10 business days. If results are again ‘Needs Improvement’ or ‘Unsatisfactory’, suspension of road test certification for at least one week. Must be reaudited and achieve ‘Meets Standards’ before certification is restored. (Business and instructor can conduct no road tests during suspension.)

Audit results of ‘Unsatisfactory’ require suspension of road test certification for at least one week. Must be reaudited and achieve ‘Meets Standards’ before certification is restored. (Business and instructor can conduct no road tests during suspension.)