

received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, *etc.*). You may review the Department of Transportation's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (Volume 65, Number 70; Pages 19477-78) or you may visit <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Exemption Decision

Under 49 U.S.C. 31315 and 31136(e), the FMCSA may renew an exemption from the vision requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10), which applies to drivers of CMVs in interstate commerce, for a two year period if it finds "such exemption would likely achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level that would be achieved absent such exemption." The procedures for requesting an exemption (including renewals) are set out in 49 CFR part 381. This notice addresses 17 individuals who have requested renewal of their exemptions in a timely manner. The FMCSA has evaluated these 17 applications for renewal on their merits and decided to extend each exemption for a renewable two year period. They are:

Henry Ammons, Jr., Larry N. Arrington, Robert D. Bonner, David S. Carman, Cedric E. Foster, Glen T. Garrabrant, John R. Hughes, Alan L. Johnston, Luther A. McKinney, Carl A. Michel, Sr., Dennis I. Nelson, Rance A. Powell, Shannon E. Rasmussen, James R. Rieck, Garfield A. Smith, Frederick E. St. John, Henry L. Walker.

These exemptions are extended subject to the following conditions: (1) That each individual have a physical exam every year (a) by an ophthalmologist or optometrist who attests that the vision in the better eye continues to meet the standard in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10), and (b) by a medical examiner who attests that the individual is otherwise physically qualified under 49 CFR 391.41; (2) that each individual provide a copy of the ophthalmologist's or optometrist's report to the medical examiner at the time of the annual medical examination; and (3) that each individual provide a copy of the annual medical certification to the employer for retention in the driver's qualification file and retain a copy of the certification on his/her person while driving for presentation to a duly authorized Federal, State, or local enforcement official. Each exemption will be valid for two years unless rescinded earlier by the FMCSA. The exemption will be rescinded if: (1) The person fails to

comply with the terms and conditions of the exemption; (2) the exemption has resulted in a lower level of safety than was maintained before it was granted; or (3) continuation of the exemption would not be consistent with the goals and objectives of 49 U.S.C. 31315 and 31136(e).

Basis for Renewing Exemptions

Under 49 U.S.C. 31315(b)(1), an exemption may be granted for no longer than two years from its approval date and may be renewed upon application for additional two year periods. In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315 and 31136(e), each of the 17 applicants has satisfied the entry conditions for obtaining an exemption from the vision requirements (65 FR 45817, 65 FR 77066, 68 FR 10300, 65 FR 66286, 66 FR 13825). Each of these 17 applicants has requested timely renewal of the exemption and has submitted evidence showing that the vision in the better eye continues to meet the standard specified at 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10) and that the vision impairment is stable. In addition, a review of each record of safety while driving with the respective vision deficiencies over the past two years indicates each applicant continues to meet the vision exemption standards. These factors provide an adequate basis for predicting each driver's ability to continue to drive safely in interstate commerce. Therefore, the FMCSA concludes that extending the exemption for each renewal applicant for a period of two years is likely to achieve a level of safety equal to that existing without the exemption.

Comments

The FMCSA will review comments received at any time concerning a particular driver's safety record and determine if the continuation of the exemption is consistent with the requirements at 49 U.S.C. 31315 and 31136(e). However, the FMCSA requests that interested parties with specific data concerning the safety records of these drivers submit comments by March 16, 2005.

In the past the FMCSA has received comments from Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates) expressing continued opposition to the FMCSA's procedures for renewing exemptions from the vision requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10). Specifically, Advocates objects to the agency's extension of the exemptions without any opportunity for public comment prior to the decision to renew, and reliance on a summary statement of evidence to make its decision to extend the exemption of each driver.

The issues raised by Advocates were addressed at length in 69 FR 51346 (August 18, 2004). The FMCSA continues to find its exemption process appropriate to the statutory and regulatory requirements.

Issued on: February 7, 2005.

Rose A. McMurray,

Associate Administrator, Policy and Program Development.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be conducted (via teleconference). The TAP will be discussing issues pertaining to lessening the burden for individuals. Recommendations for IRS systemic changes will be developed.

DATES: The meeting will be held Monday, March 7, 2005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mary O'Brien at 1-888-912-1227, or 206-220-6096.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that an open meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be held Monday, March 7, 2005, from 1 p.m. eastern time to 2 p.m. eastern time via a telephone conference call. If you would like to have the TAP consider a written statement, please call 1-888-912-1227 or 206-220-6096, or write to Mary O'Brien, TAP Office, 915 2nd Avenue, MS W-406, Seattle, WA 98174 or you can contact us at <http://www.improveirs.org>. Due to limited conference lines, notification of intent to participate in the telephone conference call meeting must be made with Mary O'Brien. Ms O'Brien can be reached at 1-888-912-1227 or 206-220-6096.

The agenda will include the following: Various IRS issues.

Dated: February 9, 2005.

Martha Curry,

Acting Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

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