



Comparability between Security Threat Assessments (STAs) for the Hazardous Materials Endorsement (HME) and the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC)

Overview of HME/TWIC STA Comparability:

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has determined that the security threat assessments (STAs) for the Hazardous Materials Endorsement (HME) and the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) are comparable. Therefore, an individual who holds a TWIC may be eligible for a reduced fee when applying for an HME on their commercial driver's license because he or she may forgo the portion of the STA already completed for the TWIC. If an individual uses the TWIC STA as a comparable assessment when applying for an HME STA, then the HME expiration date will be tied to the expiration date of the TWIC STA -- the HME will expire no later than the TWIC STA.

TSA has developed two options for the States supporting comparability to accommodate licensing regulations/policies, processes, and systems in the particular State. However, some States cannot offer comparability at all to applicants due to various licensing system or process constraints. Applicants must determine their eligibility as well as whether the State in which they are applying for an HME supports this comparability. Details are provided below.

Comparability – Eligibility:

Effective June 08, 2012, HME STA applicants are eligible to use their TWIC STA as a comparable STA during the application process in the following States (including District of Columbia) as long as they hold a valid TWIC STA with at least one year remaining before expiration:

- 1. Arizona 8. Nevada
2. California 9. North Carolina
3. Delaware 10. Oregon
4. District of Columbia 11. South Dakota
5. Hawaii 12. Utah
6. Missouri 13. West Virginia
7. Nebraska 14. Wyoming

Applicants in these States can confirm their eligibility online with TSA during the HME STA application process at: http://hazprints.tsa.dhs.gov.

Effective June 08, 2012, HME STA applicants are eligible to use their TWIC STA as a comparable STA during the application process in the following States as long as they hold a valid TWIC STA with at least four years remaining before expiration:

- 1. Alabama 6. New Jersey
2. Colorado 7. North Dakota
3. Kansas 8. Oklahoma
4. Minnesota 9. Vermont
5. Montana

Applicants in these States can confirm their eligibility online with TSA during the HME STA application process at: http://hazprints.tsa.dhs.gov.



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Comparability – Application Fee:

Individuals who meet the requirements above and apply for an HME STA based on a comparable TWIC STA will pay a reduced HME STA application fee of \$67.00. For individuals licensed in the 38 States and the District of Columbia that use the TSA-contracted Agent for this program, the current application fee for a full HME STA is \$86.50. (These fees cover the HME STA only, and States may charge additional fees for the HME application process such as testing and license issuance.) Applicants retain the option to apply for a full STA, which includes in-person enrollment and fingerprint submission, and pay the full fee, even if they already have a valid STA associated with a TWIC. Applicants should consider the expiration date of their current TWIC STA to determine if it is more cost effective to apply for a full fee HME STA.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- **Are the background checks for an HME the same as the background checks conducted for individuals applying for a TWIC STA?**
 - Yes. They have the same eligibility requirements, share a consistent waiver and appeal process, and leverage the same fingerprint-based criminal history records check. As a result, the HME and TWIC STAs have been deemed *comparable*.

- **Do applicants with HMEs have to repeat the STA if they are applying for TWICs?**
 - No. Applicants who apply for a TWIC do not have to pay the full price for the TWIC STA if they apply successful clearance results from their most recent HME STA, and as a result, the fee for the TWIC is reduced by \$24.50. All TWIC applicants must pay the fees that cover the other components of the TWIC program, including enrollment and card issuance. Applicants are always offered the option to apply for a full-fee TWIC STA if they determine it is more cost effective to do so.

- **Do applicants with TWICs have to repeat the STA if they are applying for HME STAs?**
 - Applicants who apply for an HME STA do not have to pay the full price for an HME STA if they hold a valid TWIC, apply in a State supporting comparability, and they meet the eligibility requirements for that State regarding the length of time prior to the credential expiring (i.e., at least one year or at least four years). Applicants must fill out the HME STA application online or over the phone, depending on existing application procedures within the State in which the individual is applying, and will verify their eligibility during the application process. An HME STA based on comparability will expire no later than the TWIC STA. Applicants have the option to apply for a full-fee HME STA if they determine it is more cost effective to do so.



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- **If an applicant already has a TWIC and qualifies for a comparable HME STA, what is the application fee?**
 - Overall, the application fee is reduced by \$19.50. The programmatic portion of the threat assessment fee is reduced by \$5, because this is the historical cost of the portion of the threat assessment that is satisfied by previously conducted TSA vetting services. In addition, the \$14.50 FBI fee is not required because the applicant is not submitting fingerprints for a criminal check.
 - For individuals licensed in the 38 States and the District of Columbia that use the TSA-contracted agent for this program, the HME STA application fee is \$86.50 (this fee covers the TSA threat assessment only and the State may charge additional fees for the HME application process, including testing and license issuance). If an applicant already has a TWIC and qualifies for a comparable HME STA, the application fee is reduced by \$19.50 to \$67.00.
 - All HME STA applicants must pay the fees that cover the other components of the HME Threat Assessment Program (HTAP), including application fees and any other fees charged by their respective States for license testing and issuance.
 - *Note: Individuals should consider the expiration date of their current TWIC in order to determine if it is more cost effective to apply for a full or a comparable/reduced fee HME STA.*

- **Since HME requirements are specific to the individual States, are all 50 States and the District of Columbia offering individuals who hold TWICs a reduced fee when applying for an HME STA?**
 - No. Due to specific State statutes, license cycles, and system limitations, not all States will be able to offer a reduced fee for the HME STA to their applicants. Applicants in a State that can offer comparability (either full or partial) will be provided notice during the application process, and the application itself will offer individuals the option to pay a reduced fee by electing to use a comparable TWIC STA. The States that offer comparability are listed in the charts above.

- **If TWIC holders choose to use comparable HME STAs, when will their HMEs expire?**
 - The HME will be issued with the same expiration date as the individual's TWIC STA. Therefore, individuals should consider the expiration date of their current TWIC STA to determine if it is cost effective to apply for a comparable HME STA.

- **How do TWIC holders who are applying for HME STAs know if the State where they are applying for the HME STA offers comparability?**
 - Please see the listing of States above. Applicants can ask States about comparability during the application process, or they can contact the HazPrints Help Desk at (877) 429-7746 (7AM-9PM Eastern, Monday - Friday). Additionally, the online application (available at <http://hazprints.tsa.dhs.gov>) for the HME STA will identify whether particular States offer comparability once applicants specify the State in which they are licensed.