COVID-19 – Changes to regulations for commercial carriers and railway operators in Alberta

The Alberta government is temporarily suspending or modifying the application or operation of sections of the Traffic Safety Act and its regulations, as well as regulations under the Railway (Alberta) Act.

Regulatory Requirements

- The following vehicle inspection certificates must now be renewed if they have expired:
  - Commercial Vehicle Inspection certificates and decals;
  - Out of Province Motor Vehicle Inspection certificates; and
  - Salvage Motor Vehicle Inspection certificates.

- As part of the Government of Alberta’s plan to maintain the supply chain, a limited number of road tests are available. Information on the criteria for these tests can be found here.

- Carriers providing direct assistance to emergency relief efforts can apply for exemptions to the provincial hours of service requirements.
  - These exemptions will be given through permits, and permit fees will be waived.
  - Permits will only be considered for carriers with Excellent, Satisfactory, or Satisfactory Unaudited Safety Fitness Ratings.
  - These permits can be obtained by emailing Central.Permits@gov.ab.ca.

- Commercial carriers transporting supplies in direct assistance to the COVID-19 pandemic response will be allowed to:
  - Increase the weight that wide base single tires can carry on provincial and municipal roads without a permit;
o Increase the weight commercial vehicles with tridem and tridem drive axles can carry on municipal roads without a permit, to match what they can carry on provincial roads;
  o Be exempt from road bans on provincial and municipal roads
    o these vehicles would still have to comply with bridge carrying capacity limitations and truck routes; and
  o Be exempt from municipal bylaws that restrict the hours they operate and park.

• Direct assistance does not include routine commercial deliveries. The load must consist primarily of supplies and equipment used in direct assistance to the COVID-19 pandemic response efforts.

Alberta Traffic Safety Board Appeals

• Albertans and businesses will have until:
  o 30 days after the public health emergency ends to file appeals to the Alberta Transportation Safety Board for decisions by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles or peace officers, and
  o 30 days after the Ministerial order ends to file judicial reviews of the Alberta Transportation Safety Board’s decisions.
• These deadlines were previously 30 days from the date of being notified of the decision.

Provincial Railways

• The following requirements are temporarily suspended for existing railway employees of provincially regulated railways, to ensure social distancing requirements can be met. New employees will still be required to complete knowledge testing and fitness assessments to ensure they are capable of safely operating on railways.
  o Submission of results of a periodic safety audit when applying for a new or renewed approval to operate a railway;
  o Re-examinations of railway employees’ knowledge on required subjects and hands-on competency of actual job tasks; and
  o Periodic medical fitness for duty assessments for railway employees in safety critical positions.
• These suspensions do not apply to training and testing or assessments of new employees.

Unless another deadline is specified, these temporary changes will remain in effect until the Ministerial Orders end. The Ministerial Orders will end on whichever date is earliest:
• August 14, 2020; or
• 60 days after the public health emergency order ends, if it ends before June 15, 2020; or
• Another date determined by the Minister or Cabinet.

Key contacts

Permitting Questions: central.permits@gov.ab.ca
Driver Program Questions: driverexaminations@gov.ab.ca
Driver Fitness and Monitoring: driver.fitness@gov.ab.ca
International Registration Plan: prorate@gov.ab.ca
Commercial Carrier Questions: carrierservices.info@gov.ab.ca
Provincial Rail Questions: railsafety@gov.ab.ca