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HOW TO
HIRE DRIVERS

Grow Your Business with Streamlined Background Checks & Onboarding

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HIRING TO GROW

Growing any trucking company is a numbers game, and what's one of the most important numbers that needs to increase as demand goes up? How many drivers you employ.

Recent studies estimate the truck driver shortage could surpass 160,000 as soon as 2030.

You don't want to hire just anyone to keep up with this demand and represent your business, but getting qualified, trustworthy drivers in the cab can be tricky no matter the size of your company or how long you've been in operation.

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NEW OR
ESTABLISHED ────

New Entrant & Small Carriers

If this is your first time hiring a driver, you probably have a lot of questions and concerns now that you're branching out beyond your status as an owner-operator. You know DOT compliance should be at the top of your to-do list, but it's still new to you and you're not sure if you're meeting all the requirements.

Established Companies

Even though you've hired drivers before, it's a good idea to periodically make sure your hiring process checks all the boxes with today's ever-changing DOT compliance regulations. There may be gaps in compliance that you're not aware of, which could result in violations, fines, and out-of-service orders.

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THE HIRING PROCESS

Win-Win

Constantly searching for and hiring new drivers is a time-consuming and expensive process that involves sifting through applications, scheduling interviews, and processing several required background screens – all with the hopes that new drivers actually stick around, considering **the CDL driver turnover rate is at 94%.**

Having streamlined, DOT-compliant recruiting, hiring, and onboarding processes can get you ahead of the game and in front of more drivers than you ever thought possible. You'll spend less money and time getting drivers behind the wheel, and these drivers will be happier with their hiring experience. It's a win-win situation.

We'll walk you through the details of establishing these improved processes, including the following:

- Why you need to use a digital driver-friendly job application
- The background checks you should be running
- A walkthrough of pre-employment DOT drug testing
- How to build a culture of safety to boost driver retention

Some of these processes involve important **DOT recordkeeping requirements** as well, which we'll ensure you're prepared for.

MAKE IT EASY FOR DRIVERS TO APPLY

Between online job boards and social media, today's job seekers are looking for work online, like on Facebook, Instagram, and Indeed – they're not picking up a newspaper and scouring the "help wanted" ads.

Since truck drivers are always on the go, they're likely searching for work on a smartphone or tablet when they're on break, in the sleeper, or waiting to load/unload their truck. This is especially true for Millennial and Gen Z truck drivers.

To improve response to your online job ads, **make sure your application can be easily filled out and submitted from any mobile device.**

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THE RIGHT SYSTEMS

Use a Digital, Mobile-Friendly Application

Foley's **Dash platform** features Apply by License. This mobile-friendly job application has been found to increase submissions by 200%. This speeds up your process, while also nearly eliminating data entry errors.

When using Dash, drivers can start their application from their phone with our Apply by License feature, and also take pictures of other necessary documents. If you choose to hire the applicant, any uploaded documents are immediately moved into their driver qualification file for easy recordkeeping. It's a hands-free, zero-effort process for you!

Combine Hiring & Background Screens

The right platform will allow you to customize a job application, link to it in your online job ads, and instantly create an applicant profile that you can track throughout the hiring and onboarding process. Alerts should be sent immediately once a new application is received, making it easy for you to review and contact prospective hires as quickly as possible.

Because Dash functions as a hiring and background screening platform, this process happens automatically so results are returned to you in the shortest amount of time possible.

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HIRING THE RIGHT DRIVERS WITH THOROUGH BACKGROUND CHECKS

One hiring best practice you can't forgo for the sake of speeding up the process is running federally required background screens. You want to get a conditional job offer to a driver as soon as possible, but not without ensuring they're a qualified and trustworthy hire first.

Before hiring a driver, you should be running these background checks on them:

01 Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) Reports

02 Safety Performance Histories

03 FMCSA Clearinghouse Pre-employment Queries

04 Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS) screens

05 Federal Motor Carrier Safety Adminsitration's (FMCSA) Pre-Employment Screening Program checks

06 Criminal Background Checks

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01 Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) Reports

Obtains motor vehicle records from each state in which an applicant held a license or permit in the previous three years. Copies of those records must be added to the driver qualification file within 30 days of employment. If none are received, that effort must be documented, and/or carriers must certify that no record exists.

Recordkeeping Requirement

If hired, the driver's pre-employment MVR must be kept for the duration of their employment, plus three years.

02 Safety Performance Histories

Investigate the driver's past three years of safety performance history with all DOT-regulated employers. Correspondence with previous employers can comprise of letters, personal and telephone interviews, or other methods as determined by the hiring carrier. Everything must be recorded, documented, and kept in the driver investigation file – including any good-faith effort to contact a previous employer that was unsuccessful.

This history must include:
- General identification and employment verification
- Details on crashes the driver was involved in over the previous three years
- Any other information involving minor accidents that the previous employer wishes to provide

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03   FMCSA Clearinghouse Pre-Employment Queries

Starting on January 6, 2023, the Clearinghouse was in effect for three years and you need to query the Clearinghouse database before hiring a driver.

Recordkeeping Requirement
You must keep a record of your pre-employment Clearinghouse queries on each driver for three years.

04   Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS) Screens

A CDLIS report includes information on the driver's current Commercial Driver's License number and the issuing state, as well as up to three prior CDLs held by the driver – including those held under an alias or former name. In addition to keeping drivers with multiple CDLs off the road, this information also gives you a more complete picture of your driver's history.

If the report shows that they held CDLs in states you weren't made aware of, this will allow you to run a motor vehicle report (MVR) to ensure there were no serious infractions or safety issues that you'd want to consider prior to making a hiring decision.

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05 FMCSA Pre-Employment Screening Program (PSP)

A PSP record contains a driver's most recent five years of crash data and the most recent three years of roadside inspection data from the FMCSA Motor Carrier Management Information System (MCMIS) database.

The date as well as the driver's employer and location at the time of the crash are reported. Inspection data shows if the vehicle the driver operated was placed out of service.

06 Criminal Background Checks

Checking a driver's criminal record can uncover any felony or misdemeanor criminal convictions, as well as any pending criminal cases. Any active warrants, infractions, or history of incarceration may also be unveiled. The driver's identity and any aliases should be verified, and a range of records should be searched, from county court records to national criminal databases.

Foley's DOT background check services offer quick turnarounds for each of these screens, which allows you to make better hiring decisions in less time.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT DOT DRUG TESTING

A new driver may not perform safety-sensitive duties, including operating a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) until they have been given a pre-employment drug test with a negative result. Prior to scheduling the test, you must inform the driver in writing of the testing requirements.

Performing a urinalysis drug test on your prospective employees allows you to identify drivers who could create a controlled substances problem for your company and make your hiring decisions much easier.

Foley's DOT drug testing program takes care of scheduling your candidates' tests at one of our thousands of nationwide collection sites and reports their results in record time.

Foley also uses the most up-to-date Electronic Chain of Custody forms (eCCFs) in Dash and sends them to the testing location on your behalf to ensure timely delivery and the added security of your employees' personal information.

Recordkeeping Requirement

In the hopes your soon-to-be driver passes the drug screening, you must keep records of the negative drug test results for one year.

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DOT PHYSICAL & VALID MEDICAL CERTIFICATE

The DOT physical is a medical examination drivers must undergo before being permitted to drive commercial vehicles for a living. This physical ensures they are fit enough to meet the demands of the job and can operate large vehicles or vehicles with passengers without putting anyone at risk.

Drivers are required to have a DOT physical exam if:
- They transport hazardous materials
- They operate a vehicle that carries more than 15 people
- They are paid to operate a vehicle that carries more than 8 people
- They operate a vehicle with a gross combined weight of more than 10,000lbs

It's important to note that the DOT physical does not specifically test for drugs. The urine sample a driver will provide checks their blood sugar levels and will not look for legal or illegal substances.

Recordkeeping Requirement

If the driver passes the DOT physical, they will receive a medical certificate that can be valid for up to 24 months, depending on the results of the exam. Drivers must undergo new DOT physicals before their certificates expire.

All CLP and CDL drivers must keep the original or a copy of their medical cards on their person while on duty.

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BUILDING A CULTURE OF SAFETY TO BOOST DRIVER RETENTION

82% According to a study, companies with a strong onboarding process improve new hire retention by 82% and productivity by over 70%. This means you have much more control over your driver turnover rate than you may have realized.

Foley's Dash platform goes hand in hand with driver onboarding. It's easy for applicants to complete on any mobile device and Apply by License means that simple photos are all it takes to get a candidate started. Dash then saves all uploaded documentation to build their driver files once they've been officially hired, and it's DOT compliant so you'll be fully prepared when an auditor comes calling.

Aside from that, your company's safety culture impacts your drivers' performance and how they view their role in keeping the roadways safe for everyone.

The DOT defines safety culture as "shared values, actions, and behaviors that show a commitment to safety over competing goals and demands." You can easily instill these factors into your company's everyday tasks, procedures, and training materials.

The perks of a healthy safety culture are:
- A better workplace for all employees – not just drivers
- Reduced risk of accidents
- Lower chance of lawsuits

If your employees see how much you prioritize their safety from day one, they're much more likely to take the safety measures you have in place on the road with them too.

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AUTOMATE
RECRUITING AND COMPLIANCE

The payoff of these steps is huge. By spending a little more time on the front end of the hiring and onboarding process, you'll be hiring drivers who are an excellent fit for your company – all while keeping up with your important DOT recordkeeping.

But what about the time involved in putting these ideas into practice and managing all the recordkeeping requirements?

With an automated solution such as Dash, many of the processes highlighted above will run themselves. As a hiring, background check, and drug screening platform, plus a DOT compliance management tool all wrapped into one software solution, it can manage many of your hiring and retention processes – with very little work on your behalf.

GET IN TOUCH
WITH US

One Platform. One Partner. No Worries.

If you would like to see how our Dash Platform can make your job as a recruiter, HR manager, safety manager, or other role with a motor carrier easier, **get a FREE demo by calling our compliance experts at (860) 815-3974.**