



## Firefighter Endorsement Training Requirements (FFDL)

[En español](#)

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On January 01, 2011, [California Vehicle Code \(CVC\) §12804.11\(a\)](#) required an individual who has a noncommercial driver license, including a tiller operator, to have a firefighter endorsement "F." Restricted commercial firefighter

### Current Holders of a Restricted Commercial Firefighter License

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has automatically added the firefighter endorsement to the drive commercial firefighter driver license. The current restricted commercial firefighter driver license will be honored for this purpose.

### Current Holders of a Commercial Driver License

Firefighters with a Class A or B commercial driver license (CDL) are not required to add the "F" endorsement. The CDL includes all applicable endorsements for the vehicle they are operating.

### Applicants for an Original Firefighter Endorsement

All applicants must apply in person at a local DMV office, meet all licensing requirements, and must:

1. Submit an "Original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification" letter, on fire department letterhead, with the following:
  - Certification of employment as a firefighter or proof of registration as a volunteer firefighter.
  - Certification of completion of fire equipment operator training.
  - Signature of the fire chief or designee
2. Successfully pass the written firefighter endorsement test.
3. Submit a completed [Health Questionnaire \(DL 546\) \(PDF\)](#) form.

## Training Requirements for Firefighter Endorsement Applicants

All applicants for a firefighter endorsement must have either:

- Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator 1A training administered by an instructor registered with the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

### OR

- Fire department driver training that meets the following requirements:
  - Meets or exceeds the standards outlined in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1002, adopted by the Office of the State Fire Marshal.
  - Prepares the applicant to safely operate the department's fire equipment that the applicant will be required to operate.
  - Includes a classroom (cognitive) portion of at least 16 hours.
  - Includes a practical portion of at least 14 hours, which includes directly supervised behind-the-wheel training.

Firefighter trainees are not required to obtain a firefighter endorsement prior to training as long as the training meets the requirements listed above.

Questions regarding the new law may be directed to the DMV Commercial Licensing Policy Unit at (916) 662-4600.

## Firefighter Endorsement Q & A

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Q: What is required to apply for an original firefighter "F" endorsement?

A: You must have a commercial or noncommercial Class A, B, or C driver license and submit:

- Certification of employment or registration as a volunteer firefighter.
- Certification of completion of fire equipment operator training.
- Signature of the fire chief or designee.

- An "Original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification" letter, on fire department letterhead with the following:
  - An "Original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification" letter, on fire department letterhead with the following:
    - Certification of employment as a firefighter or proof of registration as a volunteer firefighter.
    - Certification of completion of fire equipment operator training.
    - Signature of the fire chief or designee
- A DL 546 form for a noncommercial driver license (available at <http://apps.dmv.ca.gov/forms/dl/dl546.pdf>)

Q: I have a commercial driver license (CDL). What is required to downgrade to a noncommercial Class C (C)?

A: You will be required to:

- Complete a Driver License or Identification Card Application ([DL 44](#)) form.
- Have the comment “firefighter endorsement valid” or an “F” firefighter endorsement on your driver record. Provide an Original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification letter on fire department letterhead.
- Have a valid DL 546 form on your driver license record.
- Pay the applicable fee.
- Pass any required knowledge test(s). A driving test is not required.

Q: I have a restricted firefighter driver license. What is required to downgrade to a noncommercial Class C (C)?

A: You will be required to:

- Complete a [DL 44](#) form.
- Submit a [DL 546](#) form.
- Pay the applicable fee.
- Pass any applicable written test(s). A driving test is not required.

Q: I have a restricted firefighter driver license. What is required to upgrade to a full CDL with an "F" firefighter endorsement?

A: You will be required to:

**Example:** For a restricted firefighter Class B upgrading to a commercial Class B, a driving test **is not** required. For a restricted firefighter Class C upgrading to a commercial Class C, a driving test **is** required.

- Have the comment “firefighter endorsement valid” or an “F” firefighter endorsement on your driver record. Provide an original Firefighter Employment and Training Verification letter on fire department letterhead signed by the fire department.
- Complete a Commercial Driver License Application ([DL 44C](#)) form.
- Pay the applicable fee.
- Pass any knowledge test for the unrestricted commercial class license. The firefighter written test must be passed.
- For a restricted firefighter driver license applying for the same class of an unrestricted CDL, once the written test is passed, a driving test is not required.
- For a restricted firefighter driver license applying for a higher class unrestricted CDL, the driving test is required. The driving test is issued for the higher class of a CDL for training purposes, while you are awaiting your commercial class license.

**Note:** A Certificate of Driving Skill ([DL 170](#)) form is acceptable in lieu of a driving test.

Q: Does a mechanic need to have an "F" firefighter endorsement?

A: No, a mechanic does not need an "F" firefighter endorsement. The mechanic must be properly licensed and have the appropriate equipment that would also be required.

Q: Will drivers who choose to apply for a noncommercial Class C driver license be required to enroll in the pull notice program?

A: Yes, all drivers with an "F" firefighter endorsement must enroll in the pull notice program.

Q: What is the definition of fire fighting equipment?

A: Fire fighting equipment is a motor vehicle that meets the definition of a Class A or Class B vehicle designed for use in an emergency situation, or to transport equipment used in the control of an emergency situation, and is owned by a fire department, a regularly organized fire department of a city, county, city and county, or district, or a volunteer fire department.

or district in which the department is located.

Q: Do I need an "F" firefighter endorsement to operate a Class C type vehicle owned by the fire department?

A: No, see prior question for the definition of "fire fighting equipment."

Q: Do I need to have the "F" firefighter endorsement for training purposes?

A: No, you are not required to obtain an "F" firefighter endorsement to operate fire fighting equipment for the supervision of a fire department employee who is properly licensed and is authorized by the fire department.

Q: What do I do as a tiller operator if I currently hold a Class C driver license?

A: Tiller operators are also required to have the "F" firefighter endorsement.

Q: I have a Class A driver license with an "automatic transmission" restriction. Will I be able to drive a vehicle with a manual transmission?

A: Yes, if you have an "F" firefighter endorsement on your driver license, while on duty, you can operate any vehicle it has.

Q: If I hold a restricted firefighter CDL, will it automatically be grandfathered in with the endorsement?

A: Yes, if you currently hold a firefighter CDL, your driver record has been updated with a restriction 50 and your CDL will be honored until the time of renewal. A Health Questionnaire (DL 546) form must be maintained.

Q: Will I need to retake the firefighter endorsement written test every time my driver license is renewed?

A: If you are eligible for a "renewal by mail" or "vision test only" renewal, all written tests can be waived, (if you are not eligible for a "renewal by mail" or "vision test only" renewal, all written tests are applicable).

Q: As a firefighter, do I need to meet Transportation Security Administrations (TSA) fingerprinting requirements?

A: If you hold a commercial Class A, B, or C driver license with a hazardous materials endorsement, you are required to be fingerprinted. If you hold a noncommercial Class C driver license with an "F" firefighter endorsement, you can operate fire fighting equipment with hazardous materials.

Q: I am a firefighter with a noncommercial Class C driver license and an "F" firefighter endorsement. If my driver license or endorsement is suspended, will my firefighter endorsement also be suspended?

A: Yes, if the Class C driving privilege is suspended, then so is the "F" firefighter endorsement. If eligible, you can apply for a restricted CDL for use with your course of employment. The "F" firefighter endorsement would be valid only for use with a course of employment restriction.

Q: Can I get a restricted driver license if my CDL is suspended?

A: No, a driver is not eligible to receive a restricted CDL. If you choose to apply for a restricted driver license, you must first receive your CDL back after your full driving privilege is reinstated, all the commercial tests will be required, including a hazardous materials endorsement.

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