

Requirements for Inexperienced Drivers

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A universal problem for new drivers whether it involves a General Driver License (GDL) or a Commercial Driver License (CDL) is inexperience. Experience means that learning to drive takes time and needs extensive practice to reach a sufficient competence level regardless of age. With time, the actions of driving – operating controls, looking in the rear-view mirror, shoulder checking, steering, correctly assessing situations, changing lanes, reacting appropriately, etc. – become a matter of routine. However, for the inexperienced driver, these actions require consideration, increasing overall mental workload and possibly distracting attention from the road. A new drivers' attention is easily overloaded, and their ability to combine simultaneous actions is relatively poor.

That's why RSA has implemented a new inexperienced driver program in order to support our clients with providing coverage for their inexperienced drivers.

Requirements for Inexperienced Drivers

- An inexperienced driver must have a clean abstract. There should be no demerits, commercial or personal.
- Successfully completed an accredited Mandatory Entry Level Training Program
- Undergone a pre-hire driver evaluation
- Company has a formalized training and mentoring program in place
- In Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta Mandatory Entry-Level Training (MELT) is in place and mandates a minimum amount of hours of instruction and the entry-level knowledge and skills needed to safely operate a tractor-trailer on public roadways
- In Ontario the MELT program designates 36.5 hours for classroom time, 17 hours for yard training, 32 hours mandatory on-road training and 18 hours off-road training behind the wheel – 103.5 hours
- In Ontario preference given training schools accredited by the Truck Training Schools Association of Ontario (TTSAO)
- Alberta requires 113 hours of training, including classroom and on-road time for Class 1 (tractor trailer)
- Manitoba and Saskatchewan require 121.5 hours of training, including classroom and on-road time for Class 1 (tractor trailer)

Training and Mentoring Program

1. In-class training:

- Provide training in areas such as; time management, expense planning, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, professional appearance & attitude, reliability, maintaining proper sleep patterns, customer service etc
- Provide training regarding the company's operations, as well as training in courses as required by regulatory bodies. These courses include: Hours of Service, Cargo Securement and Trip Inspections
- Include knowledge based testing on the company policies & procedures. Tests should be reviewed with the driver and incorrect answers discussed. The review should be documented (dated & signed)

2. In-cab training:

- Provide in-cab training. This will be in addition to the completion of the MELT (Mandatory Entry Level Training) program.
- Provide specific criteria regarding the timeline, knowledge, skills that must be met before a mentor can allow the new hire to begin driving.
- The carrier will, whenever possible, have more than one driver mentor to allow for an unbiased overview of the training.
- The best practice for carriers is to have their designated mentors take additional training so that they are certified driver trainers.

3. Additional mentoring / training steps:

- Once a new hire has been released to drive on their own, the carrier will monitor the new hire's progress. This will include:
 - i. Multi-truck jobs – whereby an experienced driver follows the new hire or works with the new hire, but in a separate / second truck
 - ii. Random ride-along – whereby an experienced driver rides along with the new hire on random days / jobs
 - iii. Road Observations - whereby an experienced driver or manager follows the new hire and observes their driving skills. The new hire is not aware at the time that they are being observed.
- The carrier will perform driver re-evaluations based on the driver's experience and the type of driving. For example, 30-60-90 day marks and then annually.
- The carrier will continue to provide training courses and testing, based on driver's experience and knowledge. The employer will document all training scheduled and completions.



- ✓ Start the inexperienced driver on smaller units or yard shunting when possible
- ✓ Dedicated local routes
- ✓ Junior drivers set-up with a mentor that would help them deal with all aspects of the job
- ✓ Junior drivers responsibilities limited to shunting and shuttle work until they have received acceptable internal training and mentorship
- ✓ Begin with the operation of smaller units or yard shunting when possible
- ✓ Mandate the use of electronic logging devices (ELDs); ensure weekly monitoring is in place
- ✓ Install forward-facing and driver facing cameras
- ✓ Provide driver facing cameras. Studies show a positive correlation to a strong positive effect on driver behavior, as well as eliminating the bad habits that can result in collisions
- ✓ Procure vehicles equipped with driver assist systems (ADAS), including speed limiters to mandate set speeds on heavy trucks



The employer's mentoring and training processes should be described in the Safety Manual.

These processes must be followed and all training/mentoring must be documented.

These documents must make up part of the Driver Qualification File.

In the event of a collision or incident, the employer will review these documents to review and expose any gaps in training or any indicators that the driver was not properly trained and fully qualified.