

# WisDOT: WisDOT takes steps to address school bus driver shortage

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To help school districts strained by a shortage of school bus drivers, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) will implement a temporary waiver to get more drivers behind the wheel and encourage former drivers to reinstate.

“WisDOT is taking every available opportunity to ease the strain on communities struggling to recruit drivers by removing barriers that might keep prospective drivers from applying,” DMV Administrator Kristina Boardman said.

Drivers seeking their school bus license (S endorsement) will have the portion of the test that identifies ‘under the hood’ engine components waived until March 31, 2022. All other components of the written and road tests will remain. A recent waiver from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) temporarily allows states to modify the CDL test for school bus drivers.

“Wisconsin’s CDL examiners will focus on the testing requirements that are critical to safety in order to help school districts and communities struggling to recruit qualified school bus drivers,” Boardman added.

Drivers receiving a CDL under this temporary waiver are permitted to operate intrastate school buses only, they are not authorized to operate trucks, motor coaches, or any other type of commercial motor vehicle requiring a CDL.

## **Former drivers tapped to reinstate**

Additionally, this week the DMV sent a letter to nearly 1,000 former drivers who let their school bus license lapse. The letter encourages interested drivers to renew their endorsement and check out employment opportunities in their community.

Many school bus companies have implemented employment incentives, including increased wages and sign-on and referral bonuses.

“With the critical shortage of school bus drivers in Wisconsin, we hope these steps will support new and returning drivers to get behind the wheel and ensure all students have convenient, safe transportation to their local schools,” Boardman said.