

**February 19-22, 2019**  
**SC&RA Specialized Transportation Symposium**  
 Westin Galleria Houston  
 Houston, TX  
 www.scranet.org

**February 24-27, 2019**  
**North American Iron Workers/IMPACT Conference**  
 www.impact-net.org  
 Las Vegas, NV

**April 8-14, 2019**  
**Bauma**  
 Munich, Germany  
 www.bauma.de

**April 23-27, 2019**  
**SC&RA Annual Conference**  
 Omni La Costa Resort  
 Carlsbad, CA  
 www.scranet.org

**May 20-23, 2019**  
**AWEA Wind Power**  
 George R. Brown Convention Center  
 Houston, TX  
 www.windpowerexpo.org

**May 30, 2019**  
**Lift & Move USA**  
 Ontario, Canada  
 www.liftandmoveusa.com

**June 5-8, 2019**  
**Crane Rental Association of Canada (CRAC) Conference and General Meeting**  
 Delta Prince Edward  
 Charlottetown, PE  
 www.crac-aclg.ca

**June 26-27, 2019**  
**International Tower Crane (ITC) Conference**  
 Hotel Savoyen  
 Vienna, Austria  
 www.khl.com-itc

# DQ file review

Driver qualification files can limit exposure to negligent hiring risks.

If you've been in the transportation industry for any length of time, then you're likely familiar with driver qualification files. The driver qualification file, or DQ file, is a Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) record-keeping requirement that motor carriers must meet for every employed driver. Each DQ file must contain, at a minimum, the following items, and must be retained for the duration of the driver's employment and three years thereafter. For additional information, the general requirements for driver qualification files can be found in §391.51.

A driver's qualification file shall be maintained for each driver employed and must include:

- 1 The driver's application for employment completed in accordance with §391.21;
- 2 A copy of the motor vehicle record received from each State record pursuant to §391.23(a)(1);
- 3 The certificate of driver's road test issued to the driver pursuant to §391.31(e), or a copy of the license or certificate which the motor carrier accepted as equivalent to the driver's road test pursuant to §391.33;
- 4 The motor vehicle record received from each State driver licensing agency to the annual driver record inquiry required by §391.25(a);
- 5 A note relating to the annual review of the driver's driving record as required by §391.25(c)(2);
- 6 A list or certificate relating to violations of motor vehicle laws and ordinances required by §391.27;
- 7 The medical examiner's certificate as required by §391.43(g) or a legible copy of the certificate.

“ The DQ file is a FMCSA record-keeping requirement. ”

- **Exception.** For CDL holders, beginning January 30, 2012, if the CDLIS motor vehicle record contains medical certification status information, the motor carrier employer must meet this requirement by obtaining the CDLIS motor vehicle record defined at §384.105 of this chapter. That record must be obtained from the current licensing State and placed in the driver qualification file. After January 30, 2015, a non-excepted, interstate CDL holder without medical certification status information on the CDLIS motor vehicle record is designated “not-certified” to operate a CMV in interstate commerce. After January 30, 2015 and through June 21, 2021, a motor carrier may use a copy of the driver's current medical examiner's certificate that was submitted to the State for up to 15 days from the date it was issued as proof of medical certification.
- If that driver obtained the medical certification based on having obtained a medical variance from FMCSA, the motor carrier must also include a copy of the medical variance documentation in the driver qualification file in accordance with §391.51(b)(8);
- 8 A Skill Performance Evaluation Certificate obtained from a Field Administrator, Division Administrator, or State Director issued in accordance with §391.49; or the Medical Exemption document, issued by a Federal medical program in accordance with part 381 of this chapter; and
- 9 For drivers not required to have a CDL, a note relating to verification of medical examiner listing on the National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners required by §391.23(m)(1).

## THE AUTHOR



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## DQ file record retention

Be sure to remember that driver qualification files must be retained for as long as a driver is employed by a motor carrier and for three years thereafter. However, there are individual records that may be removed from a driver's qualification file three years after the date of execution. Refer to 391.51(d) for specifics. ■

