

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY NEWSLETTER

March 2020

Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse Detects Nearly 8,000 Violations since Jan. 6

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration released data following the first weeks of operation of its Commercial Driver's License Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse. The information released showed that the clearinghouse has detected and identified nearly 8,000 positive substance abuse tests of commercial drivers since January 6, 2020. The clearinghouse now has more than 650,000 registrants.

"We've seen encouraging results from the Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse, but there's still work to do to ensure we identify more drivers who should not be behind the wheel. The clearinghouse is a positive step, and the Agency continues to work closely with industry, law enforcement, and our state partners to ensure its implementation is effective," said FMCSA Acting Administrator Jim Mullen.

The clearinghouse is aimed at improving road safety by providing FMCSA and employers with the necessary tools to identify drivers who have violated federal drug and alcohol testing program requirements and are prohibited from operating a Commercial Motor Vehicle. The goal of the clearinghouse is to ensure that such drivers receive the required evaluation and treatment before they have the opportunity to resume driving.

Those required to register for the clearinghouse include:

- Employers of commercial driver's license (CDL) and commercial learner's permit (CLP) holders, or their designated service agents, and medical review officers who report drug and alcohol program violations that occurred on or after January 6, 2020;
- Employers or their designated service agents who conduct required queries which inform them whether prospective or current employees have drug and alcohol program violations in their clearinghouse records. Employers must purchase a

query plan before conducting queries in the clearinghouse – query plans must be purchased from the FMCSA clearinghouse website only;

- Drivers who respond to employer consent requests or would like to view their clearinghouse record when applying for a job; and
- Substance abuse professionals who report on the completion of driver initial assessments and driver eligibility for return-to-duty testing for violations committed on or after January 6, 2020.

There is no cost for registration. Commercial drivers are not required to immediately register for the clearinghouse, but will need to register to respond to an employer's request for consent prior to a pre-employment query or other full query being conducted. In addition, employers must be registered during the first year of implementation to ensure they are able to conduct the required annual query on all employed drivers.

Combatting drug abuse has been a top priority of the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Trump Administration. President Trump has brought attention to the nation's opioid crisis by declaring it a nationwide public health emergency and has implemented critical federal initiatives to help reduce opioid abuse.

FMCSA's clearinghouse website contains important resources, including user brochures and instructional aids with step-by-step registration instructions for all users. Users can visit <https://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov> to access these resources.

The clearinghouse is a secure online database that allows FMCSA, employers of CDL drivers, State Driver Licensing Agencies, and law enforcement officials to identify – in real time – CDL drivers who have violated federal drug and alcohol testing program requirements, and thereby improve safety on our nation's roads.

If you have questions on the Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse, please reach out to a PayneWest Risk Control contact listed below.

SOURCE: FMCSA.DOT.GOV

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