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Commercial Driver Licenses

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website (ctas.tennessee.edu). This website is maintained by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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Commercial Driver Licenses

Reference Number: CTAS-1148

County employees operating commercial type vehicles and those requiring a special endorsement must obtain a commercial driver license in order to operate many county vehicles. Vehicles (including vehicle combinations) that fall within the commercial classification include the following:

1. Vehicles weighing more than 26,000 pounds (gross vehicle weight rating);
2. Vehicles designed to transport more than fifteen (15) passengers (including the driver); and
3. Vehicles transporting hazardous material requiring placarding.

T.C.A. § 55-50-102.

Vehicles requiring a special endorsement listing on a driver license include:

1. Those authorized to pull multiple trailers;
2. Those designed to carry more than fifteen (15) passengers (including the driver);
3. Tank vehicles;
4. Those transporting hazardous materials requiring placarding; and
5. School buses.

The commercial driver license requirements include passing grades on certain knowledge and skills tests as well as a good driving record. A "grandfather" provision exists that exempts certain drivers from having to take the skills test. Furthermore, operators of emergency vehicles are exempt from these provisions.

School bus drivers must have a Class C commercial license with school bus endorsement. T.C.A. § 55-50-102; Op. Tenn. Att'y Gen. 89-122 (Sept. 21, 1989). This endorsement may be issued only if the applicant has had five years of unrestricted driving experience and can demonstrate good character, competency, and fitness. T.C.A. § 55-50-302.

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