HOS Rules Summary

Hours of Service Regulations for Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers

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Hours of Service (HOS) regulations limit the number of hours commercial motor vehicle drivers may drive and work. These rules, established under 49 CFR Part 395, are designed to prevent fatigue-related accidents. This guide summarizes the key HOS requirements for property-carrying and passenger-carrying drivers.

Property-Carrying Drivers (Trucks, Freight)

The following rules apply to drivers of commercial motor vehicles transporting property (freight, goods, equipment) in interstate commerce.

Rule	Limit	Description
11-Hour Driving Limit	11 hours	You may drive a maximum of 11 hours after 10 consecutive hours off duty. This is your total available driving time for the day.
14-Hour Duty Window	14 hours	You may not drive after the 14th consecutive hour after coming on duty, following 10 consecutive hours off duty. This window runs continuously once you start work—off-duty time during the day does NOT pause it.
30-Minute Rest Break	30 minutes	You must take a 30-minute break after driving for 8 cumulative hours without at least a 30-minute interruption. The break can be off-duty, sleeper berth, or on-duty not driving.
60/70-Hour Weekly Limit	60 or 70 hours	You may not drive after 60 hours on duty in 7 consecutive days OR 70 hours on duty in 8 consecutive days. Your carrier declares which schedule you follow.
34-Hour Restart	34 hours	You may restart your 60/70-hour clock by taking 34 or more consecutive hours off duty. After the restart, you begin a new 7/8-day period with zero accumulated on-duty time.

■ **The 14-hour window cannot be extended or paused (except for adverse conditions). Once it starts, it runs continuously until you take 10 hours off.**

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Passenger-Carrying Drivers (Buses)

Different HOS rules apply to drivers of commercial motor vehicles designed or used to transport passengers.

Rule	Limit	Description
10-Hour Driving Limit	10 hours	You may drive a maximum of 10 hours after 8 consecutive hours off duty.
15-Hour Duty Window	15 hours	You may not drive after having been on duty for 15 hours, following 8 consecutive hours off duty. Off-duty time is not included.
60/70-Hour Weekly Limit	60 or 70 hours	Same as property-carrying: 60 hours in 7 days or 70 hours in 8 days.

Property vs. Passenger: Quick Comparison

Rule	Property-Carrying	Passenger-Carrying
Maximum driving time	11 hours	10 hours
Off-duty required before driving	10 consecutive hours	8 consecutive hours
Duty window (no driving after)	14 hours on duty	15 hours on duty
Duty window calculation	Runs continuously	Excludes off-duty time
Required rest break	30 min after 8 hrs driving	None required
Weekly limit options	60/7 or 70/8	60/7 or 70/8
Sleeper berth split allowed	Yes (7/3 split)	No

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Duty Status Definitions

Status	Abbrev	Definition	Counts Against
Driving	D	Time spent at the controls of a CMV in operation	11-hr driving, 14-hr window, 60/70-hr limit
On-Duty (Not Driving)	ON	All time working or available to work that is not driving: inspecting, loading, fueling, paperwork, waiting	14-hr window, 60/70-hr limit (not driving time)
Sleeper Berth	SB	Time resting in a DOT-compliant sleeper berth compartment	Can pause 14-hr window when used in split
Off-Duty	OFF	Time when driver is relieved of all duty and responsibility for the vehicle	Nothing—resets available time

Split Sleeper Berth Provision

Property-carrying drivers with a sleeper berth may split their required 10-hour off-duty period into two separate periods, providing flexibility for rest while maximizing productivity.

Requirements for Split Sleeper

- **Period 1:** At least 7 consecutive hours in the sleeper berth
- **Period 2:** At least 2 consecutive hours off-duty OR in sleeper berth (can be in either or both)
- The two periods must total at least 10 hours
- Neither period counts against the 14-hour driving window when paired together

How It Works

Time	Activity	Effect
6:00 AM	Come on duty after 10 hrs off	11 hrs driving, 14 hrs window available
6:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Drive 6 hours	5 hrs driving remain, 8 hrs window remain
12:00 PM - 2:00 PM	2 hours off-duty (Period 2)	Pauses window when paired with 7+ SB
2:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Drive 4 hours	1 hr driving remains
6:00 PM - 1:00 AM	7 hours sleeper berth (Period 1)	Completes split; recalculates available time
1:00 AM	Back on duty	New calculation excludes the 2+7 hr periods

The split sleeper provision is complex. Available driving and on-duty time is recalculated based on activity in the periods NOT part of the split. Consult your ELD or fleet manager for specific calculations.

Exceptions and Special Provisions

Adverse Driving Conditions

- Applies when driver encounters conditions not known before starting (snow, fog, traffic, road closure)
- May extend **both** the 11-hour driving limit and 14-hour window by up to **2 hours**
- Must document in ELD/log remarks section
- Cannot be used if conditions were known or should have been known before departure

Short-Haul Exemption

- Drivers operating within **150 air-miles** of their work reporting location
- Must return to reporting location within **14 hours**
- No ELD required—only time records (start time, end time, total hours)
- Still subject to 60/70-hour weekly limits
- If exceeding 150 miles or 14 hours even once in 30 days, full logs required for that day

16-Hour Short-Haul Exception (Property Only)

- Once per 7-day period, driver may extend 14-hour window to 16 hours
- Must operate within 150 air-miles and return to work reporting location
- Must have released time in previous 5 duty periods, totaling at least 10 hours off duty
- Does NOT extend the 11-hour driving limit

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Common HOS Violations and Penalties

Violation	Severity	CSA Points	Consequence
Driving beyond 11-hour limit	High	7	Out of service, fines up to $16,000+
Driving beyond 14-hour window	High	7	Out of service, fines
Driving beyond 60/70-hour limit	High	7	Out of service, fines
No 30-minute break after 8 hrs	Medium	5	Violation, fines
Falsifying logs/records	Severe	10	Criminal penalties possible, driver disqualification
No log/ELD when required	High	5	Out of service until corrected
Form and manner errors	Low	1-2	Warnings or minor fines

HOS violations affect your CSA score for 24 months. Multiple violations can lead to carrier intervention thresholds, affecting safety ratings and insurance rates.

Quick Reference: Can I Drive?

- Have I had at least **10 consecutive hours off duty**? — Required to reset daily limits
- Do I have **driving time remaining** under the 11-hour limit? — Check ELD for hours available
- Am I within the **14-hour window** since coming on duty? — Clock runs continuously from first on-duty
- Have I taken a **30-minute break** if driving 8+ hours? — Required before additional driving
- Am I under the **60/70-hour weekly limit**? — Check cumulative hours in 7/8 days
- Is my **ELD functioning** properly? — Paper logs required if malfunctioning

If you answer NO to any question above, you cannot legally drive until the condition is corrected.

Questions about fleet compliance and insurance?
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