

Frequently Asked Questions

I need to get an authority, how long does it take?

The process is fairly easy and quick, with most carriers able to complete the process in a couple of business days. The most time consuming item has been having the insurance company forward the required insurance forms to MDOT. The carrier must inform the insurance agent to have the Michigan Insurance Form 3046 sent to the department.

Can I come to MDOT's main office to get my authority and decals?

Usually, however you must have all the required items in place before the authority and decals will be issued. Call for reservations and appointments to the following:

Carriers company names beginning with A-I call Robbie Smith at (517) 241-0679

Carriers company names beginning with J-Z call Connie Johns at (517) 241-0680

Note: There are periods that walk-ins are restricted due to high volumes and personnel availability.

Is my vehicle a limousine?

If the vehicle, regardless of body style, is designed or used to transport 15 passengers or less (including the driver) where the public can hire the carrier to transport a passenger over the public highways of the state of Michigan, it is a limousine and the carrier must have a Limousine Certificate of Authority.

Is my limousine a bus?

If the vehicle, regardless of body style, is designed or used to transport less than 15 passengers (including the driver) it is a limousine. If transporting more than 15 passengers (including the driver) it is a bus and the carrier must have a Motor Bus Certificate of Authority.

I do non-emergency medical transportation, is my vehicle a limousine?

A non-emergency equipped vehicle (such as a van taking patients to doctor appointments, etc.) is a limousine and the carrier must have a Limousine Certificate of Authority. Ambulances are not required to be registered by MDOT if transporting persons for emergency care. In addition, Part 209 of the Public Health Code applies to a limousine service that provides non-emergency stretcher transportation. Limousine services may not transport non-emergency patients by stretcher, isolette, cot, or litter without first obtaining a license as an ambulance service under Part 209 of the Public Health Code. Contact the Department of Labor & Economic Growth, Health Services at (517) 241-3026.

How is design determined?

Federal Motor Vehicle Standards define seating capacity as:

- * any location capable of accommodating a person at least as large as a 5th percentile adult female, if the overall seat configuration and design and vehicle design is such that the position is likely to be used as a seating position while the vehicle is in motion.

The designated seating capacity weight allowance must not exceed the GVWR rating of the vehicle.

This measurement generally is 14" per designated seating position.

Manufacturers generally determine the maximum seating capacity of a limousine and the GVWR with the information affixed to a sticker around the drivers door frame area.

My vehicle configuration determines that it is a bus, but I only allow 14 passengers to be on board, is that OK?

No, it is legally defined as a bus by Michigan state law and federal regulations if the seating capacity is greater than fifteen (15) or there is greater than fifteen passengers (including the driver) on board during vehicle operation.

Why are there different dates on the Limousine Authorization Decal vs. Safety Inspection?

Authorization decals expire on the first day of March each year. Safety Inspections expire one year after the inspection is conducted. Carriers must ensure that their safety inspections are kept current regardless of the decals expiration date. Vehicles found operating with an expired inspection can be ticketed as such by any law enforcement officer. Decals have serial numbers and they are vehicle specific and are **not** transferable. When a limousine carrier ceases to operate or sells a vehicle, they shall destroy its assigned decal (or return it to the department) and remove all associated paperwork from the vehicle. Carrier name lettering and USDOT numbers should also removed from the vehicle.

Are there other limousine specific state laws I need to be aware of?

Several, MCL 257.208(b) requires that limousine companies must subscribe to the Commercial Look Up Service provided by the Secretary of State. The service will track the driving record of each driver the company submits to the service. A print out of each driver's record will be generated, and sent to the company once a year. The driver will then be tracked by the service, and if the driver is convicted of a driving offense during the year a notice will be sent within 48 hours to the company.

To apply to this service it is required that you send an E-mail to, commercialservices@michigan.gov include your name, and the legal company name.

All limousine drivers must maintain a current copy of their driving record, and make non-personal information of their record available for review by any passenger. A copy of this law can be found at:

<http://www.michiganlegislature.org/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-257-208b.pdf>

Limousine companies are not allowed to provide alcoholic beverages to customers unless the company has a valid license issued by the Liquor Control Commission. Vehicles that display a valid MDOT registration sticker authorize the customer to have an open alcoholic beverage within the passenger compartment that they bring with them.

MCL 257.226(b) states that limousine company vehicles are not permitted to operate with passengers on board with any type of temporary registration. Limousines are required to have commercial fee registration plates attached prior to operating.

If the vehicle is used to carry packages (other than those belonging to passengers), contact the Michigan Public Service Commission, Motor Carrier Division at (517) 241-6030.

Do I have to have my company name on my limousine?

MCL 257.723 states in part:

- (1) All commercial vehicles with a single or combination gross weight rating or total gross weight of more than 5,000 pounds in operation upon the public highways of this state shall have the name, city, and state or the registered logo or emblem of the registered owner of the vehicle, and lessee of the vehicle if the vehicle is being operated under lease, painted or permanently attached on each side of the vehicle in letters of not less than 3 inches in height, not lower than the bottom edge of the door. This information shall be in sharp color contrast to the background.
- (2) The identification requirements of subsection (1) may be met through the use of removable devices which meet the requirements of subsection (1). The removable devices shall be attached so that the identification is in a horizontal position.
- (3) A vehicle in compliance with the identification requirements of the federal motor carrier safety regulations, 49 CFR parts 390-399, is considered to be in compliance with this section.
- (5) A person who violates this section is responsible for a civil infraction.

What are the driver requirements?

In addition to the driver carrying a current copy of their driving record, a person who operates a limousine must have a chauffeur's license and if the vehicle has either a gross vehicle weight rating or an actual gross weight of 10,001 or more pounds the driver must have a medical card.

Who can inspect my limousine to meet the inspection requirements?

Every limousine must be inspected annually by a mechanic certified under the motor vehicle service and repair act. The motor vehicle repair facility must be registered under the motor vehicle service and repair act that is designated by the department as an inspection station, or meets the requirement through an approved local ordinance program.

Carriers should check Motor Vehicle Mechanic Certificates that must be displayed at the licensed repair facility to ensure that the mechanic certificate is not expired and that the mechanic is certified as follows:

Mechanic Certifications Required to Conduct Limousine Inspections

Vehicles less than 10,000 lbs GVWR

AUTO Front End, Suspension & Steering Systems

And

AUTO Brakes & Braking Systems

Vehicles more than 10,000 lbs GVWR

HDT Drive Train

And

HDT Brakes & Braking Systems

And

HDT Suspension & Steering Systems

Where do I get the safety inspection forms?

The inspection form(s) can be mailed to you by calling (517) 241-0679 or (517) 241-0680. Carriers also have the option of printing them from MDOT's limousine web site. All web printed limousine inspection forms must include Page 1 and Page 2 prior to taking the vehicle to the inspection station.

My company wishes to go across state lines or US borders, what do I need to do this?

You must have a federal Interstate Operating Authority (MC number) and a federal USDOT Number, if the vehicle seats greater than 8, including the driver. This can be completed by filing on-line at: www.safer.fmcsa.dot.gov then select FMCSA Registration & Updates. After securing the MC number, you must also designate a process agent to legally represent you in every state that you wish to operate in/thru. You can find BOC-3 agents through the FMCSA site, a search of the web or through industry associations.

When filling out applications, your operation would be described as Interstate, Authorized For-Hire Common Carrier, then follow the instructions provided on the website.

Carriers discovered operating in interstate operations without having the required interstate operating authority shall be placed out-of-service pursuant to 49 C.F.R. 392.9(a). In addition, the carrier may be subject to federal penalties in accordance with 49 U.S.C. 14901.

Carriers operating diesel powered equipment with 3 axles or more must have **IFTA** fuel tax decals displayed on the vehicle. These decals can be obtained by calling the Michigan Department of Treasury at (517) 373-3183.

Carriers may elect to join the Single State Registration System (**SSRS**) for payment of registration fees to other states that they will be operating in or thru. Information can be requested in Ohio (614) 466-3392 or Indiana (317) 615-7289. Only Michigan truck carriers can use Michigan's SSRS Program.

SSRS is a program in which for-hire carriers of passengers or property are required to register their Federal operating authority and proof of insurance with their base state. The base state is determined by the location of the carrier's principal place of business. If a carrier's principal place of business is maintained outside of a participating state, the carrier must select the state where the largest number of vehicles will be operated during the next registration year. All fees required for states into which the carrier operates are paid to the base state, which then transmits the fees to the other states. The registration period runs from January 1 through December 31. Carriers located in states not participating in the program and those carriers from Canadian provinces are required to register with the participating state where the greatest number of vehicles will operate in the upcoming year. The base state will issue all registrants a receipt indicating the states in which the carrier may operate. The carrier is then required to make a copy for each vehicle for which fees have been paid (this receipt must be carried in the vehicle). Carriers that operate in a state for which fees haven't been paid are subject to law enforcement action.

Operations into Canada must be conducted using Canada's rules and regulations. Information can be obtained from the province(s) which you intend to operate in (i.e. Ontario Ministry of Transport at 416-326-6732 or 800-387-7736).