



JAMES J. BLANCHARD, Governor  
ROBERT A. BOWMAN, State Treasurer

STATE OF MICHIGAN

**DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY**

TREASURY BUILDING

LANSING, MICHIGAN 48922

**REVENUE ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN 1988-11**

Approved: May 18, 1988

**REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE MOTOR CARRIER ACT**

RAB-88-11. The Motor Carrier Tax Act, MCL 207.211 et seq, imposes a tax on the consumption of motor fuel by commercial motor vehicles within this State. It also provides for a tax discount per gallon on diesel fuel delivered into commercial motor vehicles licensed under this Act.

**Registration Provisions**

The procedure for registering as a motor carrier with the Department of Treasury is outlined in MCL 207.215. This provision identifies vehicles required to be licensed and the license fees.

When applying for a motor carrier license, an applicant shall pay an annual license fee as follows:

1. Commercial motor vehicles registered in this State will pay \$92 (1988) for each vehicle licensed. This fee will be prorated by calendar quarters.
2. Commercial motor vehicles not required to be registered in this State will pay \$25 (1988) for each vehicle licensed. This fee will be prorated by calendar quarters.

The license (decal) shall be affixed to the door on the right-side of the cab of every commercial vehicle operated in this State.

Persons selling diesel fuel for retail and operating commercial motor vehicles must register with the Department of Treasury as both a motor carrier and a diesel dealer.

**Vehicles Required To Be Registered**

Under the Act, the following diesel powered highway vehicles must be registered when operated in Michigan.

1. All road tractors (regardless of the number of axles).
2. All truck tractors (regardless of the number of axles).
3. All diesel trucks, other than road tractors or truck tractors, having more than two axles.

### Vehicles Not Required To Be Registered, Exempt Vehicles

Under the Motor Carrier Act, certain vehicles are not required to be registered, or the amount of license fee to be remitted is not explicitly clear. Following are the licensing requirements pertaining to these situations.

1. Commercial motor vehicles qualifying for agricultural license plates.

Vehicles bearing agricultural plates and used for that purpose are not entitled to register as motor carriers and are subject to the full rate of tax per gallon of diesel fuel.

Vehicles with agricultural plates being used for hire may be registered as motor carriers and receive the per gallon discount on fuel purchases. However, the Department will notify the Secretary of State as to the status of the vehicle.

2. Buses are not considered commercial vehicles and are not required to register, nor are they entitled to the discount provisions.
3. License fees for commercial motor vehicles with multiple state vehicle registrations, one of which is issued by Michigan. (For example, a truck with both Michigan and Ohio license plates.)

In situations where the vehicle is registered in both Michigan and another state, the State where the negotiable title of ownership is registered will determine whether the vehicle is considered an instate or out-of-state commercial vehicle for licensing and fee purposes.

Therefore, a vehicle whose negotiable title is registered with the Michigan Secretary of State and has both Michigan and Ohio license plates will be considered an instate motor carrier and charged the instate license fee. If the vehicle title is registered in Ohio, then it will be required to register and pay the out-of-state license fee.

4. Motor carrier licensing of self-propelled contractor equipment (cranes, backhoes, well drillers, etc.).

Self-propelled contractor equipment is not required to be registered with the Secretary of State and thus is not entitled to register with the Department as a motor carrier. The fuel used by these self-propelled vehicles when operated on an existing highway is subject to the full diesel tax rate per gallon.

5. Commercial motor vehicles with manufacturer license plates.

Commercial vehicles plated with either manufacturer or dealer plates are not entitled to be registered with the Department for motor carrier purposes. The fuel used by these vehicles is subject to the full rate of diesel fuel tax.

6. Vehicles used to transport mobile homes.

Truck tractors and road tractors modified to haul mobile homes (sometimes referred to as "totters") are commercial motor vehicles and are required to register with the Department of Treasury and receive the diesel fuel discount.

Pickup trucks with two axles hauling mobile homes are not commercial motor carriers and are not entitled to register as motor carriers. Accordingly, they are subject to tax on full rate per gallon of diesel fuel.

7. Specifically exempted under the Motor Carrier Act, MCL 207.213, are commercial motor vehicles operated and owned by this State, a political subdivision of this State, the federal government, or to a commercial motor vehicle owned by, or leased and operated by a non-profit private, parochial, or denominational school, college or university, or public school, college, or university.

Unused Motor Carrier Decals

The Department of Treasury has no authority under the Motor Carrier Act to refund license fees upon return of unused motor carrier decals. Therefore, motor carriers should plan carefully to avoid being left with a large inventory of unused decals since no refund will be given.