DRUG & ALCOHOL CLEARINGHOUSE

Q&A Session for Employers and Consortia/Third-Party Administrators

December 2020
Agenda

1. OVERVIEW OF THE CLEARINGHOUSE
   About the Congressional mandate and what it means

2. REGISTRATION
   Creating a Clearinghouse account

3. QUERIES AND CONSENT REQUESTS
   Query and consent requirements in the Clearinghouse

4. REPORTING VIOLATIONS
   Violations reported to the Clearinghouse

5. COMMON ISSUES
   Common issues users are experiencing

6. NEXT STEPS & MORE INFORMATION
   How you can register, learn more, and get technical support
Overview of the Clearinghouse
The Clearinghouse Final Rule

- Mandated by Congress (MAP-21, Section 32402)
- Published December 5, 2016
- Established requirements for the Clearinghouse
- Implemented on January 6, 2020

Read the Clearinghouse final rule at:
The FMCSA Commercial Driver’s License Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse

**Record**

Employers and medical review officers report violation information to the Clearinghouse (positive tests, refusals to test, actual knowledge)

**Retain**

Secure database retains the violation and CDL/CLP number

Includes driver’s status in return-to-duty (RTD) process

**Query**

Employers and C/TPAs query the Clearinghouse for violation information, with driver consent

FMCSA uses data for enforcement purposes

State enforcement agencies will receive driver eligibility status (i.e., Prohibited/Not Prohibited)

Drivers can access only their own information
Increasing safety on our Nation’s roadways

- Real-time access to reported violation information for select registered users
- Easier for employers to meet pre-employment investigation and reporting obligations
- More difficult for drivers to conceal drug and alcohol violations from employers
- More insight into employer compliance with drug and alcohol testing rules

Safer Roadways
Am I covered by the Clearinghouse rule?

- All CDL drivers who operate CMVs on public roads and their employers and service agents. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - Interstate and intrastate motor carriers, including passenger carriers
  - School bus drivers
  - Construction equipment operators
  - Limousine drivers
  - Municipal vehicle drivers (e.g., waste management vehicles)
  - Federal and other organizations that employ drivers subject to FMCSA drug and alcohol testing regulations (e.g., Department of Defense, municipalities, school districts)

- Government entities are not required to obtain a USDOT Number under 49 CFR Part 390, however they are subject to the Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing regulations in 49 CFR Part 382

Learn more about the specific actions each user can take at:
https://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov/Resource/Index/User-Roles
Employer Requirements

Register
- Link to your FMCSA Portal account (optional)

Record
- Report CDL driver drug and alcohol program violations
- Positive tests, test refusals, actual knowledge

Query
- Check if driver is prohibited from operating a CMV
- Pre-employment and annual

Designate
- Designate a C/TPA (optional)
- C/TPA may conduct queries, report violations, and RTD information on your behalf
Owner-Operator Requirements

Register
- Register as an employer, indicate you are an owner-operator
- Link to your FMCSA Portal account (option)
- Add/verify your CDL (optional)

Query
- Check if a driver is prohibited from operating a CMV
- Pre-employment queries on any new drivers
- Annual queries on all drivers, including yourself

Designate
- Designate a C/TPA (required)
- C/TPA must report violations and RTD information
- Owner-operators may designate C/TPA to conduct queries, or conduct their own
Driver Requirements

Register
• Be sure to add/verify your CDL
• Needed to view Violation History, respond to query consent requests, and designate a SAP

Consent
• Respond to consent requests for full queries from current and potential employers
• Note: All pre-employment queries are full queries
• This includes positive tests, test refusals, and actual knowledge

Designate
• Designate a SAP, if needed, to record RTD information

Failure to provide consent to a request for a full query will result in the driver being prohibited from performing safety-sensitive functions (including operating a CMV) for that employer, in accordance with 49 CFR 382.703(c).
Registration
Registering for the Clearinghouse

- Must have a login.gov account to register for the Clearinghouse
  - When selecting a method for second factor authentication do not select “backup codes”
- After you have logged in to your login.gov account, select your user role
Registering for the Clearinghouse – Owner-Operators

- Register as an employer
  - Link to your FMCSA Portal account (optional)
- Select “Yes” when asked if you are an owner-operator
- Designate a C/TPA (required)
  - Must report violation information
  - May conduct queries
- Add/verify your CDL information
  - Needed to view Violation History and respond to query consent requests
Registering with an FMCSA Portal Account – Employers

- Employer Clearinghouse registration has two paths: FMCSA Portal users, and non-Portal users
  - If you have, or should have, a USDOT Number, you should have a Portal account
- Your Portal account must have the correct user role
  - DACH Motor Carrier
    Can query, report
  - DACH Motor Carrier Admin
    Can query, report, designate C/TPA, indicate carrier type

To request an FMCSA Portal account, visit https://portal.fmcsa.dot.gov/login
Designating a C/TPA

- A consortium/third-party administrator (C/TPA) manages all, or part, of an employer's DOT drug and alcohol testing program

- Employers should contact the C/TPA prior to sending them a designation request in the Clearinghouse.
Designating a C/TPA (continued)

- C/TPAs must be registered in the Clearinghouse before they can be designated.
- Employers select the actions a C/TPA may take on their behalf.
- Owner-operators must designate at least one C/TPA to complete the following:
  - Report violations
  - Report RTD information
Inviting Other Users

- Invite Assistant(s)
  - Ensure continuous access
  - Employers: not required for Portal users

- Additional Administrators register on the Clearinghouse website
Queries and Consent Requests
Query Requirement

- A query is a check of the Clearinghouse to ensure a CDL driver is not prohibited from performing safety-sensitive functions (such as operating a CMV) due to a drug and alcohol program violation.
- All queries require driver consent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-employment query</td>
<td>Required for all newly hired CDL drivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Until January 5, 2023, a manual check is still required for the prior 3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual query</td>
<td>Follows a rolling 12-month calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example: Query driver J. Smith on December 1, 2020 – not required to query J. Smith again until December 1, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If you have not yet conducted annual queries, the deadline is January 5, 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Consent Requirements Based on Type of Query

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Query</th>
<th>Type of Query</th>
<th>Consent Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual query</td>
<td>Limited Query</td>
<td>General consent, done outside the Clearinghouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>May be electronic or wet signature, one time or unlimited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Limited consent form must specify time range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-employment query</td>
<td>Full Query</td>
<td>Specific consent, provided electronically within the Clearinghouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Required for each full query of an individual driver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- If a driver refuses consent (for any query) the query cannot be conducted and the driver is prohibited from performing safety-sensitive functions for that employer.

Download a [sample general consent form](#).
Query Plans

Query Plan Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Queries Conducted</th>
<th>Queries Pending</th>
<th>Query Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9,773</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the past 12 months

Transaction History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purchase Date</th>
<th>Purchased By</th>
<th>Plan Purchased</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/6/2019 11:26 AM</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sample-Employer@example.com">Sample-Employer@example.com</a></td>
<td>5 Query Plan</td>
<td>Paid (Receipt)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Purchasing a Query Plan

- Payment is processed via pay.gov.

- Payment methods include:
  - Electronic funds transfer from bank accounts (ACH)
  - Credit card (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover)
  - Debit card (Visa, MasterCard)
  - Digital wallet (Amazon Pay, PayPal)
    - Digital wallet payments cannot be more than $10,000 per transaction

- FMCSA does not provide invoices or purchase orders.

- Employers must purchase the query plan. C/TPAs may not purchase a query plan on behalf of an employer.

- If you conduct queries on behalf of more than one employer, each company must have its own query plan.
How to Conduct a Query – Enter Driver Information

- Driver Information
  - Driver's name, date of birth, and CDL number and state/country of issuance
  - Information will be verified against FMCSA systems
    - Employer or C/TPA will have two attempts to enter the driver’s information correctly
    - If the information cannot be validated, the query cannot be conducted
A sample limited consent form is available in the Clearinghouse Learning Center.
How to Conduct a Query – Limited Query

- Click **Conduct Query** to proceed with the limited query
  - One query will be deducted from the employer’s Query Balance

**Conduct Query**

This limited query will determine if this driver’s Clearinghouse record has any information about resolved or unresolved drug and alcohol program violations. It will not release any specific violation information contained in the driver’s Clearinghouse record.

Click “Conduct Query” below to proceed. One query will be deducted from your Query Balance.
“Record(s) Found” is not a notification that a queried driver is prohibited from performing safety-sensitive functions. The full query is needed to determine the driver’s eligibility status.
How to Conduct a Query – Send Consent Request (Full Query)

- After you click “Send Consent Request,” FMCSA will send a notification to the driver whose CDL information you entered/verified.
  - If the driver is already registered, he/she will receive the notification via the contact method specified during registration (email or USPS).
  - If the driver is not registered, FMCSA will send a letter via USPS to the address associated with the CDL.
Drivers Responds to Consent Request in the Clearinghouse

- Drivers will log in to the Clearinghouse to respond to a consent request
  - Query consent requests will be displayed on the Driver Dashboard
## Driver’s View of Violation Information

### Violation History

**Reported On:** 11/19/2020 12:46:47 PM  
**Reason for Test:** 
**Reported By:** Sample Employer  
**Status:** Open

Actual knowledge of an alcohol violation

*View RTD Process Details*  
*View Violation Details*

If you believe information has been inaccurately reported, you can file a [complaint](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/). A drug or alcohol violation will remain in the Clearinghouse until the violation determination, whichever is later. The Clearinghouse does not contain violations of which the Clearinghouse has no knowledge.

### Violation Details

**Return to Duty (RTD) Status**

**Status:** Open – Initial SAP Assessment Complete
- **SAP Request Sent:** 11/19/2020
- **SAP Designated:** 11/19/2020
- **Initial SAP Assessment:** 11/22/2020
- **Determined Eligible for RTD Testing:** Not Completed
- **RTD Test with Negative Result:** Not Completed
- **Follow-Up Testing Plan:** Not Completed

### Employer Information

**Sample Employer**
- **Main Street**
- **Springfield, CA 12345**

### Driver Information

**AndyG Driver23**
- **DOB:** 2/25/1963
- **CDL/CLP:** CDL1234
- **Country:** United States
- **State:** California

### Violation Information

**Record ID:** TEST.ZF252.KUW1  
**Type of Violation:** Actual knowledge of an alcohol violation  
**Alcohol Use:** On Duty  
**Actual Knowledge Type:** Information provided by previous employer

**Test Results Entered By**
- Presidential Employer (11/19/2020 12:46:47 PM)
Reporting Violations in the Clearinghouse
### Reporting Violations – Employers and C/TPAs

What violations are the employer or designated C/TPA required to report?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFORMATION TO BE REPORTED TO CLEARINGHOUSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An alcohol confirmation test with a concentration of 0.04% or higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusal to test (alcohol) as specified in [49 CFR 40.261](<a href="https://www.codigest.com/49">https://www.codigest.com/49</a> CFR 40.261)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusal to test (drug) not requiring a determination by the MRO as specified in [49 CFR 40.191](<a href="https://www.codigest.com/49">https://www.codigest.com/49</a> CFR 40.191)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual knowledge, as defined in [49 CFR 382.107](<a href="https://www.codigest.com/49">https://www.codigest.com/49</a> CFR 382.107), that a driver has used alcohol on duty, used alcohol within four hours of coming on duty, used alcohol prior to post-accident testing, or has used a controlled substance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative RTD test results (drug and alcohol testing, as applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion of follow-up testing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Actual Knowledge: What It Is, What It Isn’t

- Actual knowledge must be based on one of the following:
  - Employer’s direct observation of an employee
  - Information provided by the driver’s previous employer(s)
  - A traffic citation for driving a CMV while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances
  - An employee’s admission of alcohol or controlled substance use, except as provided in §383.21

- A verified positive drug test result does not qualify as actual knowledge

- When reporting actual knowledge, employers must upload supporting documentation. This may include:
  - Notification to report for testing (date, time, location)
  - Any emails between the employer and the driver
  - Documents of termination or resignation
Reporting Violations – MROs and SAPs

What information is the MRO or SAP required to report?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFORMATION TO BE REPORTED TO CLEARINGHOUSE</th>
<th>DEADLINE FOR REPORTING INFORMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MRO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verified positive, adulterated, or substituted drug test result</td>
<td>Within <strong>two</strong> business days of making a determination or verification of a DOT-approved drug test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusal to test (drug) requiring a determination by the MRO as specified in <strong>49 CFR 40.191</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes a verified drug test per <strong>49 CFR Part 40</strong></td>
<td>Within <strong>one</strong> business day of making any change in the reported results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of driver and date the initial assessment was initiated</td>
<td>By the close of the business day following the date of initial assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of determination of eligibility for RTD testing</td>
<td>By the close of the business day following the determination that the driver completed the RTD process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to Report a Violation – Employers and Designated C/TPAs

**Driver Information**
- Driver's name, date of birth, and CDL number and state/country of issuance
  - **IMPORTANT:** Driver social security number (SSN) cannot be entered in the Clearinghouse
  - Spaces and hyphens should be removed from the CDL number before entering
- Information will be verified against FMCSA systems
  - You will have two attempts to enter the driver’s information correctly
  - If the information cannot be validated, it will be flagged for review by FMCSA (data will still be accepted)
Violation Information

- Employers (or their designated C/TPA) will add alcohol and drug violations
How to Report a Violation – Employers and Designated C/TPAs

- **Review and Submit**
  - Employers (or their designated C/TPA) will review the information for accuracy and submit the violation.

If after you submit a violation you realize you made an error, you can send a request to FMCSA to have the violation removed.
Frequently Asked Questions

- Will I report violations that occurred prior to January 6, 2020 to the Clearinghouse?
  — No, only violations that occur on January 6, 2020 or later.

- How long is the violation information retained in the Clearinghouse?
  — 5 years or until the follow-up testing plan is successfully completed, whichever is later.

- Can an MRO or employer report a drug and alcohol program violation if the driver is not registered for the Clearinghouse?
  — Yes. The Clearinghouse will associate the violation with a driver’s CDL information. This will be recorded even if the driver has not registered for the Clearinghouse.
Frequently Asked Questions

▪ What information may be challenged by the driver?
  ─ The accuracy of the information reported
  ─ Report of employer’s actual knowledge the driver received a traffic citation for driving a CMV while under the influence of drugs or alcohol if it did not result in a conviction
  ─ **Accuracy of test results and refusals may not be challenged**

▪ How does a driver change or remove inaccurate data?
  ─ The driver may submit a petition via FMCSA’s DataQs system
  ─ FMCSA will review petition and notify driver of decision to remove, retain, or correct information in the Clearinghouse and the reason for decision
  ─ If the driver believes a petition decision was made in error, he/she may submit a request for an Administrative Review
    • Request must include an explanation why he/she believes FMCSA made an error in their decision
    • Driver informed of decision
    • Decision will constitute as the final Agency action
Frequently Asked Questions

- The return-to-duty (RTD) process has not changed
  - Driver must designate a DOT-qualified SAP after a positive or refusal
  - Date the driver’s initial SAP assessment is completed
    • Note: Employer must provide the driver with a list of potential SAPs
  - Designated SAP will enter information about the driver’s treatment into the Clearinghouse
  - Driver will need to take a negative RTD test, test results are recorded in the Clearinghouse by the employer or designated C/TPA

- Will a driver’s follow-up testing plan be available in the Clearinghouse?
  - No, follow-up testing plans will not be included in a driver’s Clearinghouse record.
  - When a prospective employee has not completed a follow-up testing plan prescribed by the SAP, the subsequent new employer must obtain the follow-up testing plan from the previous employer, as required in § 382.413, and report the date the follow-up testing plan was completed.
Common Issues
Common Issues – Registration

- Incorrect Role
  - Employer registered as a C/TPA
    - Cannot designate a C/TPA
    - Cannot purchase a query plan
  - Employer registered as an Assistant, not as an Admin
    - Cannot designate a C/TPA
    - Cannot invite Assistants
  - Employer registered as a Driver
Common Issues

- **Add or update CDL**
  - Click the “Edit Profile” or “My Profile” from the dashboard
  - Click the link “Add Your CDL #” in the upper right-hand corner
  - Enter information without any spaces or dashes
Common Issues

- **Multiple roles**
  - Current Role drop down box to switch between roles

- **Add or Update C/TPA**
  - Employer role must be set to DACH Motor Carrier Admin in Portal
Common Issues – login.gov

- Change email address and authentication method
  - Log in to https://secure.login.gov/.
  - Scroll to add or edit “Two-Factor Authentication.”
  - Click on “Add email”. Then, click on “Delete” next to the email address you are replacing.
Common Issues – Violations

- **Driver cannot view query or violation information**
  - Verify MRO or Employer reported the violation
  - Verify correct CDL information was entered for the Driver
  - Verify registration included your CDL information

- **Driver cannot designate a SAP**
  - Ensure violation was reported
  - Verify correct CDL information was entered for the Driver
  - Ensure the SAP is registered
  - Ensure the Driver is entering the SAP’s name correctly
Q&A
Next Steps

Register
For information to get started, visit
https://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov/Register

For more information:
› Visit the Clearinghouse Learning Center at https://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov/Learn for resources and answers to common questions

Contact us:
› Email clearinghouse@dot.gov
› Call 844-955-0207