

If your employees are designated as "safety-sensitive" for the Department of Transportation (DOT) - meaning their job can impact both their own safety and the safety of the public - they are required to have a regular physical to be compliant and keep working. A DOT physical follows strict guidelines mandated by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), ensuring that commercial drivers and other safety-sensitive employees are in good health to work safely.

With these strict guidelines, DOT physicals can sometimes seem overwhelming. To help simplify the process, here is a brief overview* of what your employees should bring to the exam, and what to expect once they get there.

What to Bring to a DOT Physical

Commercial drivers need to bring a complete list of their medications, including the dosage regimen, dosages, and their doctors' names and addresses. To save time, it's also recommended that drivers fill out the health history questionnaire before coming to the clinic.

To make sure the exam runs as smoothly as possible, drivers with certain medical issues need to bring the appropriate documents or items. For example:

- Drivers with vision or hearing problems must bring their eyeglasses, contacts, or hearing aids
- Drivers with diabetes must bring the most recent lab results from their Hemoglobin A1C (HgA1C) and their blood sugar logs
- Drivers with heart-related issues must, at minimum, bring a letter from their cardiologist that outlines their medical history and current medications, and indicates that they are safe to work

Find more examples [here](#).

What the DOT Physical Covers

1. Vision

Drivers are required to have at least 20/40 acuity in each eye with or without correction. They are also required to have at least 70° peripheral in the horizontal meridian, measured in each eye.

2. Hearing

Drivers must be able to perceive what is known as a "forced whisper" at a distance of 5ft or less, with or without a hearing aid. This standard equates to an average hearing loss in the better ear of less than 40 dB.

3. Blood pressure/pulse rate

The medical examiner will check the driver's blood pressure and pulse to look for high blood pressure and irregular heartbeats.

4. Urinalysis

A urinalysis is required. The test looks for indications of underlying medical conditions such as diabetes.

5. Physical Examination

The physical exam will cover a dozen different categories:

- General appearance
- Eyes (cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration, etc.)
- Ears (scarring of tympanic membrane, perforated ear drums, etc.)
- Mouth and throat (to look for problems breathing or swallowing)
- Heart (murmurs, extra sounds, pacemaker, etc.)
- Lungs and chest, not including breast examination (abnormal breathing, impaired respiratory functions, cyanosis, etc.)
- Abdomen and Viscera (enlarged liver, viscera, muscle weakness)
- Vascular (abnormal pulse, carotid, varicose veins)
- Genito-urinary (hernias)
- Extremities (limb impaired)
- Spine, other musculoskeletal (previous surgery, limitation of motion, tenderness, etc.)
- Neurological (impaired equilibrium, coordination or speech pattern, ataxia, asymmetric deep tendon reflexes)

A DOT physical can only be completed by a medical examiner certified by the FMCSA. It is up to the Medical Examiner to determine if a candidate meets all the requirements, and to mark the report to the best of their knowledge.

DOT Physical Forms

There are [several forms](#) associated with DOT physicals. These forms are available online, so that drivers and employers can review them before a visit. They include:

Medical Examination Report (MER) Form, MCSA-5875

The MER contains the driver's information and health history, as well as the findings of the medical examiner during the DOT exam. At Concentra®, the MER is completed online at the center and does not need to be printed and completed beforehand.

Medical Examiner's Certificate (MEC), Form MCSA-5876

Certified drivers will receive this certificate after passing a DOT exam.

Insulin-treated Diabetes Mellitus Assessment, MCSA-5870

Commercial drivers with insulin-treated diabetes must have this form completed by their treating clinicians no more than 45 days prior to examination by a certified medical examiner (CME). A Medical Examiner's Certificate can't be issued to the driver without this form.

For additional information, please visit www.fmcsa.dot.gov.

As a leading medical provider within the DOT industry, Concentra maintains a current, comprehensive knowledge of DOT regulations. We require all our physicians to be FMCSA-certified so our centers will always have someone to complete DOT physicals.