



Logistical Forwarding Solutions

## **Know about the Hours Your Driver Can Drive!**

Commercial truck drivers involved in interstate commerce must adhere to federal Hours of Service (HOS) regulations that set the maximum amount of time a driver can work and the minimum amount of time a driver must rest before working again.

### **How many hours can a truck driver drive?**

In summary, a truck driver can drive 11 hours before needing to take a 10-hour break, while also complying with time logging requirements and following several other Hours of Service rules. All are described below, including some potential rule changes.

#### **Driving Rules Per HOS Compliance**

1. Off duty (Line 1) – not working, not required to be ready to work and no responsibility to perform work — free to pursue own interests (e.g. meal stops, time at home, relaxing at a truck stop)
2. Sleeper berth (Line 2) – all time spent resting in the sleeper berth
3. Driving (Line 3) – all time spent at the controls of a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) in operation (e.g. actually driving, sitting in traffic waiting to move)
4. On duty not driving (Line 4) – time you begin to work or must be ready to work, until the time you are relieved from work (e.g. physically loading/unloading, inspections, training, fueling — basically all non-driving work directed by the company) Know the Hours of Service rules (and exceptions) Hours of Service regulations are found in Part 395 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations

(<https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/title49/part/395>), which are developed and enforced by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), which is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

These DOT regulations describe both how long a truck driver can drive and how long he or she can participate in non-driving work. The HOS rules and exceptions are summarized below.

#### **11-hour rule**

This is the rule summarized above that a driver cannot drive more than 11 hours following 10 consecutive hours off duty (10-hour break).

### **14-hour rule**

Once you start your day after at least 10 hours off duty (10-hour break), you may not drive after reaching the 14th consecutive hour working.

### **30-minute break rule**

A driver cannot drive after the eighth hour of their shift without taking an off-duty break of at least 30 minutes before driving again.

### **70-hour rule**

A driver cannot drive after having been on duty 70 hours in any eight consecutive days. A driver can (but does not have to) reset the 70-hour clock by taking a 34-hour rest period, often called a 34-hour reset.

### **10 Hour Break**

A 10-hour break is defined as 10 consecutive hours in an off-duty status. This can be 10 consecutive hours in the sleeper berth, 10 consecutive hours on Line 1 (see duty statuses above), or a combination of both Lines 1 and 2 for 10 consecutive hours ... or in some cases, one notable exception:

### **8 and 2 split or split sleeper rule**

An 8-2 split allows drivers to sometimes split a 10-hour break into two segments — eight hours and two hours at separate times. After each partial rest break, drivers must count the driving time from before that rest against the current clock, so the split sleeper time can get confusing and interfere with healthy sleep patterns. In fact, many carriers, including Schneider, do not allow split sleeper berth breaks.

Other exceptions to the Hours of Service rules Hours of Service regulations do allow some exceptions, though it's up to each driver to understand their appropriate application.

Personal conveyance – using a truck for personal transportation (full FMCSA guidance (<https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/hoursservice/personal-conveyance>)).

Yard moves – driving done in a limited-access lot or yard can be performed in on-duty status vs. driving. Short-haul exemption –

CDL drivers that consistently operate within a 100 air-mile radius and begin and return to their terminal within 12 hours may be exempt from keeping logs, and report daily hours instead. Adverse driving conditions – drivers may extend maximum driving limit by up to two hours when certain conditions are met, including when such weather conditions could not have been known before the driver started driving.

Direct emergency assistance – drivers may complete their run under certain emergency conditions, such as a federal or state emergency declaration.

Read the full Hours of Service regulations (<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=1&ty=HTML&h=L&mc=true&=PART&n=pt49.5.395>) and understand any company-specific rules to stay compliant.

### **\*\*Common questions about how long truckers can drive\*\***

#### **How many hours can a Team driver drive?**

The rules are the same for Team and Solo drivers, so it's up to each Team to maximize driving time for each driver within the rules to keep the truck moving.

#### **How many miles can a truck driver legally drive in a day?**

Regulations do not restrict the number of miles a truck driver can drive — only the time. A driver can strive to maximize miles (<https://schneiderjobs.com/blog/driver/how-to-maximize-miles-tips>) within the time allowed, provided all other traffic laws are followed and nothing is compromising safety (e.g. fatigue or illness).

#### **What happens if a driver violates the Hours of Service rules?**

Drivers may be placed out of service and fined for a regulation violation (e.g. 14-hour rule violation), falsification of logs or failing to record a duty status; a driver and carrier Compliance, Safety and Accountability (CSA) score may be impacted and civil penalties are possible, depending on the severity.

## **Isn't the FMCSA proposing Hours of Service rule changes in 2019?**

On Aug. 23, 2019, the FMCSA published a notice of proposed rulemaking on changes to HOS regulations, including five key provisions:

- Adding flexibility to the 30-minute break
- Modifying the sleeper berth exception
- Introducing a way to pause the 14-hour clock
- Modifying the adverse driving conditions provision
- Proposing a change to the short-haul exception

Learn more about the proposed HOS changes and the public comment period

<https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/newsroom/federal-motor-carrier-safetyadministration-publishes-hours-service-proposal-improve-safety>