



Home	Bill Information	California Law	Publications	Other Resources	My Subscriptions	My Favorites
------	------------------	----------------	--------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------

SB-287 Vehicles: trailers. (2021-2022)

SHARE THIS:  

Date Published: 10/08/2021 02:00 PM

Senate Bill No. 287

CHAPTER 610

An act to amend, repeal, and add Sections 12804.9 and 12804.12 of the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

[Approved by Governor October 07, 2021. Filed with Secretary of State October 07, 2021.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 287, Grove. Vehicles: trailers.

Existing law requires the Department of Motor Vehicles to require an examination for issuance of a driver's license. The examination is required to be appropriate to the type of motor vehicle or combination of vehicles the applicant desires a license to drive or tow, in accordance with certain license classifications. A class C driver's license includes the operation of, among other vehicles, a 2-axle vehicle weighing 4,000 pounds or more unladen when towing either a trailer coach or a 5th-wheel travel trailer not exceeding 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating when the towing of the trailer is not for compensation. If the towed 5th-wheel trailer exceeds 10,000 pounds, but is less than 15,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating, and towing is not for compensation, existing law requires the holder of a class C driver's license to also pass a specialized written examination. Existing law authorizes the department to issue a restricted class A driver's license for the operation of a two-axle vehicle weighing 4,000 pounds or more unladen when towing either a trailer coach exceeding 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating or a 5th-wheel travel trailer exceeding 15,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating, when the towing of the trailer is not for compensation.

This bill, instead, would permit a class C driver's licenseholder to operate a vehicle when towing a trailer between 10,000 and 15,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight, if the towing is not for compensation or commercial purposes, the trailer is used exclusively for recreational purposes and for the transportation of property or human habitation, a specified coupling is used, and the person has passed a specialized written examination. The bill would also include within a class C driver's license the operation of a vehicle when towing a 5th-wheel travel trailer between 10,000 and 15,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight when the towing is not for compensation and the licenseholder passes a specialized written examination. The bill would authorize the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue a restricted class A driver's license for a vehicle towing a trailer of a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight exceeding 10,000 pounds, if specified circumstances are met, including that the trailer is used exclusively for recreation and the towing is not for compensation or commercial purposes. The bill would make these provisions operative on January 1, 2027.

This bill would incorporate additional changes to Section 12804.9 of the Vehicle Code proposed by AB 723 to be operative only if this bill and AB 723 are enacted, as specified.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 12804.9 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

12804.9. (a) (1) The examination shall include all of the following:

(A) A test of the applicant's knowledge and understanding of the provisions of this code governing the operation of vehicles upon the highways.

(B) A test of the applicant's ability to read and understand simple English used in highway traffic and directional signs.

(C) A test of the applicant's understanding of traffic signs and signals, including the bikeway signs, markers, and traffic control devices established by the Department of Transportation.

(D) An actual demonstration of the applicant's ability to exercise ordinary and reasonable control in operating a motor vehicle by driving it under the supervision of an examining officer. The applicant shall submit to an examination appropriate to the type of motor vehicle or combination of vehicles the applicant desires a license to drive, except that the department may waive the driving test part of the examination for any applicant who submits a license issued by another state, territory, or possession of the United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico if the department verifies through any acknowledged national driver record data source that there are no stops, holds, or other impediments to its issuance. The examining officer may request to see evidence of financial responsibility for the vehicle before supervising the demonstration of the applicant's ability to operate the vehicle. The examining officer may refuse to examine an applicant who is unable to provide proof of financial responsibility for the vehicle, unless proof of financial responsibility is not required by this code.

(E) A test of the hearing and eyesight of the applicant, and of other matters that may be necessary to determine the mental and physical fitness of the applicant to operate a motor vehicle upon the highways, and whether any grounds exist for refusal of a license under this code.

(2) (A) Before a class A or class B driver's license, or class C driver's license with a commercial endorsement, may be issued or renewed, the applicant shall have in the applicant's driver record a valid report of a medical examination of the applicant given not more than two years before the date of the application by a health care professional. As used in this paragraph, "health care professional" means a person who is licensed, certified, or registered in accordance with applicable state laws and regulations to practice medicine and perform physical examinations in the United States. Health care professionals are doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathy, physician assistants, and registered advanced practice nurses, or doctors of chiropractic who are clinically competent to perform the medical examination presently required of motor carrier drivers by the United States Department of Transportation. The report shall be on a form approved by the department. In establishing the requirements, consideration may be given to the standards presently required of motor carrier drivers by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

(B) The department may accept a federal waiver of one or more physical qualification standards if the waiver is accompanied by a report of a nonqualifying medical examination for a class A or class B driver's license, or class C driver's license with a commercial endorsement, pursuant to Section 391.41(a)(3)(ii) of Subpart E of Part 391 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) A physical defect of the applicant that, in the opinion of the department, is compensated for to ensure safe driving ability, shall not prevent the issuance of a license to the applicant.

(b) In accordance with the following classifications, an applicant for a driver's license shall be required to submit to an examination appropriate to the type of motor vehicle or combination of vehicles the applicant desires a license to drive:

(1) Class A includes the following:

(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (H) of paragraph (3), a combination of vehicles, if a vehicle being towed has a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 10,000 pounds.

(B) A vehicle towing more than one vehicle.

(C) A trailer bus.

(D) The operation of all vehicles under class B and class C.

(2) Class B includes the following:

(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (H) of paragraph (3), a single vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 26,000 pounds.

- (B) A single vehicle with three or more axles, except any three-axle vehicle weighing less than 6,000 pounds.
- (C) A bus with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 26,000 pounds, except a trailer bus.
- (D) A farm labor vehicle.
- (E) A single vehicle with three or more axles or a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 26,000 pounds towing another vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or less.
- (F) A house car over 40 feet in length, excluding safety devices and safety bumpers.
- (G) The operation of all vehicles covered under class C.

(3) Class C includes the following:

- (A) A two-axle vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 26,000 pounds or less, including when the vehicle is towing a trailer or semitrailer with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or less.
- (B) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), a two-axle vehicle weighing 4,000 pounds or more unladen when towing a trailer coach not exceeding 9,000 pounds gross.
- (C) A house car of 40 feet in length or less.
- (D) A three-axle vehicle weighing 6,000 pounds gross or less.
- (E) A house car of 40 feet in length or less or a vehicle towing another vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less, including when a tow dolly is used. A person driving a vehicle may not tow another vehicle in violation of Section 21715.
- (F) (i) A two-axle vehicle weighing 4,000 pounds or more unladen when towing either a trailer coach or a fifth-wheel travel trailer not exceeding 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating, when the towing of the trailer is not for compensation.
 - (ii) A two-axle vehicle weighing 4,000 pounds or more unladen when towing a fifth-wheel travel trailer exceeding 10,000 pounds, but not exceeding 15,000 pounds, gross vehicle weight rating, when the towing of the trailer is not for compensation, and if the person has passed a specialized written examination provided by the department relating to the knowledge of this code and other safety aspects governing the towing of recreational vehicles upon the highway.
 - (iii) The authority to operate combinations of vehicles under this subparagraph may be granted by endorsement on a class C license upon completion of that written examination.
- (G) A vehicle or combination of vehicles with a gross combination weight rating or a gross vehicle weight rating, as those terms are defined in subdivisions (j) and (k), respectively, of Section 15210, of 26,000 pounds or less, if all of the following conditions are met:
 - (i) Is operated by a farmer, an employee of a farmer, or an instructor credentialed in agriculture as part of an instructional program in agriculture at the high school, community college, or university level.
 - (ii) Is used exclusively in the conduct of agricultural operations.
 - (iii) Is not used in the capacity of a for-hire carrier or for compensation.
- (H) Firefighting equipment, provided that the equipment is operated by a person who holds a firefighter endorsement pursuant to Section 12804.11.
- (I) A motorized scooter.
- (J) A bus with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 26,000 pounds or less, except a trailer bus.
- (K) Class C does not include a two-wheel motorcycle or a two-wheel motor-driven cycle.

(4) Class M1. A two-wheel motorcycle or a motor-driven cycle. Authority to operate a vehicle included in a class M1 license may be granted by endorsement on a class A, B, or C license upon completion of an appropriate examination.

(5) (A) Class M2 includes a motorized bicycle or moped, or a bicycle with an attached motor, except an electric bicycle as described in subdivision (a) of Section 312.5.

(B) Authority to operate vehicles included in class M2 may be granted by endorsement on a class A, B, or C license upon completion of an appropriate examination. Persons holding a class M1 license or endorsement may operate vehicles included in class M2 without further examination.

(c) A driver's license or driver certificate is not valid for operating a commercial motor vehicle, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 15210, any other motor vehicle defined in paragraph (1) or (2) of subdivision (b), or any other vehicle requiring a driver to hold any driver certificate or any driver's license endorsement under Section 15275, unless a medical certificate approved by the department that has been issued within two years of the date of the operation of that vehicle and a copy of the medical examination report from which the certificate was issued is on file with the department. Otherwise, the license is valid only for operating class C vehicles that are not commercial vehicles, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 15210, and for operating class M1 or M2 vehicles, if so endorsed, that are not commercial vehicles, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 15210.

(d) A license or driver certificate issued before the enactment of Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 15200) is valid to operate the class or type of vehicles specified under the law in existence before that enactment until the license or certificate expires or is otherwise suspended, revoked, or canceled. Upon application for renewal or replacement of a driver's license, endorsement, or certificate required to operate a commercial motor vehicle, a valid medical certificate on a form approved by the department shall be submitted to the department.

(e) The department may accept a certificate of driving skill that is issued by an employer, authorized by the department to issue a certificate under Section 15250, of the applicant, in lieu of a driving test, on class A or B applications, if the applicant has first qualified for a class C license and has met the other examination requirements for the license for which the applicant is applying. The certificate may be submitted as evidence of the applicant's skill in the operation of the types of equipment covered by the license for which the applicant is applying.

(f) The department may accept a certificate of competence in lieu of a driving test on class M1 or M2 applications, when the certificate is issued by a law enforcement agency for its officers who operate class M1 or M2 vehicles in their duties, if the applicant has met the other examination requirements for the license for which the applicant is applying.

(g) The department may accept a certificate of satisfactory completion of a motorcyclist training program approved by the commissioner pursuant to Section 2932 in lieu of a driving test on class M1 or M2 applications, if the applicant has met the other examination requirements for the license for which the applicant is applying. The department shall review and approve the written and driving test used by a program to determine whether the program may issue a certificate of completion.

(h) Notwithstanding subdivision (b), a person holding a valid California driver's license of any class may operate a short-term rental motorized bicycle without taking any special examination for the operation of a motorized bicycle, and without having a class M2 endorsement on that license. As used in this subdivision, "short-term" means 48 hours or less.

(i) A person under 21 years of age shall not be issued a class M1 or M2 license or endorsement unless the person provides evidence satisfactory to the department of completion of a novice motorcycle safety training program that is operated pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section 2930) of Chapter 5 of Division 2.

(j) A driver of a vanpool vehicle may operate with a class C license but shall possess evidence of a medical examination required for a class B license when operating vanpool vehicles. In order to be eligible to drive the vanpool vehicle, the driver shall keep in the vanpool vehicle a statement, signed under penalty of perjury, that the driver has not been convicted of reckless driving, drunk driving, or a hit-and-run offense in the last five years.

(k) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2027, and as of that date is repealed.

SEC. 1.5. Section 12804.9 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

12804.9. (a) (1) The examination shall include all of the following:

(A) A test of the applicant's knowledge and understanding of the provisions of this code governing the operation of vehicles upon the highways.

(B) A test of the applicant's ability to read and understand simple English used in highway traffic and directional signs.

(C) A test of the applicant's understanding of traffic signs and signals, including the bikeway signs, markers, and traffic control devices established by the Department of Transportation.

(D) An actual demonstration of the applicant's ability to exercise ordinary and reasonable control in operating a motor vehicle by driving it under the supervision of an examining officer. The applicant shall submit to an examination appropriate to the type of motor vehicle or combination of vehicles the applicant desires a license to drive, except that the department may waive the driving test part of the examination for any applicant who submits a license issued by another state, territory,

or possession of the United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico if the department verifies through any acknowledged national driver record data source that there are no stops, holds, or other impediments to its issuance. The examining officer may request to see evidence of financial responsibility for the vehicle before supervising the demonstration of the applicant's ability to operate the vehicle. The examining officer may refuse to examine an applicant who is unable to provide proof of financial responsibility for the vehicle, unless proof of financial responsibility is not required by this code.

(E) A test of the hearing and eyesight of the applicant, and of other matters that may be necessary to determine the mental and physical fitness of the applicant to operate a motor vehicle upon the highways, and whether any grounds exist for refusal of a license under this code.

(2) (A) Before a class A or class B driver's license, or class C driver's license with a commercial endorsement, may be issued or renewed, the applicant shall have in the applicant's driver record a valid report of a medical examination of the applicant given not more than two years before the date of the application by a health care professional. As used in this paragraph, "health care professional" means a person who is licensed, certified, or registered in accordance with applicable state laws and regulations to practice medicine and perform physical examinations in the United States. Health care professionals are doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathy, physician assistants, and registered advanced practice nurses, or doctors of chiropractic who are clinically competent to perform the medical examination presently required of motor carrier drivers by the United States Department of Transportation. The report shall be on a form approved by the department. In establishing the requirements, consideration may be given to the standards presently required of motor carrier drivers by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

(B) The department may accept a federal waiver of one or more physical qualification standards if the waiver is accompanied by a report of a nonqualifying medical examination for a class A or class B driver's license, or class C driver's license with a commercial endorsement, pursuant to Section 391.41(a)(3)(ii) of Subpart E of Part 391 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) A physical defect of the applicant that, in the opinion of the department, is compensated for to ensure safe driving ability, shall not prevent the issuance of a license to the applicant.

(b) In accordance with the following classifications, an applicant for a driver's license shall be required to submit to an examination appropriate to the type of motor vehicle or combination of vehicles the applicant desires a license to drive:

(1) Class A includes the following:

(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (H) of paragraph (3), a combination of vehicles, if a vehicle being towed has a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 10,000 pounds.

(B) A vehicle towing more than one vehicle.

(C) A trailer bus.

(D) The operation of all vehicles under class B and class C.

(2) Class B includes the following:

(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (H) of paragraph (3), a single vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 26,000 pounds.

(B) A single vehicle with three or more axles, except any three-axle vehicle weighing less than 6,000 pounds.

(C) A bus with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 26,000 pounds, except a trailer bus.

(D) A farm labor vehicle.

(E) A single vehicle with three or more axles or a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 26,000 pounds towing another vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or less.

(F) A house car over 40 feet in length, excluding safety devices and safety bumpers.

(G) The operation of all vehicles covered under class C.

(3) Class C includes the following:

(A) A two-axle vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 26,000 pounds or less, including when the vehicle is towing a trailer or semitrailer with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or

less.

(B) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), a two-axle vehicle weighing 4,000 pounds or more unladen when towing a trailer coach not exceeding 9,000 pounds gross.

(C) A house car of 40 feet in length or less.

(D) A three-axle vehicle weighing 6,000 pounds gross or less.

(E) A house car of 40 feet in length or less or a vehicle towing another vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less, including when a tow dolly is used. A person driving a vehicle may not tow another vehicle in violation of Section 21715.

(F) (i) A two-axle vehicle weighing 4,000 pounds or more unladen when towing either a trailer coach or a fifth-wheel travel trailer not exceeding 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating, when the towing of the trailer is not for compensation.

(ii) A two-axle vehicle weighing 4,000 pounds or more unladen when towing a fifth-wheel travel trailer exceeding 10,000 pounds, but not exceeding 15,000 pounds, gross vehicle weight rating, when the towing of the trailer is not for compensation, and if the person has passed a specialized written examination provided by the department relating to the knowledge of this code and other safety aspects governing the towing of recreational vehicles upon the highway.

(iii) The authority to operate combinations of vehicles under this subparagraph may be granted by endorsement on a class C license upon completion of that written examination.

(G) A vehicle or combination of vehicles with a gross combination weight rating or a gross vehicle weight rating, as those terms are defined in subdivisions (j) and (k), respectively, of Section 15210, of 26,000 pounds or less, if all of the following conditions are met:

(i) Is operated by a farmer, an employee of a farmer, or an instructor credentialed in agriculture as part of an instructional program in agriculture at the high school, community college, or university level.

(ii) Is used exclusively in the conduct of agricultural operations.

(iii) Is not used in the capacity of a for-hire carrier or for compensation.

(H) Firefighting equipment, provided that the equipment is operated by a person who holds a firefighter endorsement pursuant to Section 12804.11.

(I) A motorized scooter.

(J) A bus with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 26,000 pounds or less, except a trailer bus.

(K) Class C does not include a two-wheel motorcycle or a two-wheel motor-driven cycle.

(4) Class M1. A two-wheel motorcycle or a motor-driven cycle. Authority to operate a vehicle included in a class M1 license may be granted by endorsement on a class A, B, or C license upon completion of an appropriate examination.

(5) (A) Class M2 includes a motorized bicycle or moped, or a bicycle with an attached motor, except an electric bicycle as described in subdivision (a) of Section 312.5.

(B) Authority to operate vehicles included in class M2 may be granted by endorsement on a class A, B, or C license upon completion of an appropriate examination. Persons holding a class M1 license or endorsement may operate vehicles included in class M2 without further examination.

(c) A driver's license or driver certificate is not valid for operating a commercial motor vehicle, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 15210, any other motor vehicle defined in paragraph (1) or (2) of subdivision (b), or any other vehicle requiring a driver to hold any driver certificate or any driver's license endorsement under Section 15275, unless a medical certificate approved by the department that has been issued within two years of the date of the operation of that vehicle and a copy of the medical examination report from which the certificate was issued is on file with the department. Otherwise, the license is valid only for operating class C vehicles that are not commercial vehicles, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 15210, and for operating class M1 or M2 vehicles, if so endorsed, that are not commercial vehicles, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 15210.

(d) A license or driver certificate issued before the enactment of Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 15200) is valid to operate the class or type of vehicles specified under the law in existence before that enactment until the license or certificate expires or is otherwise suspended, revoked, or canceled. Upon application for renewal or replacement of a driver's license, endorsement, or

certificate required to operate a commercial motor vehicle, a valid medical certificate on a form approved by the department shall be submitted to the department.

(e) The department may accept a certificate of driving skill that is issued by an employer, authorized by the department to issue a certificate under Section 15250, of the applicant, in lieu of a driving test, on class A or B applications, if the applicant has first qualified for a class C license and has met the other examination requirements for the license for which the applicant is applying. The certificate may be submitted as evidence of the applicant's skill in the operation of the types of equipment covered by the license for which the applicant is applying.

(f) The department may accept a certificate of competence in lieu of a driving test on class M1 or M2 applications, when the certificate is issued by a law enforcement agency for its officers who operate class M1 or M2 vehicles in their duties, if the applicant has met the other examination requirements for the license for which the applicant is applying.

(g) The department may accept a certificate of satisfactory completion of a motorcyclist training program approved by the commissioner pursuant to Section 2932 in lieu of a driving test on class M1 or M2 applications, if the applicant has met the other examination requirements for the license for which the applicant is applying. The department shall review and approve the written and driving test used by a program to determine whether the program may issue a certificate of completion.

(h) Notwithstanding subdivision (b), a person holding a valid California driver's license of any class may operate a short-term rental motorized bicycle without taking any special examination for the operation of a motorized bicycle, and without having a class M2 endorsement on that license. As used in this subdivision, "short-term" means 48 hours or less.

(i) A person under 21 years of age shall not be issued a class M1 or M2 license or endorsement unless the person provides evidence satisfactory to the department of completion of a novice motorcycle safety training program that is operated pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section 2930) of Chapter 5 of Division 2.

(j) A driver of a vanpool vehicle may operate with a class C license but shall possess evidence of a medical examination required for a class B license when operating vanpool vehicles. In order to be eligible to drive the vanpool vehicle, the driver shall keep in the vanpool vehicle a statement, signed under penalty of perjury, that the driver has not been convicted of reckless driving, drunk driving, or a hit-and-run offense in the last five years.

(k) (1) Commencing on July 1, 2025, for purposes of the issuance of a noncommercial class C driver's license, notwithstanding subparagraph (D) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (a), and to the extent not prohibited by federal law or treaty, the department may waive the driving test part of the examination for an applicant who submits a driver's license issued by a foreign nation under all of the following conditions:

(A) The department has determined the driving examination required by the foreign nation is substantially similar to the driving examination required by the department.

(B) The foreign nation, in a memorandum of understanding, extends the same reciprocal privilege relating to the issuance of a driver's license to a person who holds a valid California driver's license.

(C) The department verifies through the applicant's abstract of driving record provided pursuant to subparagraph (D) that there are no stops, holds, or other impediments to the issuance of a driver's license.

(D) The applicant has submitted a copy of the applicant's foreign driver's license and an abstract of the applicant's foreign driving record covering no less than the previous five years, issued by the appropriate government entity from the foreign nation and, if applicable, the English translation of the driver's license and abstract of driving record. These documents shall all be notarized by a consulate general of the issuing foreign nation in this state.

(E) The applicant is 18 years of age or older.

(F) The applicant has submitted satisfactory proof of California residency.

(G) The driver's license issued by the foreign nation has been surrendered to the department or has been destroyed.

(2) For purposes of this subdivision, an applicant may submit a driver's license issued by a foreign nation that is equivalent to a noncommercial or a commercial class A, class B, or class C California driver's license, but the California driver's license issued by the department to the applicant shall be a noncommercial class C driver's license only.

(3) For purposes of this subdivision, "foreign nation" means any jurisdiction other than a state, territory, or possession of the United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

(l) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2027, and as of that date is repealed.

SEC. 2. Section 12804.9 is added to the Vehicle Code, to read:

12804.9. (a) (1) The examination shall include all of the following:

(A) A test of the applicant's knowledge and understanding of the provisions of this code governing the operation of vehicles upon the highways.

(B) A test of the applicant's ability to read and understand simple English used in highway traffic and directional signs.

(C) A test of the applicant's understanding of traffic signs and signals, including the bikeway signs, markers, and traffic control devices established by the Department of Transportation.

(D) An actual demonstration of the applicant's ability to exercise ordinary and reasonable control in operating a motor vehicle by driving it under the supervision of an examining officer. The applicant shall submit to an examination appropriate to the type of motor vehicle or combination of vehicles the applicant desires a license to drive, except that the department may waive the driving test part of the examination for any applicant who submits a license issued by another state, territory, or possession of the United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico if the department verifies through any acknowledged national driver record data source that there are no stops, holds, or other impediments to its issuance. The examining officer may request to see evidence of financial responsibility for the vehicle before supervising the demonstration of the applicant's ability to operate the vehicle. The examining officer may refuse to examine an applicant who is unable to provide proof of financial responsibility for the vehicle, unless proof of financial responsibility is not required by this code.

(E) A test of the hearing and eyesight of the applicant, and of other matters that may be necessary to determine the mental and physical fitness of the applicant to operate a motor vehicle upon the highways, and whether any grounds exist for refusal of a license under this code.

(2) (A) Before a class A or class B driver's license, or class C driver's license with a commercial endorsement, may be issued or renewed, the applicant shall have in the applicant's driver record a valid report of a medical examination of the applicant given not more than two years before the date of the application by a health care professional. As used in this paragraph, "health care professional" means a person who is licensed, certified, or registered in accordance with applicable state laws and regulations to practice medicine and perform physical examinations in the United States. Health care professionals are doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathy, physician assistants, and registered advanced practice nurses, or doctors of chiropractic who are clinically competent to perform the medical examination presently required of motor carrier drivers by the United States Department of Transportation. The report shall be on a form approved by the department. In establishing the requirements, consideration may be given to the standards presently required of motor carrier drivers by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

(B) The department may accept a federal waiver of one or more physical qualification standards if the waiver is accompanied by a report of a nonqualifying medical examination for a class A or class B driver's license, or class C driver's license with a commercial endorsement, pursuant to Section 391.41(a)(3)(ii) of Subpart E of Part 391 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) A physical defect of the applicant that, in the opinion of the department, is compensated for to ensure safe driving ability, shall not prevent the issuance of a license to the applicant.

(b) In accordance with the following classifications, an applicant for a driver's license shall be required to submit to an examination appropriate to the type of motor vehicle or combination of vehicles the applicant desires a license to drive:

(1) Class A includes the following:

(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (H) of paragraph (3), a combination of vehicles, if a vehicle being towed has a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 10,000 pounds.

(B) A vehicle towing more than one vehicle.

(C) A trailer bus.

(D) The operation of all vehicles under class B and class C.

(2) Class B includes the following:

(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (H) of paragraph (3), a single vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 26,000 pounds.

(B) A single vehicle with three or more axles, except any three-axle vehicle weighing less than 6,000 pounds.

(C) A bus with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 26,000 pounds, except a trailer bus.

(D) A farm labor vehicle.

(E) A single vehicle with three or more axles or a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 26,000 pounds towing another vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or less.

(F) A house car over 40 feet in length, excluding safety devices and safety bumpers.

(G) The operation of all vehicles covered under class C.

(3) Class C includes the following:

(A) A two-axle vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 26,000 pounds or less, including when the vehicle is towing a trailer or semitrailer with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or less.

(B) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), a two-axle vehicle weighing 4,000 pounds or more unladen when towing a trailer coach not exceeding 9,000 pounds gross.

(C) A house car of 40 feet in length or less.

(D) A three-axle vehicle weighing 6,000 pounds gross or less.

(E) A house car of 40 feet in length or less or a vehicle towing another vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less, including when a tow dolly is used. A person driving a vehicle may not tow another vehicle in violation of Section 21715.

(F) (i) A two-axle vehicle when towing a trailer exceeding 10,000 pounds, but not exceeding 15,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight, if all of the following conditions are met:

(I) The towing of the trailer is not for compensation or commercial purposes.

(II) The trailer is coupled to the towing vehicle by a bed-mounted gooseneck hitch or a fifth-wheel and kingpin connection.

(III) The trailer is used exclusively for recreational purposes.

(IV) The trailer is used for the transportation of property or human habitation, or both.

(V) The person has passed a specialized written examination provided by the department relating to the knowledge of this code and other safety aspects governing the towing of recreational vehicles upon the highway.

(ii) A vehicle towing a fifth-wheel travel trailer exceeding 10,000 pounds, but not exceeding 15,000 pounds, gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight, when the towing of the trailer is not for compensation, and if the person has passed a specialized written examination provided by the department relating to the knowledge of this code and other safety aspects governing the towing of recreational vehicles upon the highway.

(iii) The authority to operate combinations of vehicles under this subparagraph may be granted by endorsement on a class C license upon completion of that written examination.

(G) A vehicle or combination of vehicles with a gross combination weight rating or a gross vehicle weight rating, as those terms are defined in subdivisions (j) and (k), respectively, of Section 15210, of 26,000 pounds or less, if all of the following conditions are met:

(i) Is operated by a farmer, an employee of a farmer, or an instructor credentialed in agriculture as part of an instructional program in agriculture at the high school, community college, or university level.

(ii) Is used exclusively in the conduct of agricultural operations.

(iii) Is not used in the capacity of a for-hire carrier or for compensation.

(H) Firefighting equipment, provided that the equipment is operated by a person who holds a firefighter endorsement pursuant to Section 12804.11.

(I) A motorized scooter.

(J) A bus with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 26,000 pounds or less, except a trailer bus.

(K) Class C does not include a two-wheel motorcycle or a two-wheel motor-driven cycle.

(4) Class M1. A two-wheel motorcycle or a motor-driven cycle. Authority to operate a vehicle included in a class M1 license may be granted by endorsement on a class A, B, or C license upon completion of an appropriate examination.

(5) (A) Class M2 includes a motorized bicycle or moped, or a bicycle with an attached motor, except an electric bicycle as described in subdivision (a) of Section 312.5.

(B) Authority to operate vehicles included in class M2 may be granted by endorsement on a class A, B, or C license upon completion of an appropriate examination. Persons holding a class M1 license or endorsement may operate vehicles included in class M2 without further examination.

(c) A driver's license or driver certificate is not valid for operating a commercial motor vehicle, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 15210, any other motor vehicle defined in paragraph (1) or (2) of subdivision (b), or any other vehicle requiring a driver to hold any driver certificate or any driver's license endorsement under Section 15275, unless a medical certificate approved by the department that has been issued within two years of the date of the operation of that vehicle and a copy of the medical examination report from which the certificate was issued is on file with the department. Otherwise, the license is valid only for operating class C vehicles that are not commercial vehicles, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 15210, and for operating class M1 or M2 vehicles, if so endorsed, that are not commercial vehicles, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 15210.

(d) A license or driver certificate issued before the enactment of Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 15200) is valid to operate the class or type of vehicles specified under the law in existence before that enactment until the license or certificate expires or is otherwise suspended, revoked, or canceled. Upon application for renewal or replacement of a driver's license, endorsement, or certificate required to operate a commercial motor vehicle, a valid medical certificate on a form approved by the department shall be submitted to the department.

(e) The department may accept a certificate of driving skill that is issued by an employer, authorized by the department to issue a certificate under Section 15250, of the applicant, in lieu of a driving test, on class A or B applications, if the applicant has first qualified for a class C license and has met the other examination requirements for the license for which the applicant is applying. The certificate may be submitted as evidence of the applicant's skill in the operation of the types of equipment covered by the license for which the applicant is applying.

(f) The department may accept a certificate of competence in lieu of a driving test on class M1 or M2 applications, when the certificate is issued by a law enforcement agency for its officers who operate class M1 or M2 vehicles in their duties, if the applicant has met the other examination requirements for the license for which the applicant is applying.

(g) The department may accept a certificate of satisfactory completion of a motorcyclist training program approved by the commissioner pursuant to Section 2932 in lieu of a driving test on class M1 or M2 applications, if the applicant has met the other examination requirements for the license for which the applicant is applying. The department shall review and approve the written and driving test used by a program to determine whether the program may issue a certificate of completion.

(h) Notwithstanding subdivision (b), a person holding a valid California driver's license of any class may operate a short-term rental motorized bicycle without taking any special examination for the operation of a motorized bicycle, and without having a class M2 endorsement on that license. As used in this subdivision, "short-term" means 48 hours or less.

(i) A person under 21 years of age shall not be issued a class M1 or M2 license or endorsement unless the person provides evidence satisfactory to the department of completion of a novice motorcycle safety training program that is operated pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section 2930) of Chapter 5 of Division 2.

(j) A driver of a vanpool vehicle may operate with a class C license but shall possess evidence of a medical examination required for a class B license when operating vanpool vehicles. In order to be eligible to drive the vanpool vehicle, the driver shall keep in the vanpool vehicle a statement, signed under penalty of perjury, that the driver has not been convicted of reckless driving, drunk driving, or a hit-and-run offense in the last five years.

(k) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2027.

SEC. 2.5. Section 12804.9 is added to the Vehicle Code, to read:

12804.9. (a) (1) The examination shall include all of the following:

(A) A test of the applicant's knowledge and understanding of the provisions of this code governing the operation of vehicles upon the highways.

(B) A test of the applicant's ability to read and understand simple English used in highway traffic and directional signs.

(C) A test of the applicant's understanding of traffic signs and signals, including the bikeway signs, markers, and traffic control devices established by the Department of Transportation.

(D) An actual demonstration of the applicant's ability to exercise ordinary and reasonable control in operating a motor vehicle by driving it under the supervision of an examining officer. The applicant shall submit to an examination appropriate to the type of motor vehicle or combination of vehicles the applicant desires a license to drive, except that the department may waive the driving test part of the examination for any applicant who submits a license issued by another state, territory, or possession of the United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico if the department verifies through any acknowledged national driver record data source that there are no stops, holds, or other impediments to its issuance. The examining officer may request to see evidence of financial responsibility for the vehicle before supervising the demonstration of the applicant's ability to operate the vehicle. The examining officer may refuse to examine an applicant who is unable to provide proof of financial responsibility for the vehicle, unless proof of financial responsibility is not required by this code.

(E) A test of the hearing and eyesight of the applicant, and of other matters that may be necessary to determine the mental and physical fitness of the applicant to operate a motor vehicle upon the highways, and whether any grounds exist for refusal of a license under this code.

(2) (A) Before a class A or class B driver's license, or class C driver's license with a commercial endorsement, may be issued or renewed, the applicant shall have in the applicant's driver record a valid report of a medical examination of the applicant given not more than two years before the date of the application by a health care professional. As used in this paragraph, "health care professional" means a person who is licensed, certified, or registered in accordance with applicable state laws and regulations to practice medicine and perform physical examinations in the United States. Health care professionals are doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathy, physician assistants, and registered advanced practice nurses, or doctors of chiropractic who are clinically competent to perform the medical examination presently required of motor carrier drivers by the United States Department of Transportation. The report shall be on a form approved by the department. In establishing the requirements, consideration may be given to the standards presently required of motor carrier drivers by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

(B) The department may accept a federal waiver of one or more physical qualification standards if the waiver is accompanied by a report of a nonqualifying medical examination for a class A or class B driver's license, or class C driver's license with a commercial endorsement, pursuant to Section 391.41(a)(3)(ii) of Subpart E of Part 391 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) A physical defect of the applicant that, in the opinion of the department, is compensated for to ensure safe driving ability, shall not prevent the issuance of a license to the applicant.

(b) In accordance with the following classifications, an applicant for a driver's license shall be required to submit to an examination appropriate to the type of motor vehicle or combination of vehicles the applicant desires a license to drive:

(1) Class A includes the following:

(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (H) of paragraph (3), a combination of vehicles, if a vehicle being towed has a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 10,000 pounds.

(B) A vehicle towing more than one vehicle.

(C) A trailer bus.

(D) The operation of all vehicles under class B and class C.

(2) Class B includes the following:

(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (H) of paragraph (3), a single vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 26,000 pounds.

(B) A single vehicle with three or more axles, except any three-axle vehicle weighing less than 6,000 pounds.

(C) A bus with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 26,000 pounds, except a trailer bus.

(D) A farm labor vehicle.

(E) A single vehicle with three or more axles or a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 26,000 pounds towing another vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or less.

(F) A house car over 40 feet in length, excluding safety devices and safety bumpers.

(G) The operation of all vehicles covered under class C.

(3) Class C includes the following:

(A) A two-axle vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 26,000 pounds or less, including when the vehicle is towing a trailer or semitrailer with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or less.

(B) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), a two-axle vehicle weighing 4,000 pounds or more unladen when towing a trailer coach not exceeding 9,000 pounds gross.

(C) A house car of 40 feet in length or less.

(D) A three-axle vehicle weighing 6,000 pounds gross or less.

(E) A house car of 40 feet in length or less or a vehicle towing another vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less, including when a tow dolly is used. A person driving a vehicle may not tow another vehicle in violation of Section 21715.

(F) (i) A two-axle vehicle when towing a trailer exceeding 10,000 pounds, but not exceeding 15,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight, if all of the following conditions are met:

(I) The towing of the trailer is not for compensation or commercial purposes.

(II) The trailer is coupled to the towing vehicle by a bed-mounted gooseneck hitch or a fifth-wheel and kingpin connection.

(III) The trailer is used exclusively for recreational purposes.

(IV) The trailer is used for the transportation of property or human habitation, or both.

(V) The person has passed a specialized written examination provided by the department relating to the knowledge of this code and other safety aspects governing the towing of recreational vehicles upon the highway.

(ii) A vehicle towing a fifth-wheel travel trailer exceeding 10,000 pounds, but not exceeding 15,000 pounds, gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight, when the towing of the trailer is not for compensation, and if the person has passed a specialized written examination provided by the department relating to the knowledge of this code and other safety aspects governing the towing of recreational vehicles upon the highway.

(iii) The authority to operate combinations of vehicles under this subparagraph may be granted by endorsement on a class C license upon completion of that written examination.

(G) A vehicle or combination of vehicles with a gross combination weight rating or a gross vehicle weight rating, as those terms are defined in subdivisions (j) and (k), respectively, of Section 15210, of 26,000 pounds or less, if all of the following conditions are met:

(i) Is operated by a farmer, an employee of a farmer, or an instructor credentialed in agriculture as part of an instructional program in agriculture at the high school, community college, or university level.

(ii) Is used exclusively in the conduct of agricultural operations.

(iii) Is not used in the capacity of a for-hire carrier or for compensation.

(H) Firefighting equipment, provided that the equipment is operated by a person who holds a firefighter endorsement pursuant to Section 12804.11.

(I) A motorized scooter.

(J) A bus with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 26,000 pounds or less, except a trailer bus.

(K) Class C does not include a two-wheel motorcycle or a two-wheel motor-driven cycle.

(4) Class M1. A two-wheel motorcycle or a motor-driven cycle. Authority to operate a vehicle included in a class M1 license may be granted by endorsement on a class A, B, or C license upon completion of an appropriate examination.

(5) (A) Class M2 includes a motorized bicycle or moped, or a bicycle with an attached motor, except an electric bicycle as described in subdivision (a) of Section 312.5.

(B) Authority to operate vehicles included in class M2 may be granted by endorsement on a class A, B, or C license upon completion of an appropriate examination. Persons holding a class M1 license or endorsement may operate vehicles included in class M2 without further examination.

(c) A driver's license or driver certificate is not valid for operating a commercial motor vehicle, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 15210, any other motor vehicle defined in paragraph (1) or (2) of subdivision (b), or any other vehicle requiring a driver to hold any driver certificate or any driver's license endorsement under Section 15275, unless a medical certificate approved by the department that has been issued within two years of the date of the operation of that vehicle and a copy of the medical examination report from which the certificate was issued is on file with the department. Otherwise, the license is valid only for operating class C vehicles that are not commercial vehicles, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 15210, and for operating class M1 or M2 vehicles, if so endorsed, that are not commercial vehicles, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 15210.

(d) A license or driver certificate issued before the enactment of Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 15200) is valid to operate the class or type of vehicles specified under the law in existence before that enactment until the license or certificate expires or is otherwise suspended, revoked, or canceled. Upon application for renewal or replacement of a driver's license, endorsement, or certificate required to operate a commercial motor vehicle, a valid medical certificate on a form approved by the department shall be submitted to the department.

(e) The department may accept a certificate of driving skill that is issued by an employer, authorized by the department to issue a certificate under Section 15250, of the applicant, in lieu of a driving test, on class A or B applications, if the applicant has first qualified for a class C license and has met the other examination requirements for the license for which the applicant is applying. The certificate may be submitted as evidence of the applicant's skill in the operation of the types of equipment covered by the license for which the applicant is applying.

(f) The department may accept a certificate of competence in lieu of a driving test on class M1 or M2 applications, when the certificate is issued by a law enforcement agency for its officers who operate class M1 or M2 vehicles in their duties, if the applicant has met the other examination requirements for the license for which the applicant is applying.

(g) The department may accept a certificate of satisfactory completion of a motorcyclist training program approved by the commissioner pursuant to Section 2932 in lieu of a driving test on class M1 or M2 applications, if the applicant has met the other examination requirements for the license for which the applicant is applying. The department shall review and approve the written and driving test used by a program to determine whether the program may issue a certificate of completion.

(h) Notwithstanding subdivision (b), a person holding a valid California driver's license of any class may operate a short-term rental motorized bicycle without taking any special examination for the operation of a motorized bicycle, and without having a class M2 endorsement on that license. As used in this subdivision, "short-term" means 48 hours or less.

(i) A person under 21 years of age shall not be issued a class M1 or M2 license or endorsement unless the person provides evidence satisfactory to the department of completion of a novice motorcycle safety training program that is operated pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section 2930) of Chapter 5 of Division 2.

(j) A driver of a vanpool vehicle may operate with a class C license but shall possess evidence of a medical examination required for a class B license when operating vanpool vehicles. In order to be eligible to drive the vanpool vehicle, the driver shall keep in the vanpool vehicle a statement, signed under penalty of perjury, that the driver has not been convicted of reckless driving, drunk driving, or a hit-and-run offense in the last five years.

(k) (1) Commencing on July 1, 2025, for purposes of the issuance of a noncommercial class C driver's license, notwithstanding subparagraph (D) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (a), and to the extent not prohibited by federal law or treaty, the department may waive the driving test part of the examination for an applicant who submits a driver's license issued by a foreign nation under all of the following conditions:

(A) The department has determined the driving examination required by the foreign nation is substantially similar to the driving examination required by the department.

(B) The foreign nation, in a memorandum of understanding, extends the same reciprocal privilege relating to the issuance of a driver's license to a person who holds a valid California driver's license.

(C) The department verifies through the applicant's abstract of driving record provided pursuant to subparagraph (D) that there are no stops, holds, or other impediments to the issuance of a driver's license.

(D) The applicant has submitted a copy of the applicant's foreign driver's license and an abstract of the applicant's foreign driving record covering no less than the previous five years, issued by the appropriate government entity from the foreign nation and, if applicable, the English translation of the driver's license and abstract of driving record. These documents shall all be notarized by a consulate general of the issuing foreign nation in this state.

(E) The applicant is 18 years of age or older.

(F) The applicant has submitted satisfactory proof of California residency.

(G) The driver's license issued by the foreign nation has been surrendered to the department or has been destroyed.

(2) For purposes of this subdivision, an applicant may submit a driver's license issued by a foreign nation that is equivalent to a noncommercial or a commercial class A, class B, or class C California driver's license, but the California driver's license issued by the department to the applicant shall be a noncommercial class C driver's license only.

(3) For purposes of this subdivision, "foreign nation" means any jurisdiction other than a state, territory, or possession of the United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

(I) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2027.

SEC. 3. Section 12804.12 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

12804.12. (a) The department may issue a restricted class A driver's license for the operation of any two-axle vehicle weighing 4,000 pounds or more unladen when towing a trailer coach exceeding 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating, or a fifth-wheel travel trailer exceeding 15,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating, when the towing of the trailer is not for compensation.

(b) In lieu of a report of a medical examination required by Section 12804.9, an applicant for a restricted license issued pursuant to subdivision (a) shall, upon application and every two years thereafter, submit medical information on a form approved by the department.

(c) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2027, and as of that date is repealed.

SEC. 4. Section 12804.12 is added to the Vehicle Code, to read:

12804.12. (a) The department may issue a restricted class A driver's license for the operation of a vehicle towing a trailer if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The towing of the trailer is not for compensation or commercial purposes.

(2) The trailer has a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 10,000 pounds.

(3) The trailer is used exclusively for recreational purposes.

(4) The trailer is used for the transportation of property or human habitation, or both.

(b) In lieu of a report of a medical examination required by Section 12804.9, an applicant for a restricted license issued pursuant to subdivision (a) shall, upon application and every two years thereafter, submit medical information on a form approved by the department.

(c) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2027.

SEC. 5. (a) Section 1.5 of this bill incorporates amendments to Section 12804.9 of the Vehicle Code proposed by both this bill and Assembly Bill 723. That section shall only become operative if (1) both bills are enacted and become effective on or before January 1, 2022, (2) each bill amends Section 12804.9 of the Vehicle Code, and (3) this bill is enacted after Assembly Bill 723, in which case Section 1 of this bill shall not become operative.

(b) Section 2.5 of this bill incorporates changes made to Section 12804.9 of the Vehicle Code proposed by both this bill and Assembly Bill 723. That section of this bill shall only become operative if both bills are enacted, without regard to the order of enactment, and become effective on or before January 1, 2022, and each bill amends Section 12804.9 of the Vehicle Code and this bill adds Section 12804.9 to the Vehicle Code, in which case Section 2 of this bill shall not become operative.