

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2026 REGULAR SESSION**

**Introduced**

### **House Bill 4441**

By Delegates Sheedy, Willis, and Cooper

[Introduced January 16, 2026; referred to the  
Committee on Government Organization]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact 17E-1-9 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to  
2 adding the ability to read and speak the English language as a requirement for obtaining a  
3 commercial driver's license in this state.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

## **ARTICLE 1. COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE.**

### **§17E-1-9. Commercial driver's license qualification standards.**

1 (a) No person may be issued a commercial driver's license unless that person is a resident  
2 of this state; ~~and~~ has passed a knowledge and skills test for driving a commercial motor vehicle,  
3 which complies with minimum federal standards established by federal regulations enumerated in  
4 49 C.F.R. Part 383, Subparts G and H; ~~and~~ has satisfied all other requirements of the Federal  
5 Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act of 1999 in addition to other requirements imposed by state  
6 law or federal regulations; and is able to speak and read the English language.

7 (b) Third-party testing. — The commissioner may authorize a person, including an agency  
8 of this or another state, an employer, private individual or institution, department, agency, or  
9 instrumentality of local government, to administer the skills test specified by this section so long  
10 as:

11 (1) The test is the same which would otherwise be administered by the state; and

12 (2) The party has entered into an agreement with the state that complies with the  
13 requirements of 49 C.F.R. Part 383.75.

14 (c) Indemnification of driver examiners. — No person who has been officially trained and  
15 certified by the state as a driver examiner, who administers a driving test, and no other person,  
16 firm, or corporation by whom or with which that person is employed or is in any way associated,  
17 may be criminally liable for the administration of the tests or civilly liable in damages to the person  
18 tested, other persons, or property unless for gross negligence or willful or wanton injury.

19 (d) The commissioner may waive the skills test specified in this section for a commercial  
20 driver license applicant who meets the requirements of 49 C.F.R. Part 383.77 and the

21 requirements specified by the commissioner.

22 (e) A commercial driver's license or commercial driver's instruction permit may not be  
23 issued to a person while the person is subject to a disqualification from driving a commercial motor  
24 vehicle, when the person does not possess a valid or current medical certification status, or while  
25 the person's driver's license is suspended, revoked, or canceled in any state. A commercial  
26 driver's license may not be issued by any other state unless the person first surrenders all such  
27 licenses to the division: *Provided*, That a person who became subject to a disqualification from  
28 driving a commercial motor vehicle prior to possessing a commercial driver's license is not  
29 disqualified from possessing a commercial driver's license or commercial driver's license  
30 instruction permit so long as the mandatory revocation period specified in §17E-1-13(a)(3) of this  
31 code has elapsed, and the individual has completed the Safety and Treatment Program or other  
32 appropriate program prescribed by the division as required by §17E-1-13(a)(2) of this code.

33 (f) Commercial driver's instruction permit may be issued as follows:

34 (1) To an individual who holds a valid Class E or Class D driver's license and has passed  
35 the vision and written tests required for issuance of a commercial driver's license.

36 (2) The commercial instruction permit may not be issued for a period to exceed one year.  
37 The holder of a commercial driver's instruction permit may drive a commercial motor vehicle on a  
38 highway only when accompanied by the holder of a commercial driver's license valid for the type of  
39 vehicle driven, who is 21 years of age or older, who is alert and unimpaired, and who occupies a  
40 seat beside the individual for the purpose of giving instruction or testing.

41 (3) Only to a person who is at least 18 years of age.

42 (4) The applicant for a commercial driver's instruction permit shall also be otherwise  
43 qualified to hold a commercial driver's license.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to add the ability to read and speak English as a  
requirement to obtain a commercial driver's license in this state.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.