



DRIVER SAFETY LETTER

NPTC
National Private Truck Council

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Feds Look to Enhance Flexibility

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The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has announced continued progress on two Hours-of-Service Pilot Programs designed to evaluate whether providing truck drivers greater flexibility and control in scheduling their work can maintain or improve safety.

Launched in September 2025 in support of President Trump's Executive Order, [Enforcing Commonsense Rules of the Road for America's Truck Drivers](#), the pilot programs are part of the Department of Transportation's initiative focused on improving the lives and working conditions of America's truck drivers.

As FMCSA prepares for the full launch of the pilot programs in 2027, the agency recently completed pre-tests with a select number of professional drivers. The pre-tests allowed FMCSA to evaluate program procedures, data collection methods and driver participation requirements before opening the pilot programs to many more drivers next year.

The first initiative, the Flexible Sleeper Berth Pilot Program will evaluate alternative split sleeper options which allow drivers greater flexibility in matching their off-duty time to real-world conditions, work schedules and their needs for rest. Under the pilot, participating drivers will be permitted to split that time into two periods in any combination, provided the two periods total at least 10 hours and one period includes at least 5 consecutive hours in the sleeper berth.

The second program, the Split Duty Period Pilot Program will evaluate whether drivers can safely pause their 14-hour driving window for up to 3 hours each day when they spend qualifying time in a non-driving status. Qualifying time may include off-duty time, sleeper berth time or on-duty time spent at a pickup or delivery location. This added flexibility could allow drivers to better manage real-world conditions on the road, including waiting out traffic or severe weather, accounting for time lost to detention or taking a break without unnecessarily reducing their available driving window. Throughout the pilot, FMCSA will monitor shippers to ensure the increased flexibility does not lead to increased detention and exploitation of drivers.

Next, FMCSA will review the pre-test results and will use the findings to refine the pilot programs ahead of the 2027 launch. Each pilot program is expected to include 256 drivers, for a total of 512 participants. Drivers will participate for four months and will receive up to \$1600 for completing all study tasks.

Professional drivers and motor carriers interested in future participation in the pilot programs or learning more about them can send their contact information to pilots@dot.gov to receive updates.

The NPTC Monthly Driver Safety Letter, jointly sponsored by NPTC and [Centerline Drivers](#), is a Microsoft Word document that you can print out and post as is, if appropriate, or modify any way you wish to make it a better fit for your drivers, including adding your company logo. If you are already doing an in-house letter, you may find information here that you can cut and paste into your own letter. If you are interested in specific subjects, or have any comments/feedback, contact Tom Moore, CTP, at tmoores@nptc.org or (703)838-8898.