



West Virginia Division of Highways Policy: **Equipment Operator Training Academy**

Issued by the Commissioner of Highways

Policy No: DOH 4.9

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Division of Highways must ensure that all employees who operate DOH rolling stock equipment are properly trained to do so safely, efficiently, and effectively.

2.0 EQUIPMENT OPERATOR TRAINING ACADEMY

The Equipment Operator Training Academy (Academy) is in Buckhannon, WV, with satellite field locations across the state. The Academy and field satellite sites are under the direction of the Equipment Division. They have a skilled and well qualified cadre of instructors available to provide each District with the needed expertise to train our employees. The primary mission of the Academy is to provide training through a combination of classroom instruction, practical exercises, and (when required) certification. This is accomplished through a variety of Primary, Basic, and Pre-certified Equipment Operator Training Programs.

3.0 PRIMARY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR TRAINING COURSES

The "Primary" Courses provide basic instruction and training on Safe Driver Training, Introduction to Equipment Operation, and serve as a preparatory class for Commercial Driver's License (CDL) testing.

3.1 SAFE DRIVER TRAINING

Smith System Safe Driver training is conducted during employee orientation and is mandatory for all new hires in all classifications that possess a driver's license. This program is under the direction of the Academy and administered through the Training Coordinators in each District and the Equipment Division. The remaining Divisions are executed through the Human Resources Division, Training Unit, at Central Headquarters in Charleston. All Smith System Safe Driver training records shall be provided to and housed by the Academy.

The Board of Risk and Insurance Management (BRIM) mandates a Safe Driver Training Program for all licensed DOH employees to be administered every five years. This training is under the direction of the Human Resources Division with assistance, as required, by Finance Division and Safety Division. The Human Resource's Training Unit shall execute the training, house the records and provide reports as required.

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3.2 INTRODUCTION TO EQUIPMENT OPERATION

Introduction to Equipment Operation is an entry-level course designed for new operators who are or will be operating equipment. It is a classroom course that includes an overview of DOH structure, safe driving, the CDL process, equipment training process, safe operation of heavy equipment, preventive maintenance, loading and transporting equipment, Snow Removal and Ice Control (SRIC) and Power Operated Vegetation Equipment (POVE).

- A. All employees in the Transportation Worker I classification and all newly hired employees in the Transportation Worker II and III classifications who operate equipment are required to attend the Introduction to Equipment Operation Course. Organization management must ensure that all such employees are scheduled promptly, preferably within the first six months of employment or as seats are available.
- B. Employees in other job classifications and career fields may attend this course with the approval of their District Engineer or Division Director as time restraints allow and seating is available.
- C. Training Coordinators should schedule employees as not to interfere with the efficient operation of their organizations.

3.3 COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE COURSE (CDL)

The CDL training program provides our employees with the information and skills to master the license requirements. This program is available for full time employees required to possess a CDL as part of their job responsibilities.

- A. Permanent employees required to maintain a Commercial Driver's License (CDL), and endorsements can be scheduled to attend the CDL Course conducted by Academy Instructors at one of the Academy Training Facilities.
- B. District Training Coordinators are responsible for the processing of CDL applications and supporting documents to the DMV in a timely fashion.
- C. Employees must have a valid CDL test card issued by the WV Department of Motor Vehicles to be scheduled for training.
- D. District Training Coordinators will schedule employees for training by submitting a copy of their test card to the Academy.
- E. Employees should be scheduled in a timely fashion to allow for retesting, seat time and examination.

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- F. Training Coordinators will schedule employees with a valid permit for pre-trip training with an Academy Instructor.
- G. Districts are responsible for providing employees with ample seat time to ensure the successful completion of the skills examination.
- H. District Training Coordinators will schedule employees for practical examination with a District CDL Examiner. Ample time should be given for retesting as necessary.
- I. District Training Coordinators are responsible for tracking employee progress and rescheduling employees for training and testing as needed.

4.0 BASIC EQUIPMENT OPERATOR COURSES

Basic equipment operator courses provide equipment operators with specialized training on various types of DOH equipment, including operational attributes of the equipment, safety features, and skills-based training.

- 4.1 Basic courses provide training on equipment for which the DOH **does not require certification**, such as Front-End Loader, Compaction Roller, Skid Steer and Bucket Truck.
- 4.2 These courses are taught by Academy Instructors or qualified DOH District trainers, under the direction of the Equipment Operator Training Academy.
- 4.3 When there is a need for additional employees to operate equipment requiring basic training and consistent with their classification and job responsibilities, the organization supervisor or DOH District trainer will make a written request for training to the Academy through the District Training Coordinator indicating the names, organization number, and classification of the employees to be trained.
- 4.4 The District Training Coordinator must ensure employees selected for training meet all classification and licensing requirements.
- 4.5 The Academy will schedule training through the District Training Coordinator as scheduling and time restraints permit.
- 4.6 Employees must successfully complete all phases of training to receive a certificate and/or wallet card and be deemed qualified to operate the specified equipment.

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5.0 CERTIFICATION

The DOH has complex equipment in its fleet that requires extensive training and certification to operate. This equipment requires in-house training and performance evaluation by DOH instructors and assessment by a third-party testing facility, the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE).

5.1 APPLYING FOR EQUIPMENT OPERATOR CERTIFICATION COURSES

- A. When there is a need for additional employees to operate equipment requiring certification and consistent with the classifications of Transportation Worker II or III, the organization supervisor will
 - 1. make a written request for training to the Academy through the District Training Coordinator. The request should include the type of equipment, number of training slots requested, and justification for the training request. Once the request is approved by the Academy, a Notification of Training and supporting documentation will be provided through the District Training Coordinator;
 - 2. post the Notification of Training on the organization's bulletin board for ten working days (not counting weekends or holidays); and
 - 3. ensure that all employees in the organization are informed of the opportunity for training and are given the opportunity to sign up, indicating their interest in training.
- B. Newly hired employees in their six-month probationary period are not eligible to sign up or be selected for training.
- C. After ten working days from posting the Notification of Training, the organization supervisor will
 - 1. consider all interested employees based on the needs of the Agency and the employees' work history, dependability, equipment experience, adaptability, general abilities, willingness to learn new skills, number of certifications, possession of a valid CDL, and length of time with the agency. Seniority is only one factor in the evaluation process;
 - 2. make a recommendation(s) based upon the preceding criteria. No employees shall be notified that they have been selected for training until approved by the District Engineer or Division Director; and

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3. send his/her recommendation on the Training Allocation Form along with Notification of Training and the names of all interested employees to the District Engineer or Division Director.
- D. The District Engineer or Division Director will review the supervisor's selections and the names of all interested employees and will
1. decide which of the employees are to be trained and
 2. provide an approved Training Allocation Form with the appropriate signatures to the Training Coordinator.
- E. The Training Coordinator will submit the completed Training Allocation Form, Notification of Training and Application for the selected applicant/s to the Training Academy.
1. If it is the desire of the district for the selected applicant to operate the equipment prior to attending formalized training, an Operator's Qualification Report ([DOH-20](#)) can be completed according to Academy guidelines and submitted to the Academy for processing.
- F. Upon receipt, the Academy will
1. schedule the employees for training as scheduling and time restraints permit;
 2. communicate the scheduling to the employee/s through the Training Coordinator; and
 3. schedule selected applicants in the order listed on the Training Allocation Form when more than one employee is selected for training.

5.2 THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Any employee who operates or is expected to operate a class of equipment requiring certification must meet all training requirements within the time restraints established. The certification requirement is not affected by the size of the machine, the function or job performed, or the part of the machine or attachment utilized. Certification is a four-part process.

STEP 1: PRE-CERTIFICATION TRAINING

Pre-certification Equipment Operator Courses provide training on full-size and

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compact equipment for which the DOH **requires certification**, such as Backhoe Loader, Track Excavator, Rubber-Tired Excavator, Motor Grader Tandem and A.W.D., and Crane (five-ton capacity and above). Any employee who operates or is expected to operate a class of equipment requiring certification must attend the Pre-Certification Equipment Operator Course for that type of equipment at one of the DOH equipment operator training facilities throughout the state.

Pre-Certification classes include classroom instruction and hands-on training on the design, safety, preventive maintenance, and operation of the equipment including an initial skills evaluation where trainees will demonstrate their ability to safely operate the equipment.

STEP 2: SEAT TIME

Upon successful completion of the Pre-Certification Class, a Task List of activities to accomplish at the employee's home organization will be given to the trainee. These activities will include actual hands-on tasks associated with the maintenance and operation of equipment. When a site is not available to complete the activities listed on the Task List, on-the-job training can be substituted.

- A. Supervisors of employees returning from the Pre-Certification Equipment Operators will
1. ensure that the employee be given a minimum of 32 hours seat time on the type of equipment trained, to complete all the activities on the task list;
 2. ensure the tasks are under the direction of a certified operator who holds a valid certification by the IUOE on the type of equipment the employee is in the process of obtaining certification;
 3. ensure the employee completes all the tasks within 30 days of returning from the Pre-Certification Course;
 4. document the completion of the field exercises on the task list;
 5. document the employees' daily labor hours and equipment used in training on the [DOT-12](#). A minimum of 32 hours seat time must be documented on both the employee and the equipment verifying training; and
 6. submit task list and [DOT-12](#) to the Academy through the District Training Coordinator.

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- B. Employees with task lists not received by the Academy by the end of the current training season will be removed from the process. These employees are eligible to sign up for training at the next available opportunity.

STEP 3: SKILLS EVALUATION

Once the Task List and the employee's DOT-12's are submitted to the Academy, through the District Training Coordinator, the employee will be scheduled for a Final Skills Evaluation on their operational performance. This will determine their ability to move forward in the certification process.

- A. Final Skills Evaluation will be scheduled by the Academy, through the District Training Coordinator, at one of the Academy training sites and conducted by Academy Instructors.
- B. Employees will be evaluated on following all safety procedures, control of the machine, and their ability to safely operate the machine.
- C. Trainees who pass the Final Skills Evaluation will be scheduled for certification testing as scheduling and time restraints allow.
- D. Trainees who do not pass the Final Skills Evaluation will be removed from the certification process. These employees are eligible to sign up for training at the next available opportunity.

STEP 4: CERTIFICATION

Employees that pass the Final Skills Evaluation will be scheduled for certification testing by the Academy as seat availability and time restraints allow.

- A. Employees will have five days to be certified by the IUOE. For employees that do not complete Certification within five days, the IUOE may:
- Grant an additional five days, if the Facility's Director feels the employee can be certified within the additional five days. Due to the advanced skill level required to operate the grader, the Director may grant an additional ten days.
 - If the Director feels that the employee cannot be certified within the time restraints allowed, he will send the employee back to his home organization equipped with a list of areas requiring additional work.

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- B. For employees that fail to complete certification within the current training season, he or she has two calendar years from completion of the pre-certification course to become certified.
- C. Employees that cannot be certified within the allotted two years are no longer eligible to operate the specified type of equipment.

An official notification, by the Training Academy to that effect will be forwarded to the employee's supervisor with a copy to be placed in the employee's district personnel file and to the Human Resources Division for inclusion in the employees' personnel file.

These employees can sign up for potential selection at the next available opportunity.

- D. Employees that drop out of the certification process are not eligible to sign up or be selected for certification on the same type of equipment for two calendar years from the date of removal from the program.

Once certified, the operator will receive a certificate and wallet card issued by the IUOE designating the type of equipment the employee is certified to operate.

Upon returning to the employee's home organization, the employee shall be allowed to operate the certified piece of equipment assigned to the organization no less than 16 hours every 90 working days.

Without interfering with the smooth operation of the organization or creating unnecessary cost or rental of equipment, certified operators will be allowed to operate rotated and rental equipment that is not permanently assigned to the organization as equipment availability and time restraints allow.

5.3 EXEMPTION TO THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Third party certification is required to operate the Backhoe Loader, Track Excavator, Rubber-Tired Excavator, Motor Grader Tandem and A.W.D., and Crane (five ton and above). Third party certification is administered by the Division of Labor for Crane, and the IUOE for Backhoe, Rubber-Tired Excavator, Track Excavator, and Motor Grader.

Any employee operating certified equipment must possess a valid CDL and have Successfully completed all phases of training and certification designated by the Academy or must be an approved trainee in the process of obtaining certification.

Employees of the DOH are exempt from the equipment operator certification requirements *only in those circumstances when all the following requirements*

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exist when:

- the equipment operator work to be performed is located on property owned by the DOH;
- such property is not used as a highway, highway right-of-way or public access;
- such property is secured by a locked gate or other means that restrict access;
- public access is not permitted or is restricted to such property, while equipment is being operated;
- the employee is familiar with the operations manual, and any related documents that accompany the equipment; and
- the employee is given adequate seat time on the type of equipment to complete all activities outlined in the Operator's Qualification Report (Form [DOH-20](#)); and
- all documentation has been properly processed through the Academy.

For example, a DOH employee who is not certified could operate a Backhoe Loader in a DOH facility lot wherein the facility is secured, and public access is restricted. However, the supervisor must first ensure that the employee has completed all activities outlined in the [DOH-20](#) and submitted the same to appropriate district personnel.

6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervisors at each level are responsible for ensuring that only properly trained operators are permitted to operate DOH equipment. While it is understood that safe and proper operation of any state equipment should be the concern of all individuals, it is imperative that employees know and understand what their responsibilities are with respect to equipment operation.

- 6.1 District Engineers/Division Directors will ensure compliance with this Procedure within their district or division. Each District Engineer/Division Director will, with the assistance of the Academy appoints a Training Coordinator.
- 6.2 The Training Coordinator will assist the District Engineer/Division Director in administering this program and coordinating all operator training within the district or division, including:

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- A. receiving and forwarding all requests or applications to the Academy for processing;
- B. maintaining all necessary trainee applications/forms and accurate employee records;
- C. monitoring employee license requirements and processing applications and scheduling for training accordingly; and
- D. monitoring employee progress on Academy System and provide periodic management reports. This includes, but not limited to:
 - 1. training allocations provided and/or not filled;
 - 2. employees waiting to be scheduled/trained;
 - 3. employees in the training process and stage of completion;
 - 4. employees trained and/or certified; and
 - 5. CDL status reports.

6.3 **The Academy will**

- A. provide each district and division assistance in implementing the training guidelines;
- B. ensure that the programs being offered are consistent throughout the DOH;
- C. coordinate training for each district and division, with the assistance of the District/Division Training Coordinator, to ensure proper scheduling according to the provisions of this Procedure;
- D. compile and maintain required records and information; and
- E. issue certificates and certification cards as required.

7.0 **TRAINING EXPENSES**

Employees' travel expenses (meals, lodging, etc.) associated with attending approved Equipment operator training programs and/or third-party testing will be paid in accordance with the Travel Regulations ([DOT 1.4](#)).

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- 7.1 The costs for meals and lodging will be charged to a training authorization established by the Academy.
- A. Employee training must be approved by the Academy.
 - B. **No salaries or vehicle expense will be charged to the established authorization.** Employee salaries and vehicle expense will be charged to the organization's overhead account.
- 7.2 The DOH will pay for **CDL applications, testing, and renewal fees** for permanent, full-time employees who are required to possess a license as part of their job responsibilities providing:
- A. The employee signs the Agreement stating they will only operate CDL equipment for the DOH; and
 - B. With approval by the District Engineer, **renewal fees** may be paid for temporary employees required to possess a CDL as part of their job responsibilities, providing the employee signs the Agreement stating they will only operate CDL equipment for the DOH.
- 7.3 The DOH will pay for Crane **applications** and **testing fees** for permanent, full-time employees who are required to possess a license as part of their job responsibilities providing:
- A. The employee signs the Agreement stating they will only operate Cranes for the DOH.
 - B. To maintain an adequate number of licensed Crane Operators, the DOH will pay for Crane **renewal fees** for all DOH employees holding a valid Crane license providing:
 - 1. licensed Crane operators sign the Agreement stating they will only operate Cranes for the DOH; and
 - 2. If it is **not** part of their regular job assignment, they must be willing to operate a Crane on a temporary basis, in times of emergency, as time restraints and scheduling allows.

8.0 TEMPORARY UPGRADE

When the primary operator is not operating equipment, any qualified operator that meets all training requirements designated by the Academy may be assigned to operate the equipment and assumes all the responsibilities of the primary operator. When this

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occurs, the operator may be eligible for temporary upgrade, in accordance with [DOH 3.12](#) policy.

Employees should not receive a temporary upgrade during training sessions. Training sessions are defined as:

- Primary, Basic or Pre-Certification Training;
- 32 hours mandatory seat time for certification; and
- Certification testing at a third-party testing facility, such as the IUOE.

9.0 RELEVANT MATERIALS/DOCUMENTS

9.1 [DOH-20](#) Operator's Qualification Report

9.2 [DOT-12](#) Daily Work Report

10.0 CHANGE LOG

09/15/08 – Section 5.2, The Certification Process was added to the policy.

04/17/19 – Entire policy revised and formatted.