



**THE PROGRAMS, BENEFITS, AND
— OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE —
TO MILITARY VETERANS IN THE
TRUCKING INDUSTRY**



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Put Your Military Driving Experience to Good Use!

Experienced commercial truck drivers are in constant high demand, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)—alongside carriers like Lily Transportation—understand the value of filling commercial motor vehicle (CMV) driver openings with responsible and appropriately qualified drivers.

If you have military driving experience—regardless of whether you served in the Reserve, National Guard, are a military veteran, or are transitioning from active duty to civilian life—you're already going to be a top-tier candidate for a career in the transportation industry. In addition to your wealth of military training, skills, and experience, you've been uniquely equipped with the kind of responsibility and discipline that carriers across the country are always on the lookout for.

However, readapting to a civilian lifestyle isn't easy, especially when you're looking for a brand new career.

That's where Lily Transportation wants to help! With this eBook, we'll walk you through the process of getting your commercial driver's license (CDL), outline the different programs available to help you on your way, and illustrate a few of the (many) benefits that are waiting for you behind the wheel of a Lily truck!



Let's get started!



Getting Your CDL

The trucking industry wants to work with you, and carriers like Lily Transportation are doing whatever they can to help you find your place in their ranks.

Before you can get behind the wheel and kickstart your new career in the trucking industry, you're going to need a commercial driver's license. Usually, this is done by attending a truck driving school and passing a written and skills-based test. However, as a veteran, you may already have the experience you need to obtain your CDL.

The FMCSA has several programs that will make it easier, quicker, and ultimately, less expensive for military personnel to obtain their CDL and transition into a civilian CMV driving career. Here are some of the most common programs the FMCSA offers to military veterans looking for a new career path and how you can apply to them:

Military Skills Test Waiver

To participate in the Military Skills Test Waiver Program, you must have held a military driver's license as part of your service and have at least two years of safe military driving experience. This means that there cannot be any disqualifications, suspensions, or license revocations on your record.

According to the (FMCSA) ¹, you can apply for this Military Skills Test Waiver within one year of leaving the military position where you operated those heavy vehicles. Every state in the country offers this waiver and you can print out the necessary form on the FMCSA website ².

If you're eligible for the military waiver, you won't need to attend a truck driving school or even hold a commercial driving permit before getting your CDL. However, you will still be required to take the written exam. So be sure to pick up (and study) your state's CDL manual from a local DMV, as this will be the basis for the questions on the exam. Some states also offer electronic versions of their manuals, and they may be able to provide access to sample tests to practice with, as well.



Even Exchange Program

Also known as the Knowledge Test Waiver, this program enables qualified military drivers to bypass the written test that's required as part of the CDL application process. When used with the Military Skills Test Waiver, this program makes it possible for veterans to seamlessly exchange their military license for a CDL.

As of October 2019, the FMCSA reports that eight states offer this waiver (Illinois, Kansas, Wisconsin, North Carolina, North Dakota, Vermont, Virginia, and Missouri). The program is growing in popularity, though, and the following states are actively working on a plan to implement the Even Exchange Program ³:

- Alabama
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Florida
- Idaho
- Maine
- Montana
- New Hampshire
- New Mexico
- South Carolina
- Wyoming

Under 21 Military CDL Pilot Program

The FMCSA is currently running a program designed to study “the feasibility, benefits, and safety impacts of allowing 18-20-year-old drivers to operate commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) in interstate commerce” ⁴.

To participate in this program, you must have heavy-vehicle driver training and experience from your time in the military, a safe driving history, and be sponsored (hired) by a participating carrier. It's important to note, however, that drivers who participate in this program will not be able to operate tankers or transport hazardous materials or passengers.

This program is designed to help the FMCSA enhance the opportunities available within the transportation industry to drivers with relevant military experience. Lily Transportation is honored to be one of the participating carriers in this study ⁵, and we're very excited to be working with a whole new generation of truck drivers!

If you're interested in getting involved with this program, get started by filling out the application the FMCSA offers on its website ⁶ or by applying directly at lily.com/jobs. You can also get in touch with the FMCSA by emailing any questions or inquiries to Under21Pilot@dot.gov

Commercial Motor Vehicle Operator Safety Training Grant Program

If you're a current or former member of the United States Armed Forces, then this program can help you receive training for a career in the motor carrier industry. This program has two primary goals, as outlined by the FMCSA ⁷:

- To expand the number of CDL drivers that possess enhanced operator safety training
- To assist current or former members of the United States Armed Forces (including National Guard members and Reservists) and their spouses receive training that will make it easy to transition into the CMV operation industry.

All applications to this program will need to be filed electronically on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved grant forms SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B. You can access these forms by searching for "Commercial Motor Vehicle Operator Safety Training Grant Program" on www.grants.gov ⁸.

What's In It For You?

If you're a military veteran interested in learning more about the unique lifestyle and benefits a career in the trucking industry can offer, then you'll find no shortage of companies who will be eager to help you find your way.

With your hyper-specialized skills in situational awareness, leadership, adaptability, stamina, and commitment, you'll have the freedom to either operate independently (although this usually means purchasing and maintaining your own vehicle) or work as an employee for a commercial transportation company.

Both options would enable you to work with carriers who want to see you succeed, and most companies are more than willing to hire you as quickly as possible (and some will even offer signing bonuses and other hiring incentives). The benefits of a truck driving career don't stop there, though! Here's a glimpse into a few of the other benefits veterans will find in a trucking career:



Competitive Salaries

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics ⁹, the average truck driver will make over \$40,000 a year. However, at Lily Transportation we not only offer a training curriculum that won't deplete your GI Bill benefits, but upon graduation, your annual compensation will average around the \$65,000 range and include full benefits.

The industry standard says that most trucking companies pay their drivers on a per-mile-driven scale, meaning the more miles you cover, the more income you'll make. And with competitive pay becoming increasingly common, the more experience you have (or gain) behind the wheel, the more opportunities you'll have for higher-paying driving positions.

Apply Your Skills in a New Field

Transitioning from a job in the military to a civilian job can be difficult. And sometimes, a desk job just isn't a good fit. If you're looking for a career path that'll help you settle into the civilian lifestyle while still providing you with an outlet to flex your greatest skills, then you should try "to look for skills and talents you use in your present career that apply to the new career you are interested in" ¹⁰.

The military equipped you with a wealth of talents (familiarity with logistics, dedication, scheduling know-how, a "never-give-up" mindset, and so much more) and it's these skills that will easily transfer to your truck driving career. For example, your ability to problem-solve on the fly will be a tremendous asset to you (and your carrier) when you encounter an unexpected situation on the road. Additionally, the discipline and structure you learned from the military will help you quickly adapt to (and thrive in) the truck driving lifestyle.



Driving with Lily Transportation

If you're ready to dive into a new career as a truck driver or Transportation Manager, our team at Lily Transportation is here to help!

Any relevant military driving experience puts you in a great place to transition into a stable civilian CMV driving job. Even if you lack commercial driving experience, but have military experience, Lily transportation is interested in training you and absorbing the cost of that training.

Lily recognizes the unique values you can bring to our company, and we're committed to doing whatever we can to integrate you into the Lily Family, train you in all the skills you'll need, and retain you for years to come.

We're always looking for ways to support our military veterans and would love to have you join our team! For more information about the unique veteran career benefits offered at Lily Transportation, reach out to us by phone at 800.248.LILY or check out our Veterans Network Program at lily.com/veterans. While you're there, check out what some of our current veterans have to say about their experiences working with Lily Transportation.





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