FAQ: English language requirements for truck drivers operating in the U.S.

What is the new requirement?

The U.S government is reinforcing existing rules stating that commercial drivers must be able to read and speak English well enough to communicate with officers and understand road signs. Drivers violating English proficiency rules will be placed out-of-service. **See the Executive Order**

Why is this being enforced?

The Administration is focused on improving highway safety, ensuring drivers can respond to instructions, and enhancing clear communication during inspections and emergencies. **See the Fact Sheet**

What does the official regulation say?

View here: **§ 391.11 General qualifications of drivers.**

Does this apply to all drivers, even if they've been driving for years?

Yes. The English language requirement has been part of FMCSA regulations for many years. The new Executive Order emphasizes enforcement and applies to all CDL holders regardless of experience.

Does this mean drivers can't speak another language?

No. Drivers are free to speak any language during their personal time or with dispatch. The requirement only applies to situations where English communication is necessary for safety or regulatory compliance. Roadside inspections, weigh station stops, and border crossings are common situations.

Are there legal protections or exceptions?

Currently, there are no exceptions. All commercial drivers operating in the U.S. are expected to comply, regardless of Visa or immigration status.

Where can I find resources to assist with improving my English?

- Many public libraries offer free access to language-learning apps
- USA Learns
- YouTube Channels

How can you help my fleet be compliant?

We can't teach your drivers English, but we do offer **DVIR** and **ELD** solutions to keep your fleet compliant when it comes to documentation requirements.