

# Federal Crackdown Closes 550+ CDL Schools in Massive Safety Investigation

More than 550 commercial driver's license training schools across the United States have been shut down following a sweeping federal investigation that uncovered widespread safety violations and fraudulent operations, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Federal officials said the closures followed more than 1,400 sting operations carried out by roughly 300 investigators in every state. The inspections targeted training providers listed in the federal Training Provider Registry and focused on whether schools were meeting entry-level driver training standards.

Investigators found numerous programs lacked qualified instructors, used fake business addresses, or failed to properly train students on key safety requirements – including the handling of hazardous materials. In some cases, instructors were licensed only for school bus training but were teaching students how to operate heavy trucks that require commercial driver's licenses. Other programs provided instruction using vehicles that did not match the type of CDL students were seeking.

Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said the findings revealed systemic problems that put public safety at risk by allowing undertrained drivers onto the road.

Industry groups representing legitimate training programs welcomed the enforcement action. The Commercial Vehicle Training Association, which represents professional truck driver training schools nationwide, said federal oversight had been needed for years to address noncompliant providers. The

group said stronger enforcement supports reputable programs and helps improve roadway safety while creating better opportunities for aspiring drivers.



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The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, representing about 150,000 members, also backed the crackdown. Leadership said eliminating so-called CDL mills – schools that push students through minimal training – is essential to protecting drivers and maintaining professional standards across the trucking industry. The group argued that some companies had relied on poorly trained drivers rather than addressing retention and working-condition challenges.

Investigators also found failures in testing procedures. Some schools admitted they did not meet their own state requirements for driver instruction or evaluation, highlighting inconsistencies that regulators say could lead to unsafe drivers receiving licenses.

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration officials said investigators conducted in-person visits to confirm whether schools were using proper equipment and qualified instructors. Schools failing to meet those standards were removed or flagged for removal from the registry.

According to federal data, 109 training providers voluntarily removed themselves from the registry once they learned enforcement inspections were underway. Another 448 received notices of proposed removal for failing to meet basic safety requirements, while 97 additional providers remain under investigation.

Officials said the effort marks one of the largest federal enforcement actions ever targeting commercial driver training. The Transportation Department framed the initiative as part of

a broader push to strengthen oversight across the trucking sector and ensure drivers are fully prepared before operating large vehicles.

Duffy said the crackdown aims to restore confidence in driver training and ensure that truck and school bus operators meet federal safety standards before getting behind the wheel. He emphasized that improving training quality is a key step in protecting motorists and maintaining professionalism across the industry.

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