

Farm Restricted Class 1 Driver's Licence

Background

Effective April 1, 2024, eligible farmers and their family members will have the option to apply for a farm-restricted Class 1 driver's licence. Qualifying applicants will not be required to complete Mandatory Entry-Level Training (MELT) but will be required to complete the remaining steps required for licensing. This bulletin will provide guidance on important considerations on licensing for farmers, eligibility requirements, restrictions and the process for applying for a farm restricted class 1 license as well as several case studies.



Considerations

Holding a fully unrestricted Class 1 license is a valuable asset that opens up a wide variety of career options, including long-haul trucking, oil field work, logging, and work in the agricultural industry, among others. Drivers with a fully unrestricted Class 1 license are free to work for any employer willing to hire them.

In contrast, a farm restricted class 1 license is specifically designed for farmers and their families to use in the operation of their farms and has limited applicability beyond supporting the family farm. The Farm restricted class 1 license with an "N" restriction is not transferable to the broader job market and cannot be used to work for other farmers, businesses, or in general employment as a truck driver. Additionally, it is restricted to use within Alberta only.

Individuals should carefully evaluate their future needs and determine whether investing in Mandatory Entry-Level Training (MELT) to obtain a fully unrestricted class 1 license is beneficial, given the flexibility it provides.

Eligibility - Farmers

The following is paraphrased from the [Government of Alberta Farm Restricted Class 1 Driver License webpage](#), in the case of any discrepancies, please refer to the government page.

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Eligible farmers and their family members must:

1. Be actively and directly farming, in Alberta;
2. Be responsible for management decisions and operating costs;
3. Have control of the farming assets; and
4. Have annual farm commodity production worth at least \$10,000 or \$5,000 to \$9,999 in some cases. [2]

Eligibility - Family Members

A family member is also eligible for a Farm restricted class 1 license if they are the spouse or adult interdependent partner of the farmer, or whether by blood, marriage or adoption or by virtue of an adult interdependent relationship, a child, parent, grandparent, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew or first cousin of the farmer. [2]

Restrictions

There are several restrictions that come with a farm restricted class 1 license.

1. The applicant must declare their eligibility to utilize this exemption.
2. The applicant must satisfy all other requirements of a Class 1 driver's licence.
3. A farm-restricted Class 1 driver's licence holder may operate vehicles which require a Class 1 driver's licence only:
 - a) within the province of Alberta; and
 - b) while engaged in necessary transportation and delivery of animals, farm products, grains, or farm produce:
 - to the farmer's farm, if those commodities are to be used by the farmer in the operation of the farm; or
 - to a market, if the commodities being transported were either grown or raised by the farmer on the farmer's farm; or
 - c) Transporting material or equipment that is owned or used by the farmer on the farm.
 - d) Family members may only operate the vehicle on behalf of the eligible farmer(s) listed in their application. [2]
4. Holders of a farm-restricted Class 1 driver's licence face a restriction "N," limiting them from operating Class 2 or 4 vehicles without passing additional tests and meeting specific conditions. [1]

How to Apply

1. Confirm eligibility and suitability of the farm-restricted Class 1 driver's licence for both
 - a. Your farm needs and
 - b. Your future career needs

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2. Obtain an [air brake](#) endorsement (Q) if for driving a farm vehicle combination that requires the driver to hold a Class 1 driver's licence.[3]
3. Visit your local registry and complete the [Driver's Knowledge Test](#).
4. Complete a [Driver's Medical](#) exam which includes your vision screening.
5. Complete the [application form](#).
6. Visit a registry and schedule a road test. Bring the following documents.
 - [Application form](#)
 - [Drivers Knowledge Test Permit](#)
 - [Driver's Medical](#)
 - Current licence
7. Secure a suitable vehicle with airbrakes for the test date.
8. Pass the road test.
9. Convert your existing licence. [1][2]

Grants

Farmers should consider utilizing the Canada Alberta Job Grant to receive up to \$10,000 year per employee. The CAJG will cover two thirds the cost of MELT (approximately \$6,600). Many family farms are eligible as a business in Alberta, to utilize this funding to cover the cost of a wide range of training. In addition, the CAJG is available to a business owner with fewer than four employees as well as their family members. For more information review our bulletin on the [Canada-Alberta Job Grant](#).

Case Study 1

Abe is a farmer in Southern Alberta specializing in potatoes and sugar beets. His 21-year-old son, Art, assists on the farm as needed and requires a Class 1 license for farm support duties. Consequently, Art applied for and obtained his farm-restricted Class 1 driver's license.

Art has recently received a job offer from BNK Grain Haulers for the upcoming fall. However, Art should decline the offer because the position would entail driving for a company outside of his family's farming operations, which is not permitted under the terms of his farm-restricted license.

Abe may be able to use the Canada Alberta Job Grant to help cover the cost of MELT for his Son Art.

Case Study 2

Petra is a 24-year-old daughter of Ed and Barb, who own a family farm near Smoky Lake. Petra is also married to Nick, whose family owns a farm near Pincher Creek. Annually, Petra and Nick contribute to both farms, assisting with the planting and harvesting of crops. They are seeking farm-restricted Class 1 driver's licenses to aid their families more effectively.

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They qualify for the license but must obtain the signatures of both sets of farm owners on the application form. Securing only one signature will restrict their ability to operate vehicles on the other family's farm. With this license, their driving is limited to activities directly related to their families' farming operations and does not extend to working for another farm.

One or both, may consider using the Canada-Alberta Job Grant to obtain an Unrestricted Licence if they plan to drive for work in the future.

Case Study 3

Alexander immigrated to Canada from Ukraine in 2022 and secured a position at Danglestein Farms and Feedlot near Okotoks. The owners' children are heading to university this fall, necessitating a reliable individual to operate their trucks.

The employer is considering leveraging the farm exemption to facilitate Alexander's acquisition of a Class 1 license, enabling him to handle the company trucks as required. Regrettably, Alexander does not qualify under the family definition for this exemption.

Consequently, he must undergo the Mandatory Entry-Level Training (MELT) program but may be eligible to use the Canada-Alberta Job Grant.

Our Services

AMTA can provide members with one-on-one guidance on the information provided in this bulletin. If you have any questions, please contact AMTA and our experienced staff will be happy to help. For your Safety, Compliance, and Human Resources questions, please email Workplace Support Services at wss@amta.ca or call 1-800-267-1003.

Resources

- [1] Frequently asked questions: Farm-Restricted Class 1 Driver's Licence, (2024, March 2). Alberta.ca, <https://www.alberta.ca/system/files/tec-farm-restricted-class-1-licence.pdf>
- [2] Farm-Restricted Class 1 Driver's Licence. (2024, March 2). Alberta.ca. <https://www.alberta.ca/farm-restricted-class-1-drivers-licence#:~:text=A%20farmer%20or%20eligible%20family,a%20Class%201%20driver's%20licence>
- [3] Air Brake Program. (2024, March 2). Alberta.ca. <https://www.alberta.ca/air-brake-program>