TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NOTE **No. T-06-08**

Department of Education
John L. Winn, Commissioner

School Business Services
School Transportation Management Section

Contact:
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Medical Examination Form for 2006-07

DATE: **May 8, 2006**

TO: **School District Transportation Directors**

FROM: **Charlie Hood, Director**
School Transportation Management

SUBJECT: **Medical Examination Form (ESE 479) for 2006-07**

Ensuring access to educational programs requires that school bus operators safely transport students to and from school each day. The ESE Medical Examination Form (ESE 479) for school bus operators has been revised for the 2006-2007 school year to conform to the requirements of Section 1012.45, Florida Statutes, and Rule 6A-3.0141, Florida Administrative Code.

The two primary changes are the hypertension requirements and the dexterity testing. Long-term hypertension levels must be less than 140 mmHg systolic blood pressure (BP) and 90 mmHg diastolic BP. If the bus operator has Stage I hypertension (140-159/90-99), he or she may be certified to drive the bus for a six-month period. If the operator's blood pressure is well controlled and the hypertension levels are lowered to less than 140/90, he or she may be recertified for an additional six months. Stage 2 hypertension (160-179/100-109) does not necessarily disqualify a bus operator. The bus operator with Stage 2 hypertension may be given a three- month certificate; within this time, the operator must get his or her blood pressure down to the acceptable levels. If he or she demonstrates a blood pressure level of less than 140/90, then he or she may be recertified for nine months. Blood pressure at or greater than 180/110 is considered Stage 3, and the bus operator is considered at high risk for an acute blood pressure-related event. A bus operator with Stage 3 hypertension may not be qualified, even temporarily, until the levels are reduced to less than 140/90, and the treatment is well tolerated. A bus operator with Stage 3 hypertension may be certified for 6 months and biannually (6 months) thereafter if at the recheck the blood pressure levels are less than 140/90.

The dexterity testing section has also changed to accommodate larger buses and recent school bus specifications requiring air doors on the buses. The new allowance is for the bus operator to get out of the driver's seat from a seated position, activate the manual switch for the air door, open the door, and step down on the ground. For the requirement that demonstrates the bus operator's ability to get out of the rear of the bus, the side door of transit buses may be used. For all the dexterity testing items, a 65-passenger or larger bus can be used.

The file and the optional printing specifications for the new Medical Examination Forms are attached so that each district can print these forms locally.

If you need more information, please contact Ms. Kay Kanupp at (850) 245-9795 or by e-mail at kay.kanupp@fldoe.org.

CH:jw

Attachments

cc: Superintendents
Charter Schools