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Late fee waived for commercial motor vehicle registration for one month

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TOPEKA – The Kansas Division of Vehicles is waiving late fees for one month for commercial motor vehicle operators whose tags must be renewed by Friday, Feb. 28.

The decision means those registering non-farm commercial motor vehicles will not be charged late fees if they register their vehicles by March 31, 2014.

While the Division is notifying Kansas law enforcement agencies of the decision, the vehicle's tags will legally be expired and drivers could be ticketed by law enforcement.

Commercial motor vehicle registration is available at 72 state and county treasurers' offices. More than 45,700 vehicles have successfully registered through the new process.

On Jan. 1, 2014, the Division implemented changes in Kansas law affecting commercial vehicle registration. Heavy trucks and trailers with tags that expired Dec. 31, 2013 were given a two month grace period to register using the new process.

The final week of every month is the busiest time for county treasurers' offices as people come in to renew their vehicle tags. Because not all treasurers are offering commercial motor vehicle registration, and some operators will need to register for a U.S. DOT number, those waiting until the last moment could miss their renewal deadline.

"We view waiving the late fees as a customer service to help commercial motor vehicle operators as they acclimate to the changes," said Lisa Kaspar, Director of Vehicles

Motor carriers operating solely in Kansas as an intrastate motor carrier will receive a new license plate. The new white and purple plate marked "Commercial" will provide an easy reference for law enforcement. Kansas-based motor carriers that drive in Kansas and other states and currently have an apportioned tag will continue to receive the license plate that is white with red marked "Apportioned."

The definition of a commercial vehicle is not changing; the federal rules have been in place since July 2000. The new system will help ensure that all commercial vehicles are properly registered and comply with existing federal and state laws. Currently, commercial vehicles should be operating under a U.S. DOT number; that DOT number will be used to set up the new intrastate commercial vehicle registration account.

A commercial vehicle is a non-farm vehicle used to transport property or passengers and:

- Has a gross vehicle weight or gross combination vehicle weight of 10,001 pounds or more
- Is designed or used to transport 15 or more passengers, including the driver or
- Is used to transport hazardous material in a quantity requiring placarding.

If a vehicle meets any one of the three criteria, it is considered a commercial vehicle.

More information is available in the commercial vehicle registration section of www.truckingks.org, there operators can also check if their county treasurer's office offers commercial vehicle registration or to register for a DOT number.