Time, weight restrictions suspended for COVID-19 commercial vehicles

JACKSON, MISS. --- To assist with the transportation and delivery of critical commodities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) is waiving required weight permits and fees, allowing weight increases and suspending time restrictions for certain commercial vehicles.

"A national emergency has been declared and states are allowed to issue overweight permits to commercial vehicles transporting commodities considered a divisible load on the interstate highways," said Melinda McGrath, P.E., MDOT Executive Director. "This will help ensure timely and efficient delivery of goods and services throughout Mississippi during this great time of need."

The temporary allowances are for commercial vehicles providing direct assistance in support of emergency relief efforts intended to meet the immediate need for:

- Medical supplies and equipment related to the testing, diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19.
- Supplies and equipment, including masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, soap and disinfectants, necessary for healthcare workers, patients and community safety, sanitation, and prevention of COVID-19 spread in communities.
- Food for emergency restocking of stores.
- Immediate precursor raw materials—such as paper, plastic or alcohol—that are required and to be used for the manufacture of essential items.
- Fuel.
- Equipment, supplies and persons necessary for establishment and management of temporary housing and quarantine facilities related to COVID-19.
- Persons designated by federal, state or local authorities for medical, isolation, or quarantine purposes.
- Persons necessary to provide other medical or emergency services.

Under this allowance, the maximum gross weight is 90,000 pounds on a five-axle commercial vehicle within a 51-foot outer bridge measurement. The maximum tandem limit is 40,000 pounds. All other dimensions must meet legal requirements.

Under the authority of Gov. Tate Reeves' executive order signed March 30, the state is also suspending restrictions on the number of hours an operator can drive. The order follows guidance from a declaration from the U.S. Department

of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration issued earlier this month.

This declaration does not allow fatigued or ill drivers to operate a commercial vehicle. Nor does it allow vehicles to cross bridges with a posted limit below the gross weight of the commercial vehicle.

For more information on trucking weight limits, view Executive Order No. 1464 in full HERE.

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The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) is responsible for providing a safe intermodal transportation network that is planned, designed, constructed and maintained in an effective, cost-efficient and environmentally sensitive manner. MDOT's objective is to maximize taxpayer's dollars by providing a safe, efficient multimodal network that enhances economic stability and growth. For more information, visit GoMDOT.com.

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