

# Frequently asked questions: Agriculture and Mandatory Entry Level Training (MELT) for Class 1 drivers

Revised on February 27, 2019

## Current training requirements versus future:

Current Class 1 requirements	Class 1 requirements as of March 1, 2019
Class 1 training for new drivers is recommended, but not mandatory.	Class 1 training for new drivers is mandatory. Farmers and farm workers can apply for an extension to comply with MELT until Nov. 30, 2019
The majority of new Class 1 drivers take some kind of Class 1 training.	All drivers who want to get their Class 1 licence for the first time must take MELT training, unless they are a farmer or farm worker who has received approval for an extension from Alberta Transportation.
Class 1 training is not standardized and varies from school to school.	All schools must provide the same, standardized MELT training.

### What is MELT and why is it being implemented?

Mandatory Entry Level Training (MELT) is a training program for new Class 1 (tractor-trailer) drivers. It is a mandatory, standardized training curriculum that will be in place at driver training schools and organizations starting March 1, 2019. Anyone who wants to get a Class 1 licence after that date must take this training.

Once a driver has completed the Class 1 MELT training, they must successfully pass an enhanced knowledge and road test (based on the MELT curriculum) to obtain their Class 1 licence.

The purpose of the training is to ensure that commercial drivers have the basic skills and experience necessary to safely operate large commercial vehicles on the road.

This training should improve safety, reduce collisions and save lives.

## What are the requirements for new and existing Class 1 drivers?

- 1) **Existing:** If you got your Class 1 licence on or before October 10, 2018, no changes apply to you. You continue to be a Class 1 driver without any additional requirements.
- 2) **Transition Period:** If you got your Class 1 licence between October 11, 2018 and February 28, 2019, you must take the enhanced knowledge and road test by March 1, 2020. The purpose of this re-testing is to ensure that recently licensed Class 1 drivers have driving skills that meet the new standards.
  - o Government will pay for the first attempt at the knowledge and road tests. You will have two attempts to pass.
- 3) **New:** After March 1, 2019, all drivers who have never held a Class 1 licence before and want to get one must take MELT, no exceptions.
- 4) **Farmers and Farm Workers:** Until Nov. 30, 2019, farmers and farm workers can apply to Alberta Transportation to get their Class 1 licence under the pre-MELT process.

## Is there an exemption for MELT for farmers in Alberta?

No, but government has recently decided to give farmers and farm workers an extension to comply with MELT, to ensure that the agriculture industry has the resources they need to meet the demands of the 2019 farming season.

If you apply for and are eligible for the extension, you will not be required to take MELT training and you may take the existing, pre-MELT, Class 1 knowledge and road test.

You must have your Class 1 licence in place by Nov. 30, 2019.

You will also have to take the enhanced Class 1 knowledge and road test (based on MELT curriculums) before March 1, 2020, to ensure that you meet the new driver training standards.

Any driver who wants to get a Class 1 licence must meet all of the following requirements:

- Have an approved Class 1 driver's medical completed by a physician,
- Be at least 18 years old,
- Not be part of the Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Program and have at least a full Class 5 Alberta driver's licence; and
- Successful completion of the Air Brake Endorsement (Q Endorsement) Program.

## How do I get the farmer's/farm workers extension?

- 1) All farmers and farm workers must apply for the extension by filling out an application form between March 15 and November 30, 2019, and clearly identify themselves as a member of the agriculture industry. The application form will be available through your agricultural organization, and will also be available online on March 15, 2019.
- 2) Alberta Transportation will review the application and, if farm-related status is confirmed, approve it with an authority letter.

- 3) Once you have been approved for the extension, you must take and pass the pre-MELT Class 1 knowledge and road test **before November 30, 2019.**
- 4) No one is eligible for the extension beyond December 1, 2019.
- 5) To make sure these drivers also meet the new MELT standards, they will also have to take the enhanced knowledge and road test (based on the MELT curriculums) before March 1, 2020.

I am a transition driver; I either got my licence between October 11, 2018 and February 28, 2019, or am a farmer/farm worker who was approved for a Class 1 extension. What is the re-testing process?

- 1) You have until March 1, 2020 to take your enhanced knowledge and road test. You have two attempts to pass both tests.
  - You can continue to drive Class 1 vehicles until that time.
- 2) Starting March 1, 2019, you can book your enhanced knowledge test in person at any Alberta registry agent office.
- 3) Government will pay for your first attempts at the knowledge and road tests. If you fail the first attempt at the knowledge test, or the first attempt at the road test, you have one more chance to retake the test you failed, at your expense.
- 4) If you fail the second re-test attempt at either the knowledge or road test, your licence will be re-classed to the class of licence you held previously (e.g. if you held a Class 5 licence, it will revert back to a Class 5 licence.)
- 5) You will be ineligible to drive Class 1 vehicles.
- 6) To re-obtain your Class 1 licence, you must take the MELT training and pass the knowledge and road tests.

What if I don't re-test before March 1, 2020?

If you haven't done your re-testing by March 1, 2020, your licence will be automatically re-classed to the class of licence you held previously (. if it was Class 5, your licence will revert back to Class 5.) You will be ineligible to drive Class 1 vehicles. To re-obtain your Class 1 licence, you must take MELT training and pass the knowledge and road tests.

How much will MELT training cost?

To ensure that MELT training is fair and accessible, government has capped the maximum amount any training school or organization can charge for MELT.

The most a school can charge for Class 1 MELT is \$10,000. Schools can choose to charge less than this, at their discretion, to offer competitive pricing.

Are there funding opportunities available to take MELT?

There may be funding and training opportunities available to those that meet the Government of Alberta eligibility requirements. Please visit <https://www.alberta.ca/employment-training-services-directory.aspx> for more information.

Employers may be eligible for training support through the Canada-Alberta Job Grant: <https://www.alberta.ca/canada-alberta-job-grant.aspx>.

### How long does the MELT Class 1 program take?

Class 1 MELT Program:

- 40.5 hours of classroom instruction; 15.5 hours of in-yard instruction; 57 hours of in-vehicle training (Actual driving – 39 hours, Off-road maneuvers – 18 hours)
- Total training hours – 113

If the Air Break Program applies to you, an additional 8.5 hours are required to obtain this training.

### How will MELT requirements affect seasonal workers?

Canadians from another province working temporarily in Alberta and temporary foreign workers under the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program can continue to use their existing driver's licence from their home jurisdiction during the time they are in Canada. However, these workers are not able to obtain an Alberta driver's licence because they don't establish permanent residency in Alberta.

This means that seasonal workers who come from out of province or out of country **and already have a commercial licence to drive a Class 1 vehicle in their home jurisdiction** are not subject to MELT requirements.

- These drivers can drive a Class 1 vehicle in Alberta with their existing licence from their home jurisdiction because they are typically in the province for less than a year and do not establish residency.

Only people who have established residency in Alberta are eligible to apply for an Alberta driver's licence.

- This means that seasonal workers from outside of Canada **who do not have a commercial truck licence in their home jurisdiction**, and therefore no experience driving a large truck, are **not eligible** to get an Alberta Class 1 licence.
- This has always been the case.

If someone from out of country has a Class 1 licence in their home jurisdiction and is yet to establish residency in Alberta they cannot exchange their Class 1 licence for an Alberta Class 1 licence. They must take MELT. Alberta does not accept non-Canadian commercial driver's licences from any foreign jurisdiction. This has always been the case and will not change with the MELT Program.

No one is allowed to drive a vehicle in Alberta without having the appropriate driver's licence class.

### What about existing Class 1 drivers from other Canadian jurisdictions?

As mentioned above, if a driver is working temporarily in Alberta, they may continue to drive the class of vehicle permitted by their existing driver's licence from their home jurisdiction.

## What is the process for getting an Alberta Class 1 licence if you move from another jurisdiction?

If you've moved to Alberta to live permanently, you must:

- exchange your current driver's licence for an Alberta driver's licence within 90 days of moving to the province by handing in your valid provincial or territorial driver's licence to a registry agent
- provide proof that you live in Alberta
- provide proof of residence in Canada

You'll be given an Alberta's driver's licence equal to the class of licence you are exchanging, as long as you meet the Class 1 requirements below:

### **Canadian Jurisdictions with MELT Programs**

Class 1 drivers from a Canadian province who have successfully completed an equivalent Class 1 MELT program are not required to take Alberta's MELT program or challenge the enhanced knowledge or road test to attain an Alberta commercial driver's licence; they will get a Class 1 Alberta driver's licence.

### **Other Canadian Jurisdictions without MELT**

- Class 1 drivers who have held their driver's licence for more than 24 months will not be required to take the MELT Program or challenge the enhanced knowledge and road tests; they will get a Class 1 Alberta driver's licence.
- Class 1 drivers who have held their driver's licence for 12 to 24 months have the option of completing Alberta's MELT Program or challenging the Class 1 enhanced knowledge and road tests.
  - If you are unsuccessful at passing either the enhanced knowledge test or the enhanced road test on the first attempt, your licence class will revert back to the class of licence you previously had in your home jurisdiction (such as a Class 5).
  - You must take the MELT Program and successfully pass the enhanced knowledge and road tests in order to reobtain a Class 1 licence in Alberta.
- Class 1 drivers who have held their driver's licence for less than 12 months must complete Alberta's MELT Program prior to taking the enhanced knowledge and road tests.
  - In the meantime, your licence will revert back to the previous class of licence you had in your home jurisdiction (e.g. Class 5).

## What if I want my son or daughter to get a Class 1 licence to help on the farm? Or hire local youth to drive my Class 1 vehicles?

As of March 1, 2019, all drivers who want to get their Class 1 licence for the first time will have to take MELT training and pass the enhanced knowledge and road tests, no exceptions.

To be eligible for a Class 1 driver's licence, applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements prior to applying for a commercial driver's licence:

- Have an approved Class 1 driver's medical completed by a physician,
- Be at least 18 years old,
- Not be part of the Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Program and have at least a full Class 5 Alberta driver's licence; and
- Successful completion of the Air Brake Endorsement (Q Endorsement) Program.

Are there enough schools ready to deliver MELT training, to meet farmer's needs?

All driver training schools and senior driving instructors have been trained in the MELT curriculums free of charge by Alberta Transportation. They are now in the process of being licensed to teach MELT. Alberta Transportation has already certified a number of training schools throughout the province to teach the MELT Programs. Alberta Transportation continues to receive licensing applications from driver training schools and instructors daily.

Will there be schools in rural Alberta that teach MELT?

Right now, there are several schools that offer Class 1 training in rural Alberta, but, the majority of Alberta's driver training schools tend to be located in urban centres. The larger population ensures sufficient class sizes to make the training economically viable. That said, we anticipate that the existing accessibility of training in rural areas in the province will continue.

How can I become a provider of MELT?

All entities who want to deliver driver training, including the MELT Program curriculums in Alberta, must be licensed by Alberta Transportation. Information can be found at: <https://www.alberta.ca/apply-for-a-driver-training-school-licence.aspx>

Will there be enough driver examiners to test new Class 1 drivers across the province in a timely fashion?

Yes. As we transition to the government-run road test model March 1, 2019, we anticipate that we will have enough capacity to meet demand. We expect to be completing up to 200 Class 1 tests per month across the province.

Do you need to take MELT for a Class 3 licence?

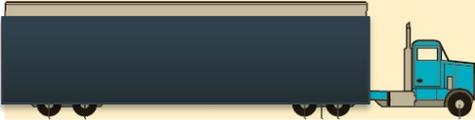
No, MELT does not apply to Class 3 licences.

What is the process for getting a Class 3 licence?

To obtain a Class 3 driver's licence:

- You must be at least 18 years old
- You hold a non-GDL driver's licence
- You must pass the vision test
- You must pass a Class 3 knowledge test at a registry agent's office; and
- You must pass a Class 3 road test

What is the difference between Class 3 and Class 1 vehicles?

Class 3	Class 1
<p>A Class 3 driver's licence holder may operate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a single motor vehicle with three or more axles</li> <li>• a single motor vehicle with three or more axles towing a trailer with one or more axles, if the trailer is not equipped with air brakes</li> <li>• any motor vehicle or combination of vehicles that the holder of a Class 5 driver's licence may operate</li> <li>• all motor vehicles under Classes 1, 2 and 6 for learning only</li> </ul> <p>No holder of a Class 3 driver's licence is allowed to operate a motor vehicle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that has a seating capacity of more than 15, while that vehicle is transporting any person other than the driver</li> <li>• to transport passengers for hire</li> </ul> <p>Here are examples of the vehicles a Class 3 driver's licence holder can driver</p> 	<p>A Class 1 driver's licence holder may operate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• any motor vehicle or combination of vehicles other than a motorcycle</li> <li>• a tractor-trailer combination with three or more axles, equipped with air brakes</li> <li>• Class 6 type vehicles for learning only</li> </ul> <p>Here is an example of one of the vehicles a Class 1 driver's licence holder can operate.</p> 

Who was consulted about these changes?

Government consulted with the general public (including an open, online survey and random telephone polling) as well as in-person stakeholder sessions in July 2018.

The in-person stakeholder sessions included representatives from the commercial transport and driver training and examination industries, as well as the farming industry.

Alberta Transportation also met with the following organizations to discuss MELT requirements:

- Alberta Motor Transport Association
- Association of Alberta Registry Agents
- Alberta Motor Association
- Certified Driver Examiner Association

Unanimously, these groups supported MELT for all Class 1 drivers, without exception, to ensure the safety of everyone on the road.

Government reached out to farming stakeholders in September 2018, to discuss MELT requirements:

- Alberta Federation of Agriculture
- United Farmers of Alberta
- Alberta Agricultural Economics Association
- AgSafe Alberta
- Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee.

These groups expressed strong support for the implementation of mandatory training for new commercial drivers and strong support for no exemptions.

I would need more information on MELT and the extension for farmers. Where can I find this?

For more information about MELT please visit:

<https://www.alberta.ca/mandatory-entry-level-training-for-class-1-and-2-drivers-licences.aspx>

For questions on the training extension for farmers, please visit:

<https://www.alberta.ca/mandatory-entry-level-training-for-class-1-and-2-drivers-licences.aspx>

I have further questions. Who can I contact?

To connect with Driver Programs and Licensing Standards:

Hours: 8:15 am to 4:30 pm (open Monday to Friday, closed statutory holidays)

Phone: 780-427-8230 (Edmonton area)

Toll free: 310-0000 before the phone number (in Alberta)

Email: [trans.driver.prog@gov.ab.ca](mailto:trans.driver.prog@gov.ab.ca)