START A CAREER - CALIFORNIA

How to become a tow truck driver in California

What tow truck drivers do, the skills and credentials that matter in California, and how to find tow truck driver jobs.

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1 What tow truck drivers do

Tow truck drivers move disabled, damaged and illegally parked vehicles, help at accident scenes and often handle roadside calls, at night, on weekends and in bad weather.

2 Skills and training

You need a valid driver license and a driving record your employer's insurer accepts. Heavy tow trucks need a commercial driver license; most employers train new drivers on equipment and scene safety.

3 Licensing

Tow truck drivers in freeway service patrol work need a DMV tow truck driver certificate after a Department of Justice background check. Check your employer's city and county permit rules.

4 Find jobs on NCC

Browse open jobs below or on NCC Jobs.

Requirements at a glance

DMV tow truck driver certificate (freeway service patrol)

Required in some cases - State - California DMV; Department of Justice

Tow truck drivers in freeway service patrol operations need a DMV tow truck driver certificate after Department of Justice or FBI clearance, valid up to five years.

Official agencies and links

Vehicle Code 12520 and 2430.1, Tow truck driver certificate

California Legislature

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=VEH&sectionNum=12520

Frequently asked questions

Do tow truck drivers need a license in California?

For freeway service patrol work, a DMV tow truck driver certificate.

This guide is general information, not legal advice. Rules change and can depend on your city or county, so confirm with the official agencies linked below before you apply.