

# Recruit a “New” Segment of Drivers to Take on the Driver Shortage

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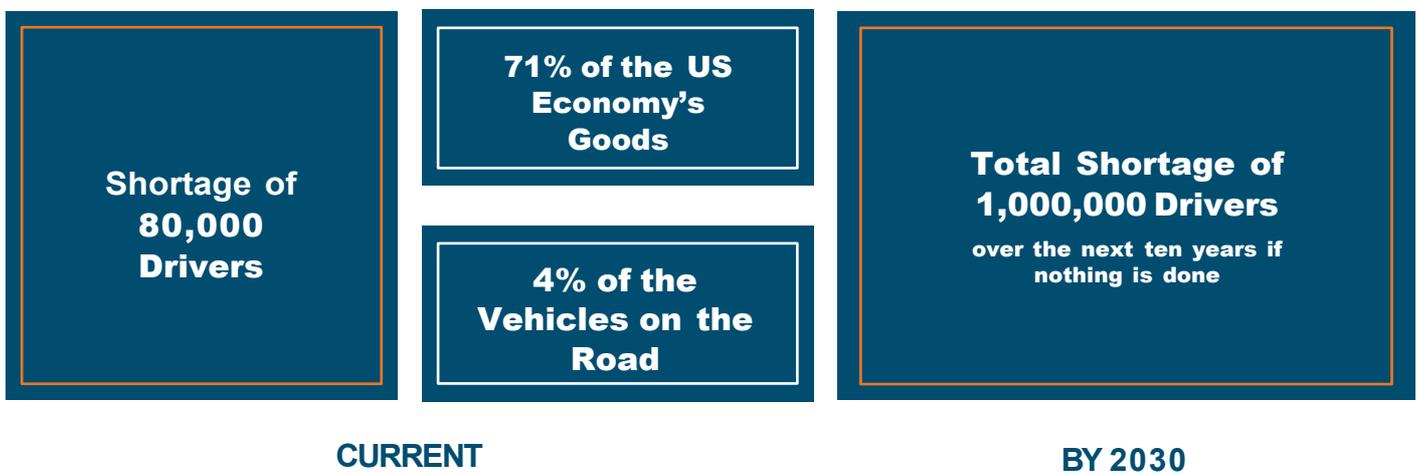
# INTRODUCTION

In this guide, we will look further into the trucking crisis and how we can overcome it. Carrier's need to discover every possible avenue to keep their known, experienced drivers versus hiring unknown drivers of tomorrow.

Better care and investment into drivers' livelihood could drastically improve the driver shortage and address the top two challenges carriers face today: recruitment and retention.

The trucking industry is facing many critical issues; however, one that continues to be front and center is how increasingly harder it is to recruit and retain qualified drivers. The state of our current U.S. drivers exposes a bigger problem, **driver health** which is a contributor to the driver shortage. **Let's dive in.**

The American Trucking Associations (ATA) estimated that there is currently a **shortage of 80,000 drivers**. Spear further reported that truck drivers move **71% of the US economy's goods** but represent just **4% of the vehicles** on the road. If nothing is done, the latest figures put the industry on track for a **further shortage of 160,000 drivers by 2030**, meaning the industry will need **1,000,000 drivers** over the next ten years.



# DIVING INTO THE DRIVER SHORTAGE CAUSES

## REASONS FOR THE DRIVER SHORTAGE

### An increase in freight demand as the US economy reopens

There have been waves of baby boomer retirements, and the pandemic has only made this worse, bringing us into the 'great resignation' era.

### Long hours and uncomfortable working conditions

Sleep deprivation and the sedentary lifestyle are causing drivers to fail their medical DOT exams.

### The demographic of current workers

The trucking industry relies heavily on male employees, typically 45 or older. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average age of a commercial truck driver in the US is 55 years old. With the retirement age being between 60 to 70 years old, many of these workers are retiring or soon retire.

## LACK OF WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

Redwood further estimated that **47% of women make up the nation's workforce** but only account for **6% of commercial truck drivers**. There is a stereotype that the trucking industry is for men only. It is seen as a 'macho' job that pertains to men only. Employers need to do a better job at changing this message around. It's imperative that Carriers encourage women to enter the trucking industry and really embrace driver diversity.

Gender-diverse companies are **15% more likely to earn above-average revenue.**

according to McKinsey

The Bipartisan Infrastructure bill that recently passed authorizes hundreds of dollars for transportation, including **workforce development for the trucking industry**. It allows 3,000 drivers between the ages of 18 and 20 to undergo training with the vision to get them driving tractor-trailers across state lines.



This would provide further employment for younger people and benefit the industry. Still, the problem is the younger workforce isn't flocking to become professional drivers and it also increases the risk for carriers. It also doesn't get to **the heart of the problem**.

## **There is a paramount issue that we can no longer ignore: DRIVER HEALTH**

**It is estimated that there are 3.6 million drivers in the U.S., and between 45%-55% of drivers have been issued a one-year or less medical card, putting them at risk of losing their jobs. Another 10% (360,000) have been medically disqualified.**

**This is where a new pool of drivers, at a much higher reward, lower costs, come into play. A solution that the industry has not yet been successful. That is improving the quality of your experienced, known drivers to keep them employed.**

# THE POOL OF MEDICALLY DISQUALIFIED DRIVERS

Drivers need a **DOT physical exam** because commercial driving is a very demanding job, and the exam ensures theirs and others' safety on the road. There are **thousands of medically disqualified drivers** who have been disqualified due to health issues and, as a result, failed their DOT medical exam.



**NATIONAL  
REGISTRY**  
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MEDICAL EXAMINERS  
NationalRegistry.fmcsa.dot.gov

The top three health issues behind failing the test are high blood pressure, elevated sugar levels, and sleep apnea. As previously mentioned, there are an estimated **360,000 drivers who are medically excluded**, and what's interesting to note is that these conditions can be prevented and managed if drivers are given a practical opportunity to care for their health and wellbeing while on the road or after they've been medically disqualified.

Depending on a driver's health condition, the **disqualification could be temporary**. For example, let's say you have over 300 drivers that have been medically disqualified in the past year. Out of those 300 drivers, half of them have high blood pressure. **Rebuilt by Espyr** has a team of experienced health coaches that works with these drivers closely to lower their blood pressure and improve other over mental and physical health. It's life-changing for these drivers and allows carriers to keep their known, experienced drivers.

**Scenario**  
**Over 300  
Medically  
Disqualified  
Drivers**  
with different health issues

**Step 1**  
**Experienced  
Health Coaches**  
work closely with  
drivers

**Step 2**  
**Drivers Retake  
the DOT Exam**  
and pass with flying  
colors

**Step 3**  
**Drivers Are  
Rehired &  
Backed  
On  
The Road!**

Carriers have a hard time tracking their driver's medical results. It's general practice for carriers to get this data from a third-party administrator (TPA) who manages the health benefits. This means that there's a **lack of visibility** into knowing how many drivers are being medically disqualified or have short-term medical cards. Carriers see this as natural attrition and puts their focus on increasing pay and bonuses for new driver recruitment.

Driver health and wellness directly impacts **seven of the top ten critical issues** reported by drivers and carriers in ATRI's most recent report, "Critical Issues in the Trucking Industry."

Addressing driver health and work-life balance has always been an issue in the trucking industry due to low driver engagement and reach. This arguably contributes to the driver shortage we are currently facing. Drivers must stay aware of the medical conditions preventing them from doing their job. This should be a **collaborative effort** between the carrier and driver.



Rebuilding your drivers who struggle with health conditions yet have a good driving record and loads of experience (meaning there is no need for costly and time-consuming training) allows carriers to keep their known, trusted drivers instead of **the increased cost and risk of hiring unknown drivers**. It's a win-win situation for both parties.

# THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

To conclude, the driver shortage is causing a **national crisis**, and something must be done to improve it. Although experts have proposed a recruitment drive amongst younger workers could be the answer, **driver health and wellness** has been hugely underrated, but the statistics and outcomes are telling us different.

Here at **Fit to Pass**, we work every day with carriers who are shocked by how many drivers are medically disqualified or even at the risk of losing their medical DOT card. We are on a mission *to improve today's known driver's quality of life and help cure the driver shortage crisis in the US*. We have the solutions that help retain the driving workforce and allow you to 'rehire' your known, trusted drivers.

Our goal is *to get them either Rebuilt or Fit to Pass, so driver's stay employed and are made to feel valued*. With the national shortage, it's now more important than ever that carriers take an interest in their drivers' lives and offer as much support as possible. By reducing the number of medically disqualified drivers, we can drastically improve the driver shortage and give those that need it a second chance.



***“By helping our drivers make better food and exercise choices, Fit to Pass has changed lives.”***

Ellen Voie, CEO  **WOMEN IN TRUCKING**



Espyr delivers game-changing solutions for the trucking industry to transform how you recruit, retain, and care for your drivers. Fit to Pass, Rebuilt, and Second Chance are designed to improve a driver's quality of life and a carrier's bottom line. The Fit to Pass team has over 25 years' experience in the trucking industry, driver health and employee coaching. Our highly professional and specialized team understands the driver lifestyle challenges. We elicit change when change is hard for life-transforming and cost-saving results.. Visit the [Fit to Pass website](#) to learn more.

**Contact Fit to Pass today to help  
your drivers reach their full potential.**

Call: 1-888-570-3479

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