

TRUCK TALK

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34 Hour Restart

The revised 34 hour restart provisions of the Motor Carrier Safety Regulations that were amended 7/1/13 contain some verbiage that has been found to be somewhat confusing and making compliance more difficult. First and foremost, the provisions are clear as to what the requirement for a restart is:

- (1) Must include two periods from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m., home terminal time.
- (2) May only be used once per week, 168 hours, measured from the beginning of the previous restart.

Simple and yet possibly not so easy to apply to many carriers' normal operating routine that could vary from an 8 to 5 scenario. Those operating in the 8 – 5 (we refer to as daytime hours, 5 days per week), which would generally include weekends off, should notice no change in their normal operating practice. Drivers will be 'fresh' at the start of business on Monday morning provided they have met the other provisions of the rule (# 1 above). The effective length of this 34 hour restart would be 63 hours if the work week begins at 8:00 a.m. on Monday. Obviously, this is much more time off than the minimum requirement.

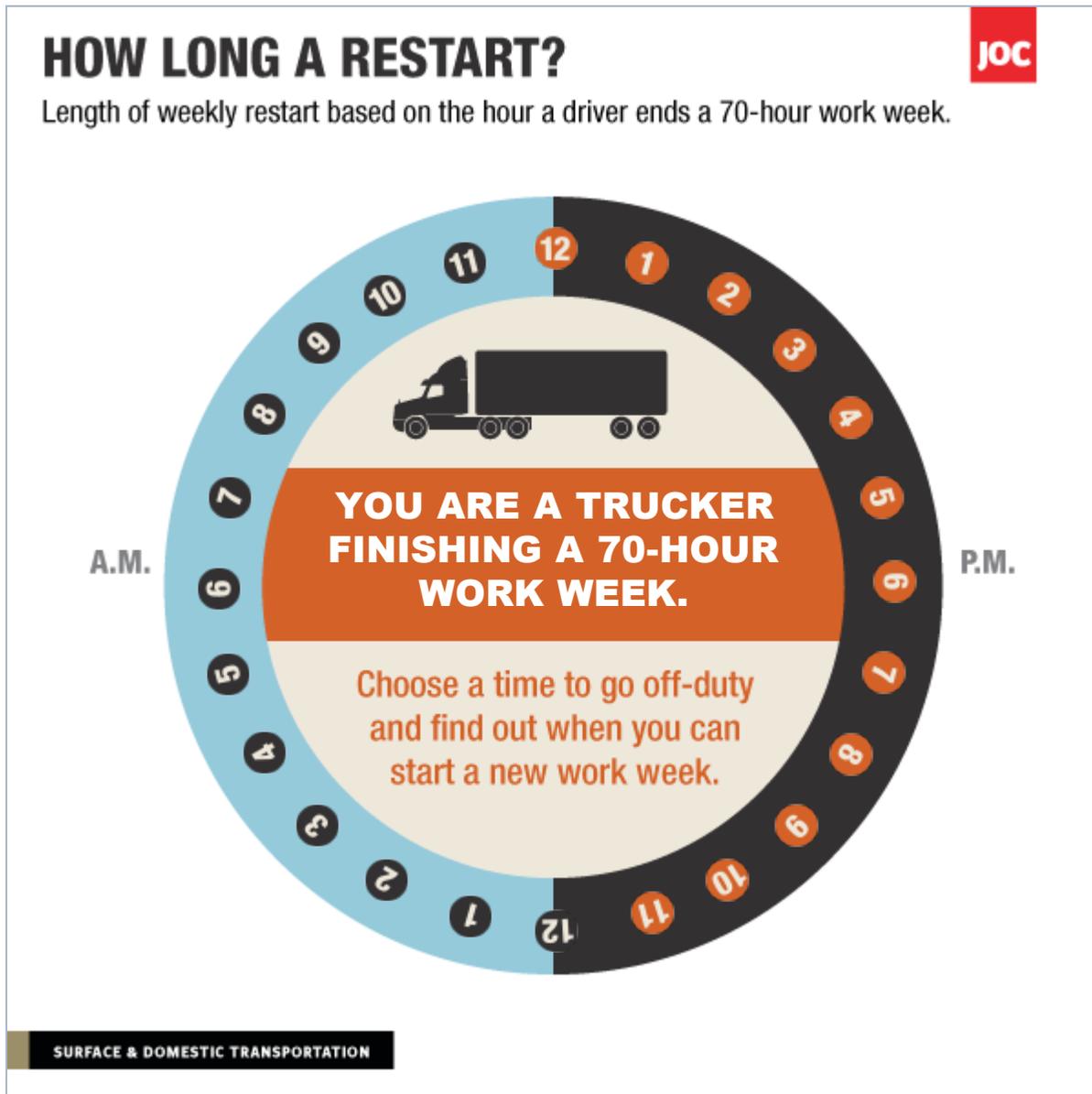
Another example could involve an irregular route motor carrier where the normal operating practice would include the driver 'passing through' his/her home (over the weekend where home lies in a line between the origin and the destination of the shipment – and not necessarily the base of operations for the motor carrier). Arriving at 11:30 p.m. on Friday night, the required provisions of the 34 hour restart would be met at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday morning, allowing the driver to continue onto the destination and deliver first thing Monday morning. This scenario would represent a much more efficient use of the restart provision than the 8-5 scenario above.

With respect to 24 hour operations where pickup and delivery might be accomplished at any time of the day or night, restart compliance can be accomplished in only 34 hours if the off duty period begins sometime in the window of 7:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. For example, if the restart is initiated at 2:00 a.m. Sunday morning, the restart time frame to meet the minimum two periods of 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. requirement would be 39 hours. The resulting restart availability is at 5 a.m. two days later (Tuesday morning). Certainly a less efficient way to meet the requirement, but the level of compliance is acceptable and the driver is well rested.

Created by the Journal of Commerce, a very good chart to calculate the restart based on the minimum restart requirement can be found at:

<http://www.joc.com/sites/default/files/u59196/interact/truckclock/index5.html>

A best practice would be for this chart to be made available to all drivers with internet access in addition to operational staff so that the 34 hour restart can be calculated accurately and used as a planning tool for driver schedules and customer delivery expectations.



ckovachevich@cwgins.com

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