

Transport Dispatcher

Decide which truck goes where, keep drivers legal, and fix the day when everything goes wrong at once.

TYPICAL PAY

\$50,340

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$36k to \$78k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

up to 2 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Trucking terminals, freight brokerages, utility control rooms,...

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma or an equivalency certificate** Grade 12
Enough math to work out hours, miles and rates, and enough patience to be shouted at politely.
- 2 Get into a transport company any way you can** 6 to 18 months
Warehouse, dock, driver check-in, customer service. Carriers promote dispatchers from inside far more often than they hire from outside.
- 3 Learn the rules** Ongoing
Federal hours of service limits, load securement, weights and what a driver can legally do today. Getting this wrong puts a truck out of service.
- 4 Take the desk** 1 to 2 years
Start on a small board of drivers or a night shift, then move to a bigger board as you prove you can keep trucks moving.
- 5 Specialize or move up** 3 to 5 years
Freight brokerage, fleet management, safety and compliance, or terminal operations.

Pros and cons

- + Get in fast with no degree and no debt
- + Indoor, predictable, sit-down work in an industry that is mostly not
- + Real problem solving instead of repetitive tasks
- Federal projections have this occupation declining as software takes over routine assigning
- Stressful. You are the middle of every argument between drivers and customers
- Nights, weekends and on-call rotations at many carriers

Optional boosts

Supply chain certification. Hazardous materials knowledge. Safety and compliance. Spanish.

Good to know

Paper logbooks are gone

Federal rules now require electronic logging devices that record driving time straight from the truck's engine. A dispatcher cannot ask a driver to stretch the hours the way the industry used to, because t...

The empty miles are the enemy

A truck that drives 200 miles with nothing in the trailer earns nothing and still burns fuel and driver hours. A good dispatcher is judged mostly on how few of those miles their fleet runs, which is why the jo...

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Dispatchers, Except Police, Fire, and Ambulance
Training Provider Registry, the federal entry-level driver training system
American Trucking Associations
Apprenticeship.gov, the federal Registered Apprenticeship site

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/transport-dispatcher>



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