MKUU TRANSPORTATION

FMCSA Compliance Checklist

A practical carrier self-audit for safety, records, maintenance, drivers, and New Entrant readiness

REVIEW • DOCUMENT • CORRECT • VERIFY

Free Business Resource | August 2026

How to Use This Checklist

Use this document as a recurring internal compliance review. Check only items that you have actually verified. Mark missing, expired, incomplete, or questionable items for corrective action and retain supporting records in an organized compliance system.

Important: This checklist is educational and does not replace the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs), Hazardous Materials Regulations, state requirements, or professional legal/compliance advice. Requirements vary by operation.

1. Carrier Registration & Operating Authority

☐ USDOT information is current and accurately reflects the carrier's operation.

☐ Operating authority required for the carrier's operation is active.

☐ Required insurance filings are active and match the authority/operation.

☐ BOC-3 process-agent filing is on record when required.

☐ UCR registration is current when applicable.

☐ IRP, IFTA, state permits, plates, and credentials are current when applicable.

☐ Company address, phone, email, legal name, DBA, equipment count, and operating classifications are reviewed for accuracy.

☐ Copies of current registrations, permits, insurance certificates, and authority records are readily retrievable.

2. Driver Qualification Files (DQF)

☐ A separate, organized qualification file exists for each driver when required.

☐ Driver application for employment is complete when required.

☐ Motor vehicle record inquiries and required driving-record reviews are documented.

☐ Safety performance history inquiries are completed and retained when required.

☐ Road test certificate or acceptable equivalent is documented when required.

☐ CDL class, endorsements, restrictions, and expiration dates are verified.

☐ Medical qualification documentation/status is verified as applicable.

☐ Annual review requirements and related documentation are completed when applicable.

☐ Expired, missing, or inconsistent driver documents are corrected before dispatch.

3. Drug & Alcohol / Clearinghouse

☐ Carrier is registered in the FMCSA Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse when subject to the rule.

☐ Each CDL driver subject to Part 382 has the required Clearinghouse process completed before safety-sensitive work.

☐ Owner-operators subject to the rule have designated a qualified C/TPA as required.

☐ Pre-employment drug testing requirements are completed before applicable drivers perform safety-sensitive functions.

☐ Carrier is enrolled in a compliant random drug and alcohol testing program when required.

☐ Random testing records and consortium/C/TPA documentation are retained.

☐ Post-accident, reasonable-suspicion, return-to-duty, and follow-up procedures are understood and documented when applicable.

☐ Supervisors who are required to receive reasonable-suspicion training have completed it.

4. Hours of Service (HOS) & ELD

☐ Drivers understand the HOS rules applicable to the operation.

☐ Required drivers use a compliant ELD unless a valid exception applies.

☐ ELD user manuals/instruction information and required supporting materials are available as applicable.

☐ Driver logs are reviewed for form-and-manner issues, unidentified driving, edits, violations, and supporting-document inconsistencies.

☐ Unassigned/unidentified driving events are reviewed and resolved.

☐ Supporting documents are retained and matched to records of duty status when required.

☐ Drivers know how to handle ELD malfunctions and required backup records.

☐ Dispatch practices do not pressure drivers to violate HOS or operate while fatigued.

5. Vehicle Inspection, Repair & Maintenance

☐ A systematic inspection, repair, and maintenance program is in place.

☐ Maintenance files identify each vehicle and contain required service/repair information.

☐ Preventive maintenance intervals are established and followed.

☐ Annual/periodic inspections are current for every required commercial motor vehicle.

☐ Proof of periodic inspection is carried/maintained as required.

☐ Drivers perform required pre-trip/post-trip inspection responsibilities.

☐ DVIR defects requiring correction are repaired and documented when applicable.

☐ Out-of-service defects are corrected before the vehicle returns to service.

☐ Brake/vehicle inspectors meet qualification requirements when applicable.

☐ Tires, brakes, steering, suspension, lights, coupling devices, fluids, and safety equipment receive routine attention.

6. Roadside Inspections & Violations

☐ Every roadside inspection report is reviewed promptly.

☐ Out-of-service violations are corrected before continued operation.

☐ Repair certifications/responses are completed and returned when required.

☐ Recurring violations are tracked to identify training, maintenance, or management problems.

☐ Drivers receive coaching or corrective action after preventable violations.

☐ Carrier periodically reviews its FMCSA safety data/SMS information for accuracy and trends.

☐ Data believed to be incorrect is evaluated for the appropriate correction/challenge process.

7. Accident / Crash Records

☐ An accident register is maintained for recordable crashes as required.

☐ Required crash information and supporting documents are retained for the required period.

☐ Post-accident drug/alcohol testing requirements are evaluated immediately after qualifying crashes.

☐ Insurance claims, police reports, photographs, witness information, and internal reviews are organized.

☐ Each crash is reviewed for preventability and corrective action.

☐ Drivers know the company's crash reporting and emergency notification procedure.

8. Safety Management & Company Policies

☐ Written safety expectations are communicated to drivers.

☐ Drivers are trained on vehicle inspections, HOS/ELD, accident response, cargo securement when applicable, and company reporting procedures.

☐ Dispatch and management understand that safety requirements take priority over delivery pressure.

☐ Driver complaints involving fatigue, unsafe equipment, coercion, or compliance are documented and addressed.

☐ Corrective actions are documented rather than handled only verbally.

☐ Compliance files are backed up and can be retrieved quickly during an audit or investigation.

9. New Entrant / Safety Audit Readiness

☐ Carrier understands that New Entrants are monitored during the initial 18-month period.

☐ Carrier is prepared for a Safety Audit generally within the first 12 months after beginning operations.

☐ FMCSA contact information is current so audit notices are not missed.

☐ Driver, vehicle, HOS, drug/alcohol, accident, insurance, and general compliance records are organized for review.

☐ Carrier has reviewed FMCSA's New Entrant educational material and Safety Planner.

☐ Management understands violations that can cause automatic Safety Audit failure.

☐ Any known compliance weakness has a documented corrective action and follow-up date.

☐ Records can be submitted electronically if the carrier is selected for an offsite/electronic audit.

10. Monthly Compliance Review

☐ Review upcoming expirations for CDL, medical status, registrations, permits, insurance, annual inspections, and other credentials.

☐ Review roadside inspections and open corrective actions.

☐ Review HOS/ELD exceptions and unidentified driving.

☐ Confirm drug/alcohol program and Clearinghouse tasks are current.

☐ Review maintenance due dates and unresolved defects.

☐ Review crash/incident files.

☐ Review FMCSA safety performance data and company compliance calendar.

☐ Document who completed the review and the date.

Corrective Action Log

Issue / Missing Item	Action Required	Responsible Person	Due Date	Completed
				☐

				☐
				☐
				☐
				☐
				☐
				☐
				☐
				☐

Compliance Review Sign-Off

Carrier / Company: ______________________________________

USDOT Number: _____________________

Reviewed By: ____

Review Date: ________________   Next Review: ________________

Highest-priority corrective action: ____

____

Official FMCSA Resources

- **Motor Carrier Safety Planner:** https://csa.fmcsa.dot.gov/SafetyPlanner/
- **Safety Planner Forms Library:** https://csa.fmcsa.dot.gov/SafetyPlanner/Resources/FormsLibrary.aspx
- **New Entrant Safety Assurance Program:** https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety/new-entrant-safety-assurance-program
- **FMCSA Hours of Service:** https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/hours-service
- **FMCSA Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse:** https://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov/

Final Reminder

Compliance is not a one-time filing. It is an operating system. A carrier should be able to show, through current records and daily practices, that qualified drivers, safe equipment, lawful hours, testing requirements, maintenance, crash response, and corrective actions are being managed consistently.

MKUU TRANSPORTATION