

Small-carrier DOT compliance checklist.

A starting point for your paperwork. Mark what needs review, assign the next step and keep proof in the right place.

Requirements depend on your operation, drivers, vehicles, cargo and states. Check the linked official guidance and applicable exceptions. Sources reviewed September 15, 2026.

CURRENT FMCSA NOTICE

FMCSA has temporarily paused biennial-update enforcement and related USDOT inactivation for updates due on or after June 1, 2026 during the Motus transition. Check the current notice for changes. This does not waive other carrier requirements. [Read the notice.](#)

☐ **01 Define your operation.**

Record your operating scope, vehicles, cargo and applicable federal and state requirements. An in-state trip can be part of interstate commerce.

[Official source](#)

☐ **02 Review your carrier details.**

Check your carrier details against the official registration record. Note corrections and use current FMCSA Motus guidance.

[Official source](#)

☐ **03 Record your normal MCS-150 schedule.**

Record the normal FMCSA update schedule and keep submission proof. Check the temporary-relief notice on this page before acting on a date.

[Official source](#)

☐ **04 Check UCR applicability and year.**

Check UCR applicability using the official guide. Record the registration year, verified vehicle count and receipt location.

[Official source](#)

☐ **05 Organize covered drivers' qualification files.**

For drivers subject to Part 391, compare each qualification file with FMCSA's checklist and applicable retention rules.

[Official source](#)

☐ **06 Check initial MVR inquiries.**

Check required initial MVR inquiries, including the preceding three years of licensing states, timing and applicable exceptions.

[Official source](#)

Your drivers. Your records.

Continue your review, then choose the next action.

- ☐

07 Schedule the annual MVR review.

For covered drivers, obtain and review the MVR at least every 12 months. Keep the reviewer's name and review date.

[Official source](#)
- ☐

08 Track license and medical dates.

Record actual license and applicable medical-certification dates. Confirm the required verification records for each driver.

[Official source](#)
- ☐

09 Review Clearinghouse queries and consent.

For covered drivers, check a full pre-employment query and a query at least every 12 months. Limited and full queries require different consent; review official guidance.

[Official source](#)
- ☐

10 Confirm drug and alcohol program duties.

Check applicable Part 382 testing duties and owner-operator C/TPA designation. Clearinghouse queries do not replace drug testing.

[Official source](#)
- ☐

11 Locate vehicle and hours-of-service records.

Locate applicable inspection, maintenance and duty-status records. Review operating exceptions and official requirements.

[Official source](#)
- ☐

12 Give each next step an owner.

Assign a responsible person, next review date and record location. A checked box is not submission proof or a compliance certification.

WRITE DOWN THE NEXT STEP

Task / next action	Responsible person	Next review	Record location

Keep sensitive driver details out of this worksheet. A checked box does not file anything, run a query or establish compliance.

Online checklist and all official sources axlebell.com/resources/dot-compliance-checklist/

Preparing for UCR? [Read AxleBell's 2027 UCR guide](#). Keep ongoing reminders and records together: [explore AxleBell plans](#).