FMCSA READINESS WORKSHEET

New Entrant Safety Audit Checklist

A practical document-gathering and self-review guide for passenger carriers and other newly registered motor carriers.

12	18	45
MONTHS: AUDIT GENERALLY OCCURS WITHIN YOUR FIRST YEAR	MONTHS: NEW ENTRANT MONITORING PERIOD	DAYS: FMCSA TARGET TO NOTIFY YOU OF RESULTS

What the audit is

FMCSA uses the New Entrant Safety Audit to confirm that a new carrier has basic safety-management controls in place. The audit may occur at the carrier's principal place of business or electronically. Your auditor may request additional records based on your operation.

A Carrier profile — complete before gathering records

Legal business name _____	USDOT number _____
DBA / trade name _____	MC number, if applicable _____
Principal place of business _____	Primary FMCSA contact _____
Audit date / response deadline _____	Auditor / agency contact _____

B Before the audit notice arrives

- ☐ Confirm the legal name, address, phone, email, and operating status in FMCSA records are current.
- ☐ Assign one person to own the audit response and one backup who can locate records quickly.
- ☐ Keep records organized by driver, vehicle, and compliance program—not only by calendar month.
- ☐ Run an internal review against the automatic-failure items on page 3 and correct control gaps now.

Document-Readiness Checklist

Use this as an assembly list. Check both availability and completeness; a document that exists but is unsigned, expired, or missing supporting records may not prove compliance.

1 Carrier, authority, and insurance

- [ ] Current FMCSA registration and operating-authority records, as applicable.
- [ ] Proof of required financial responsibility / insurance and any required endorsement or filing.
- [ ] Written safety policies, assigned responsibilities, and corrective-action documentation.
- [ ] MCS-90 or other proof applicable to the operation; ADA or household-goods records if applicable.

2 Drivers and qualification files

- [ ] Driver roster: name, date of birth, hire date, license number, license state, class, and status.
- [ ] Complete driver qualification file for every driver who operated a regulated vehicle.
- [ ] Motor vehicle record checks, review documentation, medical certification, road test or equivalent, and required inquiries.
- [ ] Commercial driver's license and endorsements appropriate for each vehicle and passenger capacity.
- [ ] Disqualification monitoring and documentation showing prohibited drivers are not dispatched.

3 Hours of service and operating records

- [ ] Records of duty status or time records for the applicable audit period, with supporting documents.
- [ ] ELD records and supporting documentation when an ELD is required; exception basis documented when not required.
- [ ] Evidence that logs are reviewed, violations are addressed, and false or incomplete records are corrected.
- [ ] Passenger-carrier dispatch, trip, charter, fuel, toll, payroll, and other records that corroborate duty status.

4 Vehicles, inspection, repair, and maintenance

- [ ] Vehicle roster: unit number, VIN, plate/state, GVWR, seating capacity, ownership/lease status, and service dates.
- [ ] Systematic maintenance plan and vehicle-specific inspection, repair, and maintenance records.
- [ ] Current periodic/annual inspection documentation for each regulated vehicle.
- [ ] Driver vehicle inspection reports and proof that safety defects were repaired before operation.
- [ ] Inspector qualifications, including brake-inspector qualifications where required.
- [ ] Roadside inspection reports and documented correction of cited defects or out-of-service conditions.

5 Drug and alcohol program — CDL drivers

- [ ] Written DOT drug and alcohol testing program and consortium/third-party administrator records.
- [ ] Pre-employment, random, post-accident, reasonable-suspicion, return-to-duty, and follow-up records, as applicable.
- [ ] Random testing selections, testing pool/driver lists, annual summaries or MIS data, and proof of required rates.
- [ ] Supervisor reasonable-suspicion training and FMCSA Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse compliance records.

6 Crashes and operation-specific records

- [ ] Accident register and available supporting records for FMCSA-reportable crashes during the prior three years.
- [ ] Post-accident testing decisions and documentation, including why a test was or was not required.
- [ ] Hazardous-materials shipping papers, training, permits, security plan, and registration if applicable.
- [ ] Passenger-carrier emergency procedures, accessibility documentation, and other records requested for the operation.

Automatic-Failure Risk Review

Treat every unchecked item as urgent

FMCSA identifies certain violations that can cause a New Entrant Safety Audit failure. This page translates the official list into a practical control review; the regulation citations are included so you can verify the exact rule.

☐	**DRUG & ALCOHOL**	A testing program is implemented for CDL drivers. §382.115(a), (b)
☐	**DRUG & ALCOHOL**	No driver known to have an alcohol concentration of 0.04 or greater performs a safety-sensitive function. §382.201
☐	**DRUG & ALCOHOL**	No driver who refuses a required test performs a safety-sensitive function. §382.211
☐	**DRUG & ALCOHOL**	No driver known to have tested positive for a controlled substance performs a safety-sensitive function. §382.215
☐	**DRUG & ALCOHOL**	Random testing is conducted at the required rates. §382.305
☐	**DRIVER LICENSE**	Every required driver holds the proper CDL. §383.3(a); §383.23(a)
☐	**DRIVER LICENSE**	The carrier does not knowingly allow a driver whose CDL/permit is disqualified by a State, or who lost the right to operate, to drive a CMV. §383.37(b)
☐	**DRIVER LICENSE**	The carrier does not knowingly allow a driver who is disqualified from driving a CMV to operate. §383.51(a)
☐	**INSURANCE**	Required financial responsibility is in effect. §387.7(a)
☐	**INSURANCE**	Passenger-carrier financial responsibility requirements are met, when applicable. §387.31(a)
☐	**DRIVER QUALIFICATION**	The carrier does not knowingly use a driver disqualified under the general driver-qualification rules. §391.15(a)
☐	**DRIVER QUALIFICATION**	The carrier does not knowingly use a physically unqualified driver. §391.11(b)(4)
☐	**HOURS OF SERVICE**	Records of duty status are maintained; FMCSA's automatic-fail list uses a 51% or greater noncompliance threshold. §395.8(a)
☐	**VEHICLE SAFETY**	Vehicles declared out of service are not operated before required repairs. §396.9(c)(2)
☐	**VEHICLE SAFETY**	Safety-related defects listed on inspection reports are repaired before operation. §396.11(c)
☐	**VEHICLE SAFETY**	Periodic inspections are completed; FMCSA's automatic-fail list uses a 51% or greater noncompliance threshold. §396.17(a)

Important: FMCSA may update its rules and enforcement guidance. Verify the current official list before submitting your audit response.

Final Assembly & Submission Review

Build a response package that an auditor can navigate without guessing.

1 Quality-control the package

- [ ] Match every requested item to a clearly named file or folder and a one-page index.
- [ ] Confirm names, dates, VINs, license numbers, and vehicle identifiers are consistent across records.
- [ ] Check signatures, certifications, expiration dates, test results, and documented corrective actions.
- [ ] Remove unrelated personal information only when appropriate; preserve complete originals and follow the auditor's delivery instructions.
- [ ] Keep a dated copy of exactly what was submitted and proof of delivery.

2 Prepare the people and workspace

- [ ] Identify the manager who understands daily operations and the staff who own driver, maintenance, HOS, and testing records.
- [ ] For an on-site audit, provide a quiet work area, a stable work surface, and reasonable access to key personnel.
- [ ] Answer accurately and directly. If you do not know, verify the record instead of guessing.
- [ ] If FMCSA identifies deficiencies, document corrective action promptly and follow all response deadlines.

3 Open items / notes

Want a second set of eyes before the audit?

LBC Fleet helps motor carriers organize records, identify control gaps, and prepare for New Entrant Safety Audits.

lbcfleet.com/new-entrant-safety-audit-preparation/ | +1-480-779-4342

Official references

- New Entrant Safety Audits
- New Entrant Safety Assurance Program
- Automatic-failure regulations
- FMCSA Safety Audit Resource Guide

This checklist is general educational information, not legal advice and not a substitute for FMCSA instructions. Requirements depend on your operation, vehicles, drivers, and commodities. Your auditor may request additional records. Current as of August 2026.