

FREE CHECKLIST | DOT AUDIT READINESS

DOT Audit Readiness Checklist for Trucking Companies

If you have an audit notice, or you just want to sleep better at night, this is what to have organized before FMCSA asks. Work top to bottom. If you cannot check a box, that is exactly where to start. Hi, I am Rhythm, aka The Safety Gal, and this is the same list I run with new clients.

1. Driver files

- Every active driver has a complete qualification file
- Applications signed and dated
- MVRs pulled from every state the driver held a license in the last 3 years
- Current medical examiner's certificate on file, not expired
- CDL copy current and legible
- Pre-employment drug test result and FMCSA Clearinghouse query on file
- Annual MVR review documented

2. HOS and ELD records

- ELD registered and running on every truck that needs one
- Logs available for the audit period (confirm the exact scope in your notice)
- Unassigned driving time reviewed and resolved
- Log edits documented with a reason
- Supporting documents kept where required (fuel, tolls, dispatch)

3. Drug and alcohol program

- Written policy in place and given to drivers
- Random testing pool active (usually through a consortium)
- Pre-employment, random, post-accident, reasonable suspicion, and return-to-duty procedures documented
- Clearinghouse registered, with pre-hire and annual queries run

4. Vehicle maintenance records

- Periodic (annual) inspection on file for every vehicle
- DVIRs collected and reported defects repaired, with documentation
- Preventive maintenance tracked by mileage or time
- Repair invoices kept

5. Accident register and incident records

- Accident register maintained and current
- Post-accident testing documentation where it applies
- Copies of relevant reports and insurance claims on file

6. Insurance and authority documents

- Proof of active insurance at your required limits
- Operating authority and DOT/MC numbers current
- UCR, IRP, and IFTA registrations current where they apply

7. Company policies and safety controls

- Written safety policies your drivers have acknowledged
- Someone named as responsible for compliance
- A system, not memory, tracks every expiration

8. What to do after receiving an audit notice

- Read exactly what is requested and the deadline
- Pull those records first and find the gaps before the auditor does
- Organize so any single document can be produced in seconds
- Get help early if the timeline is tight

9. What not to do

- Do not ignore the notice hoping it goes away
- Do not alter, backdate, or create records after the fact
- Do not wait until the last week to start
- Do not assume the auditor is out to get you. They are verifying a system. Show them one.

10. When to ask for help

- Your records live across email, paper folders, and memory
- You are not sure what the auditor will focus on
- Your scores are elevated or you have had a serious incident
- You would rather have someone who has sat across from FMCSA get you ready

Need help getting audit-ready? Book a Free Compliance Review at fleetregulators.com/contact.html

Disclaimer: This checklist is for general educational purposes and does not guarantee audit results. Requirements may vary by carrier type, operation, audit scope, and current regulations. Confirm what applies to you against current FMCSA rules.