

FREE CHECKLIST | DRIVER QUALIFICATION FILES

Driver Qualification File Checklist for Motor Carriers

If your DQ file system depends on memory, it is not a system. Pull three random driver files right now and check them against this list. If any file is missing something, that is your starting point. Straight talk from The Safety Gal.

1. Driver application

- Signed and dated
- Covers the previous 10 years of employment history

2. CDL and license information

- Current copy on file, front and back
- Correct class and endorsements for the work

3. MVRs

- Pulled at hire from every state held in the last 3 years
- Reviewed again every year

4. Medical certificate

- Current and not expired
- Matches the license record

5. Road test or equivalent

- Road test certificate on file, or an acceptable substitute documented

6. Previous employer safety performance history where applicable

- Written inquiries sent to DOT-regulated employers from the last 3 years
- Responses (or documented attempts) kept in the file

7. Annual review

- Documented review of the driving record
- A qualified person's written determination that the driver is still qualified

8. Clearinghouse documentation where applicable

- Pre-employment full query on file
- Annual limited query for each active CDL driver

9. Expiration tracking

- Alerts set for medical cards, MVR reviews, and Clearinghouse queries before they lapse
- Someone owns following up, not just filing

10. Common DQ file mistakes

- Expired medical cards still sitting in active files
- MVR pulled at hire but never updated
- Missing Clearinghouse queries, especially the annual one
- No documentation of the previous-employer inquiry
- Training records stored separately, invisible during an audit

Want us to review your driver files? Book a Free Compliance Review at fleetregulators.com/contact.html

Disclaimer: This checklist is general educational guidance. Confirm current requirements based on your operation and applicable FMCSA regulations.