

# Step-by-Step Checklist:

## How to Set Up MC Authority with FMCSA

*Motor Carrier Authority (For-Hire Interstate Operations)*

Use this checklist to **track progress, compliance, and avoid common delays** when applying for MC Authority.

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### Before You Apply (Preparation)

- Confirm you need **MC Authority** (for-hire, interstate operations)
- Decide carrier type:
  - Motor Carrier of Property
  - Broker (if applicable)
- Determine operation type:
  - Interstate
  - Intrastate (state-specific authority may also apply)
    - Legal business entity is registered with your state
    - EIN obtained from the IRS (**FREE**)
    - Business bank account opened

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### Step 1: Apply for DOT Number & MC Authority

- Create an account in the **FMCSA Unified Registration System (URS)**
- Complete the online application (MCSA-1)
- Select correct authority type

- Pay FMCSA filing fee (**\$300 per authority type**)
- Application submitted successfully

*FMCSA fees are paid directly by the business owner.*

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#### **Step 2: FMCSA Application Review (Waiting Period)**

- MC number issued (pending status)
- 21-day public protest period begins
- FMCSA application status monitored

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#### **Step 3: Insurance Requirements (Critical)**

- Obtain required insurance coverage:
  - Auto Liability (typically \$750,000 minimum)
  - Cargo Insurance (required by most brokers/shippers)
    - Insurance company files:
  - **BMC-91 or BMC-91X** (liability)
  - **BMC-34** (cargo, if applicable)
    - Confirm filings are visible in FMCSA system

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#### **Step 4: Designate Process Agents (BOC-3)**

- Select a BOC-3 process agent service
- BOC-3 filed electronically with FMCSA
- Coverage includes all required states

*BOC-3 must be on file before authority can be activated.*

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#### **Step 5: Unified Carrier Registration (UCR)**

- Register for **UCR**
- Pay annual UCR fee (based on fleet size)
- Confirmation saved for records

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#### **Step 6: Safety & Compliance Setup (Required)**

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- Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse account created
- Random testing consortium enrolled (if CDL drivers)
- Driver qualification files established
- Hours of Service (HOS) system selected
- ELD compliance reviewed (if applicable)
- Vehicle maintenance files created
- Accident register set up

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#### **Step 7: Vehicle & Driver Requirements**

- Vehicle(s) properly titled and registered
- Annual vehicle inspections completed
- Proof of insurance carried in vehicle
- Driver credentials verified:
  - Valid license
  - Medical certificate (if required)
  - Background checks completed

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#### **Step 8: New Entrant Safety Audit Preparation**

- Safety policies documented
- Compliance records organized
- New Entrant Safety Audit readiness confirmed
- Contact information updated in FMCSA portal

*The New Entrant Safety Audit typically occurs within the first 12 months.*

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#### **Step 9: Authority Activation**

- Insurance filings accepted
- BOC-3 on file
- UCR active
- Authority status shows **ACTIVE** in FMCSA system

You are now authorized to operate legally.

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#### **Ongoing Compliance (Do Not Skip)**

- Maintain active insurance at all times
- Renew UCR annually
- Update FMCSA MCS-150 every 2 years or as required
- Maintain driver, vehicle, and safety files
- Comply with DOT audits and inspections

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### **Important Notes**

- All **FMCSA and government fees are paid by the business owner**
- Missing filings are the most common cause of delayed authority activation
- Insurance filings must be submitted by the **insurance provider**, not the carrier

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### **Optional Setup Assistance**

MC Authority setup assistance is available for those who prefer guided support.

#### **Service Fee: \$500 (services only)**

- Includes guidance, filing support, and compliance setup
- All FMCSA, insurance, and government fees are paid separately by the business owner

*I am not an attorney or accountant. Legal or accounting matters may be referred to licensed professionals.*

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### **Final Reminder**

Strong compliance practices from day one help protect your authority and your business. Use this checklist to stay organized, informed, and audit-ready.

— **Halima Moore**

Owner & Founder