Carrier vetting checklist for freight brokers

Tick each line before you tender the load, and file this page with it. "VetCarrier" marks what a VetCarrier check reads from the FMCSA record; "Partly" means the check helps; "You" means you do it elsewhere.

BEFORE YOU BOOK: THE FMCSA RECORD

- ☐ Operating authority is active and includes carrier authority, not broker authority alone. — **VetCarrier**
- ☐ The USDOT number is active. — **VetCarrier**
- ☐ No out-of-service order is on the record. — **VetCarrier**
- ☐ Liability insurance on file meets the federal minimum for the freight. — **VetCarrier**
- ☐ The safety rating is not Unsatisfactory. — **VetCarrier**

BEFORE YOU BOOK: THE COMPANY BEHIND THE RECORD

- ☐ The legal name, DBA and address on the record match the carrier packet and the rate confirmation. — **Partly**
- ☐ Phone and email are confirmed through a number or address you looked up yourself. — **You**
- ☐ Email domains are read letter by letter, and a free email account used for company business is questioned. — **You**
- ☐ The certificate of insurance is confirmed with the insurer or agent, using contact details you found. — **You**
- ☐ Watch for copied records: recent changes to a carrier's contact details are a reason to call the carrier directly. — **You**

AT PICKUP AND AFTER

- ☐ The truck shows the carrier's name and USDOT number, and they match the rate confirmation. — **You**
- ☐ Driver, license, truck, plates and DOT and MC numbers are documented with photos. — **You**
- ☐ The transaction record is kept for three years, with the carrier's name, address and registration number. — **Partly**
- ☐ Fraud is reported: police report and ic3.gov for stolen cargo, FMCSA's National Consumer Complaint Database for registration misuse. — **You**

Criminals copy real carrier records, so a clean record does not prove the caller is that carrier: confirm phone, email and address through contact details you found yourself. Following this checklist does not prevent theft, and a VetCarrier check is not a guarantee that a carrier is safe or legitimate.

Sources: FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center, PSA I-043026-PSA, Cyber-Enabled Strategic Cargo Theft Surging, April 30, 2026; FMCSA SAFER, Company Snapshot help (field definitions); 49 CFR 387.9, Financial responsibility, minimum levels (eCFR); 49 CFR 385.13, Carriers with an Unsatisfactory safety rating (eCFR); 49 CFR 390.21T, Marking of commercial motor vehicles (eCFR); 49 CFR Part 371, Brokers of Property (eCFR); FMCSA, National Consumer Complaint Database information collection, Federal Register, June 6, 2025 (govinfo).

General information, not legal or insurance advice. Free to print and share. Full checklist with links: https://vetcarrier.org/tools/carrier-vetting-checklist/