



FMCSA



## FMCSA Operating Authority Startup Guide

This guide is designed to help new carriers understand the essential steps in obtaining FMCSA operating authority.

### Step 1: Register for a USDOT Number

- Use the FMCSA Unified Registration System (URS).
- Required for all carriers operating in interstate commerce.

### Step 2: Apply for Operating Authority (MC Number)

- Choose the correct authority: common carrier, contract carrier, or broker.
- File Form OP-1 or apply via the URS.

### Step 3: Designate Process Agents

- File Form BOC-3 to designate legal agents in each state of operation.

### Step 4: Get Insurance Coverage

- File proof of insurance with FMCSA via Form MCS-90 or E-form.
- Minimum public liability insurance varies by commodity.

### Step 5: Pay the Unified Carrier Registration (UCR) Fee

- Required annually based on fleet size.

### Step 6: Comply with Safety Requirements

- Create a Drug & Alcohol Testing Program.
- Maintain a Driver Qualification File for each driver.

- Set up Hours of Service (HOS) compliance and ELDs.

#### Step 7: Prepare for Audits

- New Entrant Safety Audits are common within the first 12 months.

Keep copies of all registration, filings, and compliance forms for your records.

For detailed help, visit [FMCSA.gov](https://www.fmcsa.gov) or consult a compliance specialist.