

Every motor carrier, its officers, drivers, agents, representatives, and employees directly concerned with inspection or maintenance of commercial motor vehicles must comply and be conversant with these rules.

General requirements

Every carrier shall systematically inspect, repair, and maintain all commercial motor vehicles under its control.

Recordkeeping requirements

Motor carriers must maintain the following information for every vehicle they have controlled for 30 days or more:

Identifying information, including company number, make, serial number, year, and tire size

- A schedule of inspections to be performed, including type and due date
- Inspection, repair, and maintenance records
- Records of tests conducted on buses with pushout windows, emergency doors, and marking lights.

These records must be retained for one year at the location where the vehicle is garaged, and maintained for six months after the vehicle leaves the carrier's control (via sale, trade-in, or scrap).

Roadside inspection reports

Any driver who receives a roadside inspection report must deliver it to the motor carrier.

Certification of roadside inspection reports

An official of the motor carrier is to examine the roadside inspection report and ensure that any violations or defects noted on the report are corrected. Within 15 days after the inspection, the carrier must sign the completed roadside inspection report to certify that all violations have been corrected, and then return it to the indicated address. A copy must be retained for 12 months from the date of inspection.

Post-trip inspection report

Every carrier must require its drivers to prepare a daily written post-trip inspection report at the end of each driving day. Every driver is responsible for preparing such a report for each vehicle driven. This report must cover at least the following parts and accessories:

Service brakes (including trailer brake connections)

- Parking (hand) brake
- Steering mechanism
- Lighting devices and reflectors
- Tires
- Horn
- Windshield wipers
- Rearview mirrors
- Coupling devices

- Wheels and rims
- Emergency equipment.

The report must list any condition that the driver either found or had reported to him/her that would affect safety of operation or cause a breakdown. If no defect or deficiency is reported or found, the report should state this. The driver must sign the report in all cases. Before dispatching the vehicle again, a carrier shall ensure that a certification has been made as to any defect or deficiency, that they have been corrected, or state those deficiencies that do not require immediate correction. Carriers must keep the original post-trip inspection report and the certification of repairs for at least three months from the date of preparation.

Before starting out, the driver must be satisfied that the motor vehicle is in safe operating condition. If the last vehicle inspection report notes any deficiencies, the driver must review and sign to acknowledge that necessary repairs have been completed.

Periodic inspection

Every commercial vehicle, including each segment of a combination vehicle requires periodic inspection that must be performed at least once every 12 months. At a minimum, inspections must include all items enumerated in the Minimum Periodic Inspection Standards, Appendix G to Subchapter B. Carriers may perform required annual inspections themselves. The original or a copy of the periodic inspection report must be retained by the motor carrier for 14 months from the report date.

Documentation of inspection

Documentation (report, sticker, or decal) of the most recent periodic inspection must be kept on the vehicle.

Inspector qualification

Motor carriers must ensure that persons performing annual inspections are qualified. Inspectors must:

understand the inspection standards of Part 393 and Appendix G

- be able to identify defective components
- have knowledge and proficiency in methods, procedures, and tools.

Inspector training or experience

Inspectors may have gained experience or training by:

completing a State or Federal training program, or earning a State or Canadian Province qualifying certificate in commercial motor vehicle safety inspections

- a combination of other training or experience totaling at least a year.

Evidence of qualifications

Motor carriers must retain evidence of an inspector's qualifications until one year after the inspector ceases to perform inspections for the carrier.

Equivalent to periodic inspection

The motor carrier may meet periodic inspection requirements through:

State or other jurisdiction's roadside inspection program;

- Self-inspection by qualified employee; or
- Third party inspection by qualified individual.

Brake inspector qualification

The motor carrier is responsible for ensuring that all inspections, maintenance, repairs, and service to brakes of commercial motor vehicles comply with these regulations. The carrier must ensure that the employees responsible for brake inspection, maintenance, service, or repairs meet minimum brake inspector qualifications.

Qualifications for brake inspectors

The brake inspector must:

understand and be able to perform the brake service and inspection;

- know the methods, procedures, tools and equipment needed; and
- be qualified to perform brake service or inspection by training and/or experience.

Qualifying brake training or experience

Qualifying brake training or experience includes successful completion of:

a State, Canadian Province, Federal agency, or union training program,

- a State-approved training program,
- training that led to attainment of a State or Canadian Province qualifying certificate to perform assigned brake service or inspection tasks, including passage of CDL air brake test in the case of a brake inspection, or
- one year of brake-related training, experience, or combination of both.

Maintaining evidence of brake inspector qualifications

Motor carriers must maintain evidence of brake inspector qualification at the principal place of business or the location where the inspector works. Evidence must be retained for the period during which the brake inspector is employed in that capacity, and for one year thereafter.