

Fleet Maintenance Recordkeeping Requirements

A well-managed fleet maintenance program is an important step to reduce operational costs, reduce accidents resulting from equipment defects, and to improve public opinion of your company. Scheduling preventative maintenance will allow your company to plan repair work that will not curtail operations and anticipate problems and promote corrections before they become serious. All maintenance should be performed by a qualified mechanic and the manufacturer's recommended maintenance program and schedule should be reviewed and maintained.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) require companies to maintain certain documents and records regarding fleet maintenance. Companies must maintain records for each motor vehicle they operate or control for 30 consecutive days or more.

There are numerous methods that can be utilized to maintain maintenance records. All records, except those requiring a signature, may be maintained electronically, provided the company can produce a printout of the required data upon demand. Your company may choose to maintain records electronically, in three ring binders, or in file folders; ultimately, it is important to establish a recordkeeping system that works for your operation.

Maintenance Files

Maintenance files must be kept where the vehicle is housed or maintained for a minimum of **one year** and for **six months** after the vehicle leaves a company's control. The file must include:

- Vehicle identification including company number (if so marked), year, make, serial number, and tire size. If the vehicle is leased, the person furnishing the vehicle must be identified.
- A written schedule or means to indicate the nature and due date of the various inspection and maintenance operations to be performed
- A record including the date and nature of inspection, repairs, and maintenance
- A record of tests conducted on push-out windows, emergency doors, and emergency door marking lights on buses (as applicable)

Periodic (Annual) Inspection

The original or a copy of the periodic inspection report shall be retained by a carrier for a period of **14 months** from the date of the inspection report. The original or a copy of the inspection report must be retained where the vehicle is either housed or maintained.

Evidence of Inspector and/or Brake Inspector Qualifications

Carriers must ensure that individuals performing annual inspections and/or brake inspections are qualified. The carrier must retain evidence of the individual's qualifications. The evidence must be retained **for the period the person is employed in that capacity and one year thereafter**. Note: Carriers do not have to maintain documentation of inspector qualifications for those inspections performed as part of a state periodic inspection program.

Roadside Inspection Reports

Fleet drivers must turn roadside inspection forms completed by Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)-authorized inspectors into their carriers within 24 hours. If fleet drivers are not returning to the carrier within 24 hours, he or she must fax, mail, or transmit the form to the carrier.



Upon receipt of the inspection form, all violations or defects noted are to be corrected. The carrier is to retain one copy of the completed form for **one year** at the principal place of business or where the vehicle is housed.

Driver Vehicle Inspection Reports

Every carrier shall require its drivers to report, and every driver shall prepare a written report at the completion of each day's work on each vehicle operated. Every carrier shall maintain the original driver vehicle inspection report, the certification of repairs, and the certification of the driver's review for **three months** from the date the written report was prepared.

Resources:

<http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/title49/section/396.1>

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