

# DOT Driver Qualification File Checklist

Every document FMCSA §391.51 requires in a driver qualification file, grouped by topic with the regulation cite. Print and tick during onboarding and at every annual review.

## Hiring application & background

Reg.	Document
■ §391.21	Driver employment application — full §391.21 form, signed and dated
■ §391.21(b)(10)	3-year residence history (most-failed line)
■ §391.21(b)(11)	10-year employment history (3 yrs for non-CDL roles)
■ §391.23	Investigation of previous employers — written request sent within 30 days of hire
■ §391.23	Previous-employer responses (or your written attempts after 30 days of no reply)
■ §391.23(d)	Previous DOT drug & alcohol testing history (the §382.413 lookup)

## Licensing

Reg.	Document
■ §391.11(b)(5)	Copy of valid CDL (front + back), license class matches vehicle type
■ §383.71	Driver self-certification of operation type (interstate/intrastate, excepted/non-excepted)
■ §391.27	Annual driving record review — within 12 months of every anniversary
■ §391.27(b)	Annual MVR from each state where the driver was licensed in the past 12 months
■ §383.31	CLP/CDL applicant disclosure of prior driving record

## Medical qualification

Reg.	Document
■ §391.43	DOT medical examiner's certificate (Form MCSA-5876) — 2-year max, sometimes shorter
■ §391.41	Medical examination report (Form MCSA-5875) — kept on file
■ §391.43(g)	If the driver has a waiver/exemption (vision, diabetes, hearing) — keep on file
■ §383.71(h)	Driver's medical self-cert filed with state DMV (matches DQ file)

## Road test & training

Reg.	Document
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- §391.31 Road test certificate, OR equivalent CDL (most carriers use the CDL substitute)
- §380.609 ELDT (Entry-Level Driver Training) certification — required for CDL applicants since Feb 7, 2022
- §391.51(b)(8) Annual driver review record — performance / safety review

## Drug & alcohol program

Reg.	Document
■ §382.301	Pre-employment drug test result (negative)
■ §382.413	Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse pre-employment query (full)
■ §382.701	Annual Clearinghouse limited query — every 12 months
■ §382.305	Random testing pool enrollment

## Ongoing file

Reg.	Document
■ §391.51(d)	Retain DQ file 'while employed + 3 years' after separation
■ §395.8	Driver HOS / RODS records — retained 6 months minimum
■ §391.27	Each year's MVR + annual review document
■ §391.51(c)	If a driver is moved to a higher-risk operation type, refresh self-cert + MVR

**Reminder:** a missing DQ document at audit time draws the same penalty whether you had it once and lost it, or never collected it. Track expiry dates on the medical card (§391.43) and the annual MVR (§391.27) above all — those are the most-cited gaps in FMCSA roadside inspections.

Want this checklist to update itself? MyCarrierVault tracks every §391.51 document per driver, alerts you 30 / 7 / 0 days before each one expires, and flags drivers as 'medically unqualified' the day a card lapses. Free for 30 days at [mycarriervault.com](https://mycarriervault.com). No credit card.

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