



Roles and Responsibilities in the Shipping Supply Chain

Transporting goods through a freight brokerage arrangement involves a coordinated process among shippers, who need to transport goods; freight brokers, who arrange the transportation for those goods; and carriers, who physically move the freight. Each is subject to federal oversight from various agencies within the U.S. Department of Transportation, including the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). Each bears responsibility for complying with different aspects of the process that apply specifically to the role they play:

Responsibility	Shipper	Broker	Carrier	FMCSA
Carrier and driver verification at pickup , including confirming a valid U.S. DOT number that matches the carrier of record	✓			
Cargo securement/hazmat compliance , identifying and declaring hazardous materials, oversized loads, or other materials requiring special handling	✓			
Hours of service compliance for drivers , including daily on-duty caps and establishing pickup, loading/unloading, and delivery schedules that adhere to requirements	✓		✓	
English language proficiency for drivers			✓	
Pre-trip and other inspections , and correcting defects before a vehicle is dispatched			✓	
Driver qualification and training , ensuring federal standards (CDL, background checks, etc.) are met and driver records and documentation are maintained			✓	
Establish, implement, and enforce safety policies and take corrective action if violations occur			✓	
Control of how trips are planned and executed			✓	
Represent company as broker, not carrier , and maintain all required federal regulations, authority, and financial responsibility as a broker		✓		
Vetting and selecting carriers with active authority/insurance		✓		
Require carriers to comply with all applicable federal and state safety regulations in written agreements/contracts		✓		
Avoiding improper pressure on drivers to violate safety regulations	✓	✓		
Provide accurate load information to carriers and promptly communicate any changes		✓		
Establish, maintain, and enforce national safety standards for commercial drivers and carriers				✓
Operate safety information programs to track inspections, crashes, and violations and direct enforcement accordingly				✓
Safety guidance, interpretation, and education				✓
Registration and operating authority , including DOT number issuance and certain requirements for carriers and brokers				✓