CARRIERSPRING

New Carrier Launch Checklist

A practical starting guide for organizing a new trucking business. Check off each item as it is completed and keep the supporting records together.

1. Build the business foundation

[ ] Choose the state where the company will be formed and check the business name.

[ ] File the LLC or other entity and keep the approved formation documents.

[ ] Obtain an EIN directly from the IRS and create a dedicated business email.

[ ] Set up a business bank account and basic bookkeeping process.

[ ] Confirm the registered-agent and business-address requirements for your state.

2. Define the operation before filing

[ ] List the freight, passengers, or commodities you plan to transport.

[ ] Decide whether you will operate interstate, intrastate, or both.

[ ] Identify equipment type, truck count, weight ratings, and ownership or lease structure.

[ ] Confirm whether your operation needs operating authority in addition to a USDOT number.

[ ] Choose only the authority type that fits the planned operation; mistaken federal fees may be non-refundable.

3. Complete registrations and authority steps

[ ] Apply for the USDOT number and required operating authority.

[ ] Complete BOC-3 process-agent filing when required.

[ ] Register for UCR and state programs that apply to the operation.

[ ] Review IRP, IFTA, HVUT, state permits, and apportioned plate requirements.

[ ] Track every confirmation number, payment receipt, and agency notice.

4. Prepare insurance and activation

- [ ] Request commercial insurance quotes based on accurate equipment and cargo information.
- [ ] Confirm the insurer understands the authority type and filing requirements.
- [ ] Make sure required insurance filings are submitted to the correct agency.
- [ ] Do not dispatch loads until authority and required coverage are active.

5. Build the safety and compliance files

- [ ] Create driver qualification files for every driver, including the owner-driver.
- [ ] Set up Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse responsibilities and a testing program when applicable.
- [ ] Prepare vehicle maintenance, inspection, accident-register, and hours-of-service records.
- [ ] Document safety policies and train drivers on the procedures they must follow.
- [ ] Create a calendar for renewals, annual reviews, registrations, and tax filings.

6. Prepare the business to haul

- [ ] Create a professional carrier packet with W-9, authority, insurance, and payment information.
- [ ] Set up invoicing, document storage, load records, and factoring or collections workflows.
- [ ] Choose ELD, fuel-card, dispatch, and transportation-management tools.
- [ ] Review broker-carrier agreements before signing and verify every broker before accepting a load.
- [ ] Set minimum rate, lane, fuel, maintenance, and cash-reserve targets before booking freight.

Important	Timelines and fees vary by agency, state, filing type, completeness, and outside review. This checklist is educational and does not guarantee approval or replace legal, tax, accounting, insurance, or regulatory advice.

Need help organizing your launch? Visit carrierspring.com/start or email support@carrierspring.com.