

ALERT: Broker and Carrier Fraud and Identity Theft

Fraud and identity theft occurs when entities use another motor carrier's assigned USDOT number, when not authorized to do so, or when someone acts as a broker and is not registered with FMCSA. Fraud and identity theft are criminal acts.

If you suspect your company has been the victim of fraud or identity theft, FMCSA recommends that you take the following steps:

1. Report the incident to your local law enforcement agency.
2. You may also report the incident to the U. S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Hotline at (800) 424-9071 or online at <https://www.oig.dot.gov/hotline>.
3. You are also encouraged to file a complaint with the FMCSA National Consumer Complaint Database (NCCDB) at <https://nccdb.fmcsa.dot.gov/nccdb/home.aspx>
4. Contact your insurance company, all load boards and factoring companies to let them know your company's information is being fraudulently used.
5. Make social media and website posts to inform your customers.
6. Make sure your company's phone number(s) displayed in FMCSA's Safety and Fitness Records System (SAFER) are visible and correct by going to <https://safer.fmcsa.dot.gov> and scrolling down to "FMCSA Searches" and clicking on "Company Snapshot".
7. Treat your company information like your banking and credit card information. Conduct frequent checks of your FMCSA Carrier Profile. If you find incorrect information, go to <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/registration> and follow the instructions on that page. This page also provides a phone number you can call to receive assistance.

Carriers: If you picked-up or hauled a fraudulently brokered load, identify who is paying the freight on the load and ask to be put in contact with their brokerage service. In many cases, the real broker of the load is also a victim of fraud or theft and is not involved in the illegal transaction. Holding loads hostage until you get paid is illegal.

Brokers: The carrier, who had or has your load, may also be a victim and is not knowingly involved in the theft. By working together, you may be able to get the goods properly delivered.

Prevention: You can take steps to attempt to protect yourself from being a victim by:

- Confirming phone numbers of brokers and carriers using SAFER at <https://safer.fmcsa.dot.gov>. If the number you were given by the carrier/broker does not match the number posted, call the number posted in SAFER for the company to discuss the load. It is possible the identity of an employee of the business you are contacting has also been stolen.
- If your SAFER search identifies a carrier or broker without a phone number visible, consider not contracting for the work until you can confirm it is a valid transaction.
- When using a search engine to confirm numbers, emails and websites, keep in mind the top search returns may be fake profiles created by the scammers. Do not trust the information unless you can confirm it on multiple sites.
- Document examination is critical. Even insurance certificates can be fraudulent. If you suspect something is not right, research the numbers and call the companies.
- STOP the transaction if:
 - a. your broker asks you to present yourself as a carrier of a different name, or asks your driver to lie about who they work for;
 - b. you question the destination of the load and are told it's a "blind load";
 - c. the broker is quick to agree in paying you more; or
 - d. the rate far exceeds the current market rate.
- Encourage your customers to maintain driver and vehicle logs. Confirm the name and numbers on the truck that shows up to load are the same as the one with which you contracted. Having your customer record the tractor and trailer plate information will assist in identifying the actual carrier. Request pictures of the truck and trailer and compare and verify information provided on the carrier packets. If you have been involved in a fraudulent load, this will be important information for law enforcement.