

MITIGATE COMPLIANCE CONCERNS WITH THIRD-PARTY EXPERTS

Don't let day-to-day business pressures push tag, title, and license renewals to the background. Hire third-party experts to manage this task and take it off your plate so you can get back to business.



TAG • TITLE • RENEWAL • MANAGEMENT

In late 2021, the American Transport Research Institute released its annual list of the Top 10 critical issues facing the trucking industry. As expected, the driver shortage, driver retention, driver compensation, lawsuit abuse reform, and truck parking made the Top 5. Trailing close behind, however, at No. 6, was compliance, safety, and accountability (CSA)¹.

Though compliance can mean many things, a key area of compliance fleets can overlook is keeping tags, titles, and plates up to date. But if you are not careful, you can put vehicles on the road with expired plates, titles, and tags—a costly concern that can lead to noncompliance. Your fleet cannot legally operate if tags and titles are not current, and if you operate illegally, you will face stiff penalties and fines.

WHAT'S REQUIRED

Documents and paperwork may not top your to-do list as you operate a fleet of hundreds or thousands of trucks, drivers, and routes. But keeping documentation current and tracking registrations and titles is vital—and required by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and state departments of motor vehicles (DMVs). Though your fleet may constantly change—as you buy, sell, and move vehicles—the title and registration process impacts compliance and the speed at which you can make vehicles road ready.

FMCSA and state DMVs require your fleet to keep the following up to date:

- Vehicle titles
- Vehicle registrations
- Renewals management
- Title management and electronic lien & title (ELT)
- Title transfers
- Plate management
- Salvage titles
- International registration plan (IRP) for over-the-road trucks

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vehicle's registration expires, Every state requires fleets to keep these documents current and most renew annually. If you fall behind, fees and headaches quickly pile up. For instance, if a fleet vehicle's registration expires, you can face fines from \$4 to \$500. Let's say, the state assesses \$20 for expired registrations. That may not seem like much, until you realize it is \$20 a day, per expired vehicle in your fleet, until you correct the problem.

Delays at DMVs compound the issue. Most state DMVs remain understaffed since the pandemic.

Processes that took weeks before 2020, now take months. The Kansas Department of Transportation, for example, once processed requests three months out. Now they process requests in the month they are due. Your fleet might have all documentation in, but DMV delays can ground your trucks until current registration paperwork arrives.

Worse, while trucks are stopped, your costs are not. When tags, titles and licenses are not current, you must take trucks off the road, pay salary and benefits to drivers, and cover fines for late paperwork. Your bottom line will suffer from lost revenue and increased expenses.

It may be tempting to take shortcuts or falsify information to appear compliant in this environment. But getting caught will come at a heavy price. Recently, a fleet owner paid \$632,000 for falsifying FMCSA documents. Michael Chaves, owner of Rhode Island-based CAT Transportation, paid \$424,598 in restitution to victims and \$207,270 to the IRS after using another person's identification without permission to falsify motor carrier registration documents².



GET SOME HELP

A third party can shoulder the burden of tracking titles, registrations, and licenses, and marking dates on a calendar for re-registration filings. These parties can prevent steep fines for violating DMV requirements. You can keep trucks on the road with confidence, knowing your documentation is always up to date.

Working with a third party keeps your focus on day-to-day operations without concern about expired titles, tags, and registrations. It reduces your risk of accidentally putting a truck on the road without current documentation. The third party will maintain a schedule for renewals to keep your fleet current and on the road.

As DOT regulations evolve, it can be challenging to keep up. A third-party takes this off your plate. These entities monitor changes in state and county filing regulations to ensure you file applications correctly and on time. They know when there are backlogs, process changes, new timelines, and staff shortages long before you do.

A third party also consolidates fees and transaction costs for titles, tags, and registrations into a single bill. These entities pay registration, titling, and licensing fees upfront, then bill you for the service. Imagine the time savings if you have thousands of trucks operating in all 50 states.



SELECTING AN AUTHORIZED THIRD PARTY

How do you select the right third party for the job? First, you must choose an authorized third party for these transactions. DMVs grant these private companies access to their title and registration offices to file paperwork for license plates, registrations, and titles electronically.

There are other considerations, however. You may find plenty of options to work with. But not all companies work the same way. The best authorized third parties work directly with state DMVs on a fleet's behalf to deliver a single solution for all vehicle license, title, and registration issues. They are licensed, bonded and insured and provide a single contact for services.

You also must make sure knowledgeable experts staff the company you select and that they have existing DMV relationships and connections. This ensures they stay current with process changes and delays and follow processes to the letter.

An authorized third party also should offer a full roster of services, including:

- › Monitoring and verifying expiration dates.
- › Procuring titles and registrations.
- › Renewing registrations on time.
- › Tackling duplicate title and registration requests.
- › Consolidating all fees and transaction costs for titles, tags, and registrations into a single bill.
- › Customizable licensing, titling, and registration programs that fit your unique fleet requirements.
- › Advanced record keeping services, tracking, and reporting.



KNOW THE REQUIREMENTS

Before working with an authorized third party, you also should understand what is required of you. A tag and title service can take a lot off your plate, but only if you supply the correct information upfront. Though requirements differ from state to state, certain information is always required.

Consider a registration renewal. If you registered your vehicle under a business name, the registration period typically falls on the last day of the month, based on the name of your business. When renewing your registration, you must supply:

- › Renewal notice or copy of last registration
- › Proof of insurance
- › Proof of emissions test (if required)

To replace a decal or license plate, you must supply:

- › Copy of registration
- › Police report for license plate (if required)

Ownership transfers also have exacting requirements. To transfer ownership of a vehicle purchased locally or out of state or from an individual, you must supply:

- › Original title signed off by seller and assigned to new owner
- › Reassignment forms
- › Bill of sales or dealer invoice
- › Copy of previous owner's tag registration (if available)
- › License plates you would like to transfer to the vehicle (registration and tag number)
- › Proof of insurance
- › Proof of emissions (if required)
- › Original Power of Attorney
- › Lease agreement (if required)

These are just a few examples of the paperwork you must produce. Ask questions on what's required for your needs. Remember, supplying the right documentation for the tasks at hand keeps things running smoothly so your vehicles are never on the road with expired titles, tags, and registrations.



WHY J3 MANAGEMENT GROUP?

J3 Management Group is an authorized third party that checks all these boxes. This woman-owned enterprise is licensed, bonded, and insured and works directly with state DMVs on your behalf to deliver a single solution that solves all license, title, and registration woes.

These knowledgeable experts know how to track down tags, titles, and registrations in nearly every state. They monitor changes in state and country filing regulations and follow every process down to the last detail to keep your paperwork current.

J3 Management Group also provides a complete lineup of services to cover all your needs. As an added benefit, the company scans every registration and plate before sending them to you. This means if you ever need a copy, one is always available.

Further, J3 Management Group provides every customer with a single point of contact. This means you always get a voice on the other end of the phone who knows specifics about your operation. Your contact works with you to monitor and verify expiration dates; procure and store titles; renew tags and registrations on time; consolidate fees and transaction costs into a single bill; and customize programs to fit your unique needs.

J3 Management Group has you pay title and registration fees upfront, so you know your costs well in advance and can budget for them. The company also provides a portal for you to check on the status of your title and registrations to avoid putting vehicles with expired titles and registration on the road.

Some companies also offer logistics and vehicle storage services. But J3 Management Group keeps the focus on tags, titles, and registrations. They do not muddy the waters with logistics or vehicle storage but specialize to ensure they always provide top-of-the-line services to every fleet customer.

We know you want to do the right thing and always keep tags, titles, and registration current. But this step can drop to the bottom of your to-do list as day-to-day concerns take precedence. An authorized third party puts keeping your fleet in compliance at the top of its to do list, keeping your focus on day-to-day operations while giving you peace of mind that your titles, tags, and registrations are always current.

Take titles, tags, and registrations off your plate. Contact J3 Management Group at info@j3mgmtgrou.com or **(404) 990-4762** to get started.

1. truckingresearch.org/atri-research/top-industry-issues/
2. ccjdigital.com/regulations/article/15065968/fleet-owner-sentenced-for-falsifying-fcmsadocuments

