



Truck and Trailer Hook-Up (Coupling) Procedure

Policy Statement

The Hunter Express US Inc. is committed to ensuring all truck and trailer coupling (hook-up) operations are performed safely and in compliance with **U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT/FMCSA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and insurance requirements.**

All drivers must follow a standardized hook-up procedure to ensure proper equipment connection, cargo security, documentation accuracy, and prevention of accidents, equipment damage, or regulatory violations.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in serious safety risks and disciplinary action.

Purpose

To establish a safe and consistent procedure for:

- Verifying shipment documentation
 - Matching assigned equipment
 - Safely coupling tractor and trailer
 - Ensuring load security and regulatory compliance
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Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Hunter Express US Inc. drivers
 - Owner-operators
 - Contract drivers operating under Hunter Express US Inc. authority
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Regulatory Compliance

This policy supports compliance with:

- **FMCSA Vehicle Inspection and Coupling Requirements (49 CFR Parts 392 & 396)**
 - **Cargo Securement Regulations (49 CFR Part 393)**
 - **CBP/CTPAT cross-border security requirements**
 - **OSHA workplace safety practices**
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General Requirements

- Drivers must **not hook up to any trailer** without first completing all required checks
 - Drivers must verify:
 - Equipment identity
 - Documentation accuracy
 - Load security
 - Any discrepancies must be reported immediately before proceeding
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Procedure: Truck & Trailer Hook-Up

1. Pre-Dispatch Preparation

Before proceeding to the equipment:

- Report to the **driver room or dispatch office**
- Obtain all trip documentation, including:
 - Trip sheet
 - Bill of Lading (BOL)
 - ACE manifest (if applicable)
 - CTPAT/security documentation

2. Documentation Verification

Drivers must verify the following:

- **Truck number** matches trip assignment
- **Trailer number** matches trip sheet and paperwork
- **Border crossing details** (if applicable)
- **CTPAT/security documents** are complete
- All documentation fields match (load, shipper, consignee, etc.)

3. Equipment Identification Check (CRITICAL STEP)

Before coupling:

- Match:
 - **Truck unit number** with assigned equipment
 - **Trailer number and license plate** with:
 - ACE manifest
 - Trip sheet / envelope
- Verify:
 - **Seal number matches BOL and CTPAT documents**

4. Discrepancy Handling

If any mismatch or discrepancy is identified:

- **DO NOT hook up the trailer**
- Immediately notify:
 - Dispatch
 - Supervisor
- Await further instructions before proceeding

5. Trailer Inspection Before Hook-Up

Before coupling, visually inspect:

- Trailer condition (damage, structural issues)
- Tires, lights, and landing gear
- Kingpin and fifth wheel condition
- Proper trailer height for coupling

6. Safe Coupling Procedure

Drivers must follow proper coupling steps, including:

- Ensure tractor is aligned with trailer
- Back slowly and carefully under trailer
- Perform a **tug test** to confirm secure connection
- Connect:

- Air lines
 - Electrical lines
- Raise landing gear fully
- Verify trailer brakes and lights are functioning

7. Seal and Load Verification

- Confirm seal number matches paperwork
- If required by Hunter Express US Inc. or due to discrepancy:
 - Break seal and **physically inspect the load**
- Ensure cargo appears:
 - Secure
 - Properly loaded

8. Final Safety Check

Before leaving the yard:

- Perform full **walk-around inspection**
 - Confirm:
 - Tractor and trailer are properly connected
 - All connections are secure
 - No visible hazards or defects
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Driver Responsibilities

Drivers are responsible for:

- Verifying all documentation before hook-up
 - Ensuring equipment matches assigned load
 - Following safe coupling procedures
 - Reporting discrepancies immediately
 - Ensuring compliance with safety and security protocols
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Security and CTPAT Compliance

Drivers must:

- Verify seal integrity
 - Ensure cargo security at all times
 - Follow all cross-border documentation and inspection requirements
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Prohibited Actions

- Hooking up without verifying equipment and documentation
 - Ignoring discrepancies in trailer number, seal, or paperwork
 - Leaving yard without confirming secure connection
 - Operating equipment that is unsafe or non-compliant
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Training Requirements

All drivers must receive:

- Coupling/uncoupling procedure training
 - Pre-trip inspection training
 - Cross-border and cargo security training
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Non-Compliance

Failure to follow this policy may result in:

- Disciplinary action
 - Equipment damage or cargo loss liability
 - Regulatory violations and penalties
 - Termination of employment or contract
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Go-To Person for This Policy:
Safety Manager

Attachments:

- Pre-Trip Inspection Checklist
 - DVIR Form
 - Cargo Securement Guidelines
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Responsibility:

The Safety Manager is responsible for implementation, training, and enforcement of this policy.

Authorized by:
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President