

Truck Accidents

Maryland Trucking Accident Attorneys, Serving Clients Nationwide

Shulman Rogers represents victims of serious commercial trucking accidents across Maryland, DC, Virginia, and the country. We act immediately after a crash to preserve evidence, identify every liable party, and build a case the trucking industry's insurers take seriously. Our attorneys have delivered multi-million dollar recoveries in personal injury cases and handle every trucking matter in-house.

We handle every case ourselves. No referrals, no outsourcing.

When a Commercial Truck Hits You, the Trucking Company Is Already Responding. So Are We.

Commercial trucking accidents aren't like car accidents. The injuries are more catastrophic, the evidence is more complex, and a lot of it doesn't last long. The moment a serious crash happens, the trucking company's response team, including their attorneys, adjusters, and accident reconstruction specialists, is often on scene within hours.

From the moment you call us, we're moving just as fast. We send spoliation letters the day we're retained, demanding preservation of the truck's black box, electronic logging records, camera footage, and driver files before that data can be overwritten or destroyed. We bring in expert reconstructionists and pull the carrier's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) records. We identify everyone who might share liability. We build your case before the other side has time to muddy it.

Our attorneys have litigated commercial trucking cases against regional carriers and national fleets in Maryland, Virginia, Washington, DC, and across the country. We know how these cases get built, and we know how they get fought.

Why Trucking Accident Cases Require Different Legal Experience

The physics are different.

Under federal regulations, a fully loaded commercial truck can weigh up to 80,000 pounds. A passenger vehicle typically weighs 3,000 to 4,000 pounds. When those two collide at highway speed, the consequences for the smaller vehicle's occupants are nearly always catastrophic and often fatal.

The liability is more complex.

In a standard car accident, liability usually runs to the at-fault driver. In a commercial trucking case, several parties may share legal responsibility:

- The truck driver
- The motor carrier (the company that owns or operates the truck)
- The cargo loading company, if improper loading contributed to the crash
- A leasing company, if the truck was leased rather than owned by the carrier
- The truck's manufacturer, if a mechanical defect contributed
- A maintenance contractor, if negligent service played a role

Identifying every liable party takes immediate investigation, before contracts get buried, employment relationships get restructured, and documentation disappears.

Federal regulations govern the industry.

The FMCSA sets binding rules for commercial carriers and their drivers: hours-of-service limits, mandatory rest periods, driver qualification standards, drug and alcohol testing requirements, cargo securement rules, and vehicle maintenance obligations. Violations of these regulations can establish negligence, but you need an attorney who knows where to look and can get the records before they're gone.

Electronic evidence expires fast.

Modern commercial trucks generate a lot of digital data: GPS location history, hard-braking events, engine speed, throttle position, hours logged, and more. That data lives on the truck's engine control module (ECM) and electronic logging device (ELD), and some systems overwrite it within days of a crash. The trucking company isn't required to preserve it indefinitely, which is why we send preservation demands the day we're retained.

The insurance stakes are high.

Federal law requires commercial motor carriers to carry liability insurance well above what's required of private drivers. That means meaningful compensation may be available, and it also means the carrier's insurer has a strong financial incentive to fight the claim hard. Our attorneys are ready for that fight.

What We Do From Day One

- **Issue spoliation letter to the carrier:** Legally requires preservation of ECM/black box, ELD, GPS, camera footage, and driver records before data is overwritten
- **Obtain the police crash report:** Establishes the official record and may identify witnesses, road conditions, and citations issued
- **Pull FMCSA carrier safety records:** Reveals prior violations, out-of-service orders, and patterns of negligence
- **Obtain the driver qualification file:** Hours of service logs, drug test history, license records, and prior infractions

- **Retain an accident reconstructionist:** Establishes speed, braking distance, point of impact, and driver behavior from physical and electronic evidence
- **Identify all potentially liable parties:** Carrier, driver, loader, lessor, and manufacturer may each carry separate liability and insurance coverage
- **Document all injuries and damages:** Medical records, imaging, treating physician statements, future care needs, and lost earning capacity

Common Causes of Serious Commercial Trucking Accidents

Our commercial truck accident lawyers look into every contributing factor, including:

- **Driver fatigue.** Hours of service regulations exist because fatigued driving at highway speed is deadly. FMCSA rules cap driving time and require mandatory rest periods, but violations are still among the most common factors in serious truck crashes. ELD data can show whether a driver was actually in compliance.
- **Distracted driving.** Cell phone use behind the wheel of an 80,000-pound vehicle is catastrophic when it leads to a crash. Records of phone activity at the time of the crash can be obtained through litigation.
- **Speeding and aggressive driving.** A fully loaded commercial truck needs significantly more distance to stop than a passenger vehicle. Speeding shrinks the margin for error and increases the force of impact.
- **Inadequate driver training. Carriers that cut corners on driver qualification and training bear direct responsibility for the foreseeable consequences.**
- **Improper cargo loading.** Unsecured or improperly distributed cargo can cause a truck to jackknife, roll, or shed debris onto other vehicles.
- **Vehicle maintenance failures.** Brake failures, tire blowouts, and lighting defects caused by negligent maintenance are preventable and actionable. Maintenance records are among the first things we request.
- **Drug and alcohol impairment.** Post-crash drug and alcohol testing is required under FMCSA regulations, and we obtain those results as part of every investigation.

Serious Truck Accident Injuries We Handle

Commercial truck crashes cause injuries that change the course of a person's life. We represent clients and families dealing with:

- Traumatic brain injury (TBI)
- Spinal cord injury and paralysis
- Multiple fractures and complex orthopedic injuries
- Severe burns
- Internal organ damage
- Amputations
- Wrongful death

These cases take more than negotiation skill. They take attorneys who understand the full scope of what a serious injury costs and know how to present that to a jury when it comes to that.

Trucking Accident Case Results

Our attorneys have recovered substantial verdicts and settlements for seriously injured clients, including:

- **\$6.6 Million** — Federal Tort Claims Act Trial Verdict
- **\$2.1 Million** — Federal Tort Claims Act Trial Verdict
- **\$3.92 Million** — Dog Attack Settlement
- **Confidential Multiple Six-Figure Settlement** — Premises Liability Case
- **[Placeholder]** — Trucking Accident, Tennessee

These results reflect firm-wide personal injury recoveries. Past results do not guarantee future outcomes.

The Attorneys on Your Case

Michael V. Nakamura

Shareholder, Personal Injury Practice Chair

Mike has represented seriously injured clients across Maryland, DC, Virginia, and beyond for decades. He leads the personal injury practice at Shulman Rogers and has tried and won complex cases in both state and federal court.

[Placeholder: Quote from Mike — on the importance of moving fast in trucking cases, what it means to genuinely prepare a case for trial rather than settle prematurely, and what clients can expect from his team.]

Karl J. Protil, Jr.

Shareholder

Karl brings deep plaintiff-side litigation experience and a background as a former Army JAG Corps officer to every case he handles. He has litigated catastrophic injury cases nationally and takes no shortcuts in the investigation or preparation of a case.

[Placeholder: Quote from Karl — on holding large carriers and their insurers accountable, the value of being genuinely trial-ready, and what that means for clients.]

Todd A. Pilot

Shareholder

Todd has litigated serious personal injury and catastrophic accident cases across the region and brings extensive trial experience to the team.

Geographic Areas We Serve

Our trucking accident attorneys represent clients injured on Maryland's roads and highways, throughout Washington, DC, across Virginia, and beyond. Commercial truck crashes happen often on major freight corridors in our region, including:

- **I-95:** Running through Baltimore, Washington DC, and Northern Virginia, one of the highest-volume commercial freight corridors in the country
- **I-270:** A major route between the DC metro area and western Maryland
- **I-66:** A primary corridor through Northern Virginia into DC
- **I-81:** Running through the Shenandoah Valley, one of the busiest trucking routes in the eastern United States
- **I-495 / Capital Beltway:** Encircling Washington DC through Maryland and Virginia
- **US Route 1:** Running through Maryland and Virginia with significant commercial traffic

We represent clients in Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Howard County, Frederick County, Anne Arundel County, and Baltimore in Maryland, all DC neighborhoods and federal roadways, and Fairfax County, Arlington, Alexandria, Loudoun County, and Prince William County in Virginia. For serious trucking accidents in other states, we evaluate national cases and have litigated in multiple jurisdictions.

Past results do not guarantee future outcomes. The information on this page is for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Shulman Rogers is licensed to practice law in Maryland, Washington DC, and Virginia. National representation is available for select matter types.

Content reviewed by Michael V. Nakamura, Shareholder and Personal Injury Practice Chair, and Karl J. Protil, Jr., Shareholder, Shulman Rogers. Potomac, Maryland. Founded 1972.

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