



Consumer Guide to Moving in Washington State

Know your rights when hiring a mover.

Your Responsibilities

When hiring a mover, you should:

- Provide an accurate list of items to move.
- Review all inventory sheets and inspect for damage before signing.
- Be present when your goods are packed, loaded, unloaded, and unpacked.

Complaints

If you can't reach a resolution with the company, contact our help line at 1-888-333-WUTC (9882), or file a complaint online at www.utc.wa.gov/FileAComplaint.

Loss and Damage

There are three liability options for you to choose from:

- **Option one:** Basic value protection.
- **Option two:** Replacement cost coverage, with \$300 deductible.
- **Option three:** Replacement cost coverage, no deductible.

You have the right to choose which liability option is best for you, and it should be included in your bill of lading.

If you do not choose, your move will default to option two.

Option one is free to you, options two and three both have costs that are regulated by the UTC. Visit www.utc.wa.gov/MovingGuide for rates.

Customers need to file a loss or damage claim within nine months after delivery of goods.



Consumer Protection
888-333-WUTC (9882)
consumer@utc.wa.gov
PO Box 47250
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

Mover Requirements

The Utilities and Transportation Commission regulates household goods moves in Washington.

State law requires movers to have a current UTC permit, and to provide you with specific documents at each step of the move.

Don't work with someone who won't provide required documents — they're breaking state rules!

✓ Permitted Mover

Look up your mover at www.utc.wa.gov to make sure they have a valid permit. Select "Look up a moving company" in the *I'm Looking For* box.

Using a permitted mover protects you. They must comply with safety, insurance, and service standards. The commission can enforce rules and help protect your rights when working with a permitted company.

✓ Written Estimate

Get a written, signed estimate before the move — it's required.

Estimates can be binding or non-binding. Even with a non-binding estimate, you won't have to pay more than 25% above the estimate.

✓ Written Inventory

Movers must provide a **written inventory of your property**. Make sure it's accurate and note any discrepancies in writing.

Any changes you make to your move afterward may result in a different cost, but your mover must provide a written supplemental estimate before providing additional services.

✓ Bill of Lading

The **bill of lading is both your contract and receipt** — do not lose or destroy it. It includes what services they'll perform, when and how they charge, and what they're liable for.

You will need it if you have a dispute.

Don't sign it until you understand what's in the contract, and make sure you check your inventory before signing it again.

Exception: Movers don't have to provide a bill of lading for small goods transportation and storage (25 household goods or a maximum of 500 pounds per week), but they do have to provide a contract.

Read the complete guide at:
www.utc.wa.gov/MovingGuide

Moving Costs

Moving costs are calculated by two methods:

- **56+ miles:** weight of your goods and the distance hauled one-way, and other applicable charges.
- **55 or less miles:** number of workers, number of trucks, amount of time, and mover's hourly rate.

The commission sets the minimum and maximum rates a mover can charge you for moving services.

Visit www.utc.wa.gov/MoverRates for a copy of those rates.

Moving Containers

Movers can only charge certain rates to provide cardboard boxes or reusable containers, and cannot charge for items like tape, bubble wrap, blankets, and carpet protection.

Prohibited Items

Movers will not pack or transport the following items:

- Explosives.
- Dangerous goods.
- Property that is likely to damage their equipment.

Storage

There are special rules if your goods will be stored in between pick-up and final delivery.

Storage-in-Vehicle (SIV)

When your belongings are temporarily stored in or on the mover's vehicle the following requirements apply:

- 15-day limit unless there's an extension.
- Vehicle must always be locked and parked in a safe, secure location.
- Mover is responsible for loss/damage per bill of lading.
- There is a daily charge.
- Written agreement required.

Warehouse storage

There are three types: **storage-in-transit** (90 days or less), **permanent storage** (more than 90 days), and **small goods transportation and storage** (25 items or less or 500 pounds max per week).

The UTC does not regulate permanent storage.