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BROKERS

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

Are you hiring a household goods mover or broker?

A moving broker is not the same thing as a mover.



A **moving company** owns trucks and has staff that handles your move directly. Interstate movers must be registered with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and have a U.S. DOT number.



A **moving broker** is an entity that arranges for the transportation of your goods, hiring an actual moving company to do the physical move. Moving brokers are sales teams that book your move and sell it to a moving company. They also must be registered with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. A broker does not assume responsibility for, and is not authorized to transport, your household goods. Brokers usually do not have moving trucks or professional movers, though some entities who are registered as brokers with FMCSA may have trucks and staff.

What should I do if I am working with a broker?

If you are working with a moving broker, be sure to:

- **Ask if the broker is registered with FMCSA.** All interstate moving brokers must be registered. You can search FMCSA's database for registered brokers at www.protectyourmove.gov.
- **Make sure the broker gives you a copy of FMCSA's Your Rights and Responsibilities When You Move booklet and the Ready to Move brochure.** Brokers are required to provide these consumer documents.
- **Ask for a list of the moving companies the broker uses.** Brokers are required to provide you this information.
- **Confirm the moving companies the broker uses are registered with FMCSA.** Brokers for interstate moves are required to use only movers that are registered with FMCSA.
- **Ask if the broker has a written agreement with the movers it uses.** This is required by law.
- **Be sure to get a written estimate from the broker that is based on the actual moving company's tariff.** Do not accept a verbal estimate.
- **Ask to see the broker's marketing materials, ads and/or website.** Brokers must reference in their marketing materials their physical business location, registered U.S DOT number, and their status as a broker that does not transport household goods but arranges for this service. If an ad is not available, ask for this information directly.



You also should know that sometimes a broker is not able to sell the job to a moving company for various reasons—low estimates, no availability, limited resources, etc.—and in this case you can get stuck without a mover on the day of your move. Many moving brokers operate from call centers located anywhere in the country.