Before You Move

- Ask for recommendations from neighbors, friends, and relatives regarding the mover and broker.
- Obtain estimates from at least three movers or brokers and compare cost and all other services to be provided by the companies.
- Check to determine whether the interstate mover and broker is registered with FMCSA and has a U.S. DOT number.
- Check with the Better Business Bureau regarding the mover and broker.
- Obtain the booklet Your Rights and Responsibilities When You Move from the mover and broker.
- Find out what the mover’s responsibilities are for damages that may occur to your belongings.
- Ask if the mover and broker have a dispute settlement program.
- Find out how and when pickup and delivery of your household goods will occur.
- Ask the mover and broker how they can be contacted before the move, during the move, and after the move.
- Adequately insure your belongings.

Moving Day

- Carefully read the information on the estimate, bill of lading, inventory, and all other completed documents before you sign them.
- Accompany the movers as they inventory your household goods and resolve any questions regarding the condition of materials being moved.
- Inform the driver and the moving company of how you can be reached during the move.
- Be present to answer questions and give directions to the movers. Stay until they finish.
- Give the driver directions to your new house.
- Before the moving truck leaves, take one final look throughout the house to make certain nothing has been left behind.
- Keep the bill of lading until your goods are delivered, the charges are paid, and any claims are settled.

Delivery Day

- Pay the driver, according to the terms of your written binding or non-binding estimate, before your goods are unloaded.
- Be present to answer any questions and give directions.
- Supervise unloading and unpacking of your goods.
- Note on the inventory list all boxes or items that are damaged or missing before you sign any documents.
Key Definitions

Broker:
A company that arranges for the truck transportation of cargo belonging to others, utilizing for-hire carriers to provide the actual truck transportation. A broker does not assume responsibility for the cargo and usually does not take possession of the cargo.

Tariff:
A list of rates, rules regulations, and available services. Each mover publishes its own tariffs and these must be provided to you upon request.

Use Only Registered Movers
Make sure the mover you select has been assigned a USDOT number, is registered with FMCSA to engage in interstate transportation of household goods, and has the proper level of insurance.
You can determine if a mover is registered with FMCSA by visiting www.protectyourmove.gov, or calling FMCSA at 800-832-5660 for licensing and insurance information.

Applicable Transportation Charges
The charges that a mover assesses for its services must be contained in a published tariff, which must be made available to you upon request. If you feel that a mover has overcharged you, contact the Surface Transportation Board at (202) 245-0238 for further assistance.

Know Your Rights and Responsibilities Before Selecting a Mover

Before moving your household goods, movers are required to give you this brochure and a booklet entitled Your Rights and Responsibilities When You Move. They provide basic information that will help you understand the documents that a mover will ask you to sign. The booklet also explains your rights if your household goods are lost or damaged. Copies of this brochure and booklet can be downloaded from the Web site www.protectyourmove.gov, which has additional helpful consumer information.

Read and Understand All Information Provided by the Mover

The mover should provide you with the following basic documents as part of your move:

Estimates
The estimate should clearly describe, in writing, all charges for services the mover will perform. If there are more items to move, the mover must prepare a new estimate. Make sure the estimate is signed by the mover. Do not accept oral estimates.

Bill of Lading
The bill of lading is a contract between you and the mover and a receipt of your belongings. The bill of lading must be signed and dated by you and your mover at origin and destination.

Inventory List
The inventory is the receipt showing each item you shipped and its condition. Be sure you receive a written copy of the inventory after your household goods are loaded, and that you agree with its description of your household goods’ condition.

Dispute Settlement Program
Before moving your household goods, interstate movers are required to provide you with information regarding their dispute settlement program. Movers must offer a neutral dispute settlement program as a means of settling disputes that may arise concerning loss or damage of your household goods.

Filing a Complaint

FMCSA does not have the authority to resolve claims against a moving company. However, you may file a complaint against a mover by visiting www.protectyourmove.gov or calling 1-888-DOT-SAFT (1-888-368-7238) Monday - Friday between the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. EST. Your complaint may trigger a federal enforcement investigation against the mover.

Arbitration Program
Any mover who engages in interstate moves must offer an Arbitration Program, which is a form of resolution that doesn't require hiring an attorney. If an individual shipper requests to go to arbitration, the mover is required to cover claims of $10,000 or less. For claims over $10,000, the mover must cover claims only if they agree to the arbitration.

The best way to avoid problems is to be informed and plan ahead.

DO NOT SIGN BLANK DOCUMENTS!