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## **MOVING GUIDE FOR HOUSEHOLD GOODS MOVES IN GEORGIA**

An intrastate household goods carrier (mover) provided this pamphlet to you to help you understand your rights and responsibilities as an individual shipping household goods within the State of Georgia. You are responsible for selecting a reputable household goods carrier, understanding the terms and conditions of the contract and understanding the remedies available for you to pursue in case problems arise.

The Georgia Department of Public Safety has jurisdiction for all household goods moved within the State of Georgia. The Department does not have regulatory authority over moves where the point of origin or destination is within another state. Those moves are interstate and regulated by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA).

*The following information is provided for moves within Georgia that are under the jurisdiction of the Georgia Department of Public Safety.*



Georgia Public Service Commission Rule 515-16-6-.07 (made applicable to moves within the jurisdiction of the Georgia Department of Public Safety under O.C.G.A. § 40-1-57) requires that each shipper in an intrastate household goods move has to be provided a copy of this pamphlet and acknowledge receipt in writing.



### **BEFORE THE MOVE**

**ONLY USE A LICENSED MOVER** – All household goods carriers operating under the jurisdiction of the Georgia Department of Public Safety (DPS) must hold a certificate from the Department. Licensed professional movers must comply with the DPS rules and regulations for handling and moving your property and must perform their services under the rates prescribed by and published in the

DPS Maximum Rate Tariff. Unlicensed movers operate outside the law, and they may provide little protection for loss or damage to your property – or none at all. For your protection use only licensed movers. For a complete list of all licensed intrastate movers in Georgia, visit the Georgia Department of Public Safety Regulatory Compliance website at [www.gamccd.net](http://www.gamccd.net). Caution, DPS recommends against using a mover that does not appear in our database of licensed movers.

**COST COMPARISON** – Your moving costs will be calculated by one of two methods.

For moves less than 50 miles – charges are based on the number of workers and hours for the loading, moving and unloading. See Section II of the Maximum Rate Tariff for detailed costs.

For moves in excess of 50 miles – charges are based on the total shipment weight and distance of the move. See Section III of the Maximum Rate Tariff for detailed costs.

All rates are published in the Maximum Rate Tariff and may be seen at the DPS website above or at the mover's office. Remember all rates are negotiable.



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**TYPES OF ESTIMATES** – An estimate must be in writing. Any licensed professional mover must provide you with a free written estimate of the probable cost of your move. The estimate may be binding or non-binding. Get estimates from several qualified experienced movers.

Be sure the estimator sees everything you want moved, including the basement, attic and garage and understands any special circumstances that may exist at the origin and/or destination address (stairs, elevators, etc.) Include only items that you are not planning on moving yourself.

Get a written estimate before the move starts (before the carrier arrives to perform the move). It should state all the decisions you have made about what you want moved, services provided by the mover, any services arranged for by the mover on your behalf, carrier information (number of men, number/size of vehicle(s), etc.) and the mover's liability for loss or damage. Have the carrier sign your copy. Keep the written estimate in a secure location; it will be the first document asked for if a dispute arises concerning overcharges.

In Georgia there are two different types of estimates –

**Non-binding** – the carrier may not charge mover than 110% of its quote as a condition of releasing the load at the destination and must wait thirty (30) days before demanding payment of any balance due.

**Binding** – this estimate is binding on both shipper and carrier to an amount agreed upon prior to the move.

**PACKING YOUR OWN HOUSEHOLD GOODS** – A moving company will generally not accept liability for items you pack yourself (unless the mover is negligent in handling the items). Any items you pack must be able to withstand the rigors (shaking) of transportation. Please discuss this with the mover and consider asking the mover to pack any fragile items for you. Never pack matches, flammable or other dangerous articles.

Never pack jewelry, money, important papers, medicines or other valuable articles for shipment on the mover's truck. Carry them with you. Your mover is not responsible for these items.



## **DURING THE MOVE**

**INVENTORY** – An inventoried Bill of Lading and the Addendum to the Bill of Lading will be very valuable documents if you have a claim for loss or damage. After the truck arrives, but before the loading begins, you may ask the carrier to make an inventory of your property and accompany the mover while the list is prepared. If you disagree with anything on the inventory, make a note of it on the form before you sign it. Make sure the inventory is legible and accurate and that any notations also appear on the company's copy. If you are billed on an hourly basis you may have to pay for the time an inventory takes, but without one you could have difficulty proving a claim.



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**BILL OF LADING** – This is your contract with the mover. It states the mover’s responsibilities, such as the services they will perform, when and how they charge for the move and their liability. Be sure you understand the contract (especially the part about the carrier’s liability) and get a copy. Don’t sign it until you understand it and agree with it. Movers are required to issue you a bill of lading, so don’t hire a mover who doesn’t use one.

**ADDENDUM TO UNIFORM HOUSEHOLD GOODS BILL OF LADING** – This document details the carrier’s liability. Your mover’s liability may be less than the value of your goods. Carriers are not liable for the full value of your property unless you declare a specific value and pay the charge for that protection. There are three (3) options available to cover loss and/or damage.

Option 1 – Released Value Protection – this option provides reimbursement for loss and damage at a rate of \$0.60 per pound per article based solely upon the weight of the lost or damaged article(s). There is no additional charge for this option.

Option 2a – Full Value Protection – this option provides coverage based on the current replacement value at the time of loss or damage. Carrier shall have the option of repairing and/or restoration to the original condition. Additional charges apply based on the valuation of the goods declared.

Option 2b – This option provides coverage based on the current replacement value at the time of loss or damage. There is a \$300.00 deductible for which the shipper is responsible.

It is important to understand that a “carrier’s liability” and “insurance” are not the same thing. It is a good idea to see your insurance agent to determine if you need additional coverage. Reputable movers will explain their liability for loss or damage to your property and how you can increase your protection. All licensed movers must provide you with a liability addendum.

**PACKING CONTAINERS, PACKING AND UNPACKING** – The fees charged for corrugated containers, crates, cartons and the packing and unpacking of such items are regulated in the Maximum Rate Tariff (Section III, Item 510). The fee charged is “all inclusive”, no additional packing material (tape, packing paper, etc.) may be charged to the shipper.

**WEIGHT** – Charges for moves over fifty (50) miles are based on weight and distance. You may verify the “tare weight” (the weight of the vehicle with a full tank of fuel, moving supplies and no crew) before your property is loaded. The driver will have that document. You are entitled to witness the official weighing of the loaded vehicle. (The weight of your shipment – the difference between the tare weight and the gross (loaded) weight – is the basis for determining your cost.) If you can’t be there for weighing and dispute it afterwards, you may insist upon a re-weighing but you may have to reimburse for the expense depending on the accuracy of the weight.



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**DELIVERY** - Be at the destination site at the time agreed upon for delivery. If you are not there and delivery can't be made because of your absence, your property may be placed in short-term storage. There may be extra fees associated with the short-term storage. Check the condition of your property before signing a delivery receipt. If there's damage or loss, make a written notation on the inventory or bill of lading. Be specific! Be sure the notations are legible and appear on both copies (yours and the carrier's). If you don't it could be very difficult to collect on a claim. If there's a box or a container you don't want unpacked right away, you and the mover should inspect it for signs of damage. If you have packed your own cartons, the mover may not be liable for loss or damage to its contents unless there is visible damage to the carton. It is important to check for damage to items while the mover is present.

**BE PREPARED TO PAY AT DELIVERY** – Unless you have made credit arrangements with the carrier, you will be expected to pay for the move before your goods are unloaded. Payment will be expected in cash, money order or cashier's check based upon the written estimate. Please note that you are not liable for any charges that are not specified in the Maximum Rate Tariff.



### **AFTER THE MOVE**

**CLAIMS** – Claims must be filed in writing within ninety (90) days of the date of delivery. A successful claim for loss or damage may depend on your having written an accurate description of the loss or damage on the inventory or the bill of lading (on both the carrier's and your copy). It is important that you document the damage.

File your claim with the carrier in a letter or use a claim form provided by the mover. Specifically describe the loss or damage and include a copy of the inventory and/or bill of lading. Send it to the mover, at its local office.

Movers must acknowledge and act on written claims (that is, pay, settle, or deny a claim) within ninety (90) days. Be sure to keep the damaged property, because the mover has a right to inspect any damaged property before settling a claim. Do not have damage repaired or replace the item before consulting with the mover, it may jeopardize your potential settlement. If the carrier refuses to address the claim then you should complete a complaint form with the Department. The complaint form is found

at [www.gamccd.net](http://www.gamccd.net) on the household goods page. With the complaint form, you will need to include a copy of the estimate, Bill of Lading, Addendum to the Bill of Lading, any written correspondence between you and the carrier. If you have photographs of the damage, those should be included as well.



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The complaint form should state the following - the address of the point of origin and final destination; the nature of the complaint; and an outline of the correspondence with the carrier.

Remember, the DPS does not have regulatory jurisdiction over household goods moves that cross state lines (interstate moves). DPS only regulates intrastate moves (origins and destination within the boundaries of Georgia).



### **THINGS TO REMEMBER**

Choose carefully – only use a carrier who has been certified and licensed by the DPS. Ask the carrier to provide its certificate number (it should be apparent on its all paperwork and advertising). Review the DPS website ([www.gamccd.net](http://www.gamccd.net)) regarding the carrier and complaints.

Get a written signed estimate and keep it.

Be ready when the mover arrives.

Accompany the mover to make an inventory prior to the move.

Understand and agree with the bill of lading before you sign it.

Before you move, require the mover to explain its limits of liability and your options for loss and damage protection.

Be at the destination at the agreed upon time for delivery.

Check the condition of your property before you sign a delivery receipt.

Be flexible.

For additional information, please contact the Georgia Department of Public Safety –

Georgia Department of Public Safety  
MCCD Regulatory Compliance PO Box 1456  
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404-624-7241  
[householdgoods@gsp.net](mailto:householdgoods@gsp.net)