

Questions Your Clients Should Ask Prospective Moving Companies

If your client has an upcoming move, it's important that they 'interview' several different companies before choosing one that's the right fit. Obviously, they should spend some time researching movers online to ensure that they are not rogue or dishonest companies. But once they know the basics – like the mover's complaint history, licensing information, number of years in business, etc. – where do they go from there?

The more questions they ask, the fewer headaches they'll experience throughout the process. Here are five questions that your clients should have ready for potential movers and information to guide them in the process of selecting the best moving company for them:



- **Are there any extra fees I need to be aware of?** Some moving companies will charge for things like: strangely shaped or awkward items; a residence that's not easily accessible for a large moving truck or van and requires shuttle service; condos or high-rises with elevator and load restrictions; and loads that need to be hand carried over a certain distance. You may also be expected to pay fuel surcharges or transportation surcharges. If your items need to be stored, additional fees like warehouse handling charges may apply. Find out in advance so you can be prepared and avoid any surprises.
- **How is the cost of my shipment calculated?** If you are moving to a new state, the charges may be based on the weight of your shipment and mileage. These are referred to as the transportation charges. There are a variety of different charges that could appear on your estimate, so be sure to ask the mover to explain each item charge for you.
- **What kind of liability coverage do you provide?** All interstate movers have to offer coverage (usually called "released value") and it assumes liability for your personal property at a rate of \$0.60 per pound. Keep in mind, though, when it comes to protecting your belongings, one size does not fit all. The level of protection you need may be greater than minimum levels based on your total shipment weight. Be sure to consider your high-value items in the determination of the protection coverage best suited for your belongings. For example, if your 70-pound flat screen crashes to the ground, you'll only get approximately \$42 as reimbursement. Basic Liability Protection is free of charge with your move, but you must confirm this level of coverage in writing. Be sure they offer plenty of options.
- **What can't we bring?** Packing perishable, dangerous or hazardous materials in your household goods without your mover's knowledge is not a good idea. Seemingly innocent items such as nail polish remover, paint and automotive maintenance products can limit their liability if something goes wrong, so be sure you know which items are on the hazardous materials list. And if you choose to pack your own boxes and the articles get damaged, it may be more difficult to establish your claim against the mover for those boxes.
- **How should I pay and what are the payment methods?** Tariff provisions require that all charges be paid before your shipment is unloaded at destination. Payments can be made using cash, certified check or money order. But find out which other payment options are available, such as a credit card. In the event that your employer is paying for the move, the employer may pre-arrange to be billed via invoice. Just be sure to have this all worked out prior to packing and loading. If the method of payment is not established prior to load day, it can cause you problems on delivery day.