

for you to obtain possession of your shipment, when your mover transports under a collect-on-delivery basis.

(12) The Surface Transportation Board's required released rates valuation statement, and the charges, if any, for optional valuation coverage. The STB's required released rates may be increased annually by your mover based on the Department of Commerce's Cost of Living Adjustment.

(13) Evidence of any insurance coverage sold to or procured for you from an independent insurer, including the amount of the premium for such insurance.

(14) Each attachment to the bill of lading. Each attachment is an integral part of the bill of lading contract. The following three items must be added as attachments:

- (i) The binding or non-binding estimate.
- (ii) The order for service.
- (iii) The inventory.

A copy of the bill of lading must accompany your shipment at all times while in the possession of your mover or its agent(s). When your mover loads the shipment upon a vehicle for transportation, the bill of lading must be in the possession of the driver responsible for the shipment. Your mover must retain bills of lading for shipments it transported for at least one year from the date your mover created the bill of lading.

#### **Should I Reach an Agreement With My Mover About Pickup and Delivery Times?**

You and your mover should reach an agreement for pickup and delivery times. It is your responsibility to determine on what date, or between what dates, you need to have the shipment picked up and on what date, or between what dates, you require delivery. It is your mover's responsibility to tell you if it can provide service on or between those dates, or, if not, on what other dates it can provide the service.

In the process of reaching an agreement with your mover, you may find it necessary to alter your moving and travel plans if no mover can provide service on the specific dates you desire.

Do not agree to have your shipment picked up or delivered "as soon as possible." The dates or periods you and your mover agree upon should be definite.

Once an agreement is reached, your mover must enter those dates upon the order for service and upon the bill of lading.

Once your goods are loaded, your mover is contractually bound to provide the service described in the bill of lading. Your mover's only defense for not providing the service on the dates called for is the "Defense of Force Majeure." This is a legal term. It means when circumstances change, were not foreseen, and are beyond the control of your mover, preventing your mover from performing the service agreed to in the bill of lading, your mover is not responsible for damages resulting from its non-performance.

This may occur when you do not inform your mover of the exact delivery requirements. For example, because of restrictions trucks must follow in your new city, the mover may not be able to take its truck down the street of your residence and must find helpers to provide long carries to

carry your furniture and other household goods down a street where it can drive and park its trucks. Another example would be if your mover is not aware that your new residence is on the third floor, requiring six flight stair carries and workmen that can carry your furniture and household goods up stairs.

#### **Must My Mover Determine the Weight of My Shipment?**

Generally yes. If your mover transports your household goods on a non-binding estimate under the mover's tariffs based upon weight, your mover must determine the weight of the shipment. If your mover provided a binding estimate and has loaded your shipment without claiming you have added additional items or services, the weight of the shipment will not affect the charges you will pay. If your mover is transporting your shipment based upon the volume of the shipment (*i.e.*, a set number of cubic yards or meters), the weight of the shipment will also not affect the charges you will pay.

Your mover must determine the weight of your shipment before requesting you pay for any charges dependent upon your shipment's weight.

Most movers usually have a minimum weight or volume charge for transporting a shipment. Usually the minimum is the charge for transporting a shipment of at least 3,000 pounds (1,362 kilograms).

If your shipment appears to weigh less than the mover's minimum weight, your mover must advise you on the order for service of the minimum cost before transporting your shipment. Should your mover fail to advise you of the minimum charges and your shipment is less than the minimum weight, your mover must base your final charges upon the actual weight instead of the minimum weight.

#### **How Must My Mover Determine the Weight of My Shipment?**

Your mover must weigh your shipment upon a certified scale.

The weight of your shipment must be obtained by using one of two methods.

**Origin weighing**—Your mover may weigh your shipment in the city or area where it loads your shipment. If it elects this option, the driver must weigh the truck before coming to your residence. This is called the *tare weight*. At the time of this first weighing, the truck may already be partially loaded with one or more other shipments. This will not affect the weight of your shipment. The truck should also contain the pads, dollies, hand-trucks, ramps, and other equipment normally used in the transportation of household goods shipments.

After loading, the driver will weigh the truck again to obtain the loaded weight, called the *gross weight*. The net weight of your shipment is then obtained by subtracting the *tare weight* before loading from the *gross weight*.

Gross weight – tare weight before loading = net weight

**Destination weighing** (Also called *back weighing*)—The mover is also permitted to determine the weight of your shipment at the

destination after it delivers your load. The fact your mover weighs your shipment at the destination instead of the origin will not affect the accuracy of the weight of your shipment. *The most important difference is your mover will not determine the exact charges on your shipment before it is unloaded.*

Destination weighing is done in reverse of origin weighing. After arriving in the city or area where you are moving, the driver will weigh the truck. Your shipment will still be on the truck. Your mover will determine the *gross weight* before coming to your new residence to unload. After unloading your shipment, the driver will again weigh the truck to obtain the tare weight. The net weight of your shipment will then be obtained by subtracting the *tare weight* after delivery from the *gross weight*.

Gross weight – tare weight after delivery = net weight

At the time of both weighings, your mover's truck must have installed or loaded all pads, dollies, hand trucks, ramps, and other equipment required in the transportation of your shipment. The driver and other persons must be off the vehicle at the time of both weighings. The fuel tanks on the vehicle must be full at the time of each weighing. In lieu of this requirement, your mover must not add fuel between the two weighings when the tare weighing is the first weighing performed.

Your mover may detach the trailer of a tractor-trailer vehicle combination from the tractor and have the trailer weighed separately at each weighing provided the length of the scale platform is adequate to accommodate and support the entire trailer at one time.

Your mover may use an alternative method to weigh your shipment if it weighs 3,000 pounds or less (1,362 kilograms or less). The only alternative method allowed is weighing the shipment upon a platform or warehouse certified scale before loading your shipment for transportation or after unloading.

Your mover must use the net weight of shipments transported in large containers, such as ocean or railroad containers. Your mover will calculate the difference between the tare weight of the container (including all pads, blocking and bracing used in the transportation of your shipment) and the gross weight of the container with your shipment loaded in the container.

You have the right, and your mover must inform you of your right, to observe all weighings of your shipment. Your mover must tell you where and when each weighing will occur. Your mover must give you a reasonable opportunity to be present to observe the weighings.

You may waive your right to observe any weighing or re-weighing. This does not affect any of your other rights you have under Federal law.

Your mover may request you waive your right to have a shipment weighed upon a certified scale. Your mover may want to weigh the shipment upon a trailer's on-board non-certified scale. You should demand your right to have a certified scale used. The use of a non-certified scale may cause you to pay a higher final bill for your move, if the non-