

The Interstate Moving Guide

You and the Moving Process



Introduction

If you have never made an interstate household goods move, perhaps you're wondering: "What do I do first?" "How is the cost of my move calculated?" "What documents are used and what is their purpose?" "Is storage available?" When questions like these are left unanswered, your anxiety level builds.

Atlas Van Lines believes that a portion of that stress can be alleviated by helping you understand the basics of the van line system and the interstate moving process.

This brochure is designed to acquaint you with the events that occur at various stages of the move process, industry terminology and the documentation usually required.

Various "tips" are also included that serve as suggestions and reminders.

TIP — *Definitions of underlined words can be found in the "Glossary." Definitions of underlined and bold words can be found in the "Glossary of Documentation." These are provided to help clarify information referenced throughout the brochure.*

Should you have further questions regarding your upcoming move, contact your local Atlas Van Lines Agent. Check your Yellow Pages for the number or visit our website at www.atlasworldgroup.com. Select "Find An Atlas Agent Near You" for a listing of the Atlas agents in your area. Or, you can call 1-800-VIP-MOVE (800-847-6683) for assistance.

If a move is in your future...

Let Atlas Take You Home.®

The Estimate

Communication— You and Your Agency Sales Representative

When scheduling your appointment, allow the agency sales representative at least one hour of meeting time. The main objective of the appointment is to provide you with an approximate cost for your move. Take full advantage of this time to express any concerns you may have. The more you communicate with your representative, the more "personalized" your estimate becomes.

For example, you're building a home in your new location and there's a slight possibility that it won't be completed in time for delivery. Storage-in-transit may be an option.

Or, perhaps it's important that costs be kept to a minimum. Your agency sales representative can assist you by offering a pricing program suitable for your budget and offer tips on how you can cut costs associated with your move.

TIP — *Since deregulation in 1980, the moving industry has become a competitive market. Although discounting is now recognized by most carriers, poor service may result from "deep" discounting. Don't let "cost" be the principal factor in selecting a carrier. Choosing the lowest price may not always be the wisest choice.*

The Cost — How Is It Calculated?

The cost of your move can be divided into three categories: the transportation charge, the cost of valuation and the cost of materials and services required to complete the move. Let's look at each individually.

Transportation Charge — This is usually your largest expense (55-70%). It is based on a tariff rate determined by the actual weight of your shipment and the number of miles it will be traveling. This charge includes the cost of loading your goods, transporting them and unloading them at destination. The transportation charge usually consists of five different elements: the linehaul charge, origin service charge, destination service charge, a special insurance surcharge and, depending upon the then current price of fuel, an emergency fuel surcharge.

Valuation — Valuation is the liability Atlas assumes for your goods while in our care. Atlas offers two plans: standard liability and Full Value Protection. Your selection will determine the cost. Ask your agency sales representative for a copy of “**Valuation Options: What’s Right For You?**” Or, you can download a copy from our website, www.atlasworldgroup.com. Click on “Household Moves,” then click on “Important Information.”

Materials and Services — Any materials and/or services required to complete your move result in additional charges. For instance, when packing and unpacking are requested, you pay for the packing or unpacking service you select; i.e., custom pack vs. full pack. Delivery conditions at your **new** location may also require additional services. And, since neither you or your agency sales representative may know about these conditions in advance, costs for these services may not be included in your estimate. For example: the van operator arrives to deliver your shipment and finds that your residence is not accessible to an over-the-road vehicle. To complete the delivery, an auxiliary (shuttle) service is required. Because inaccessibility was an unknown factor, the cost for shuttle service was not included in the original estimate. Therefore, additional charges are due (even on a binding estimate).

Listed below are examples of services that may result in additional charges:

- Auxiliary (shuttle) service—using smaller equipment to transfer the shipment between the residence and the over-the-road vehicle or vice versa.
- Extra pick-up and/or deliveries (e.g., to or from a vacation home)
- Overtime loading or unloading
- Piano and/or organ handling
- Automobile handling
- Bulky articles handling (such as large satellite dishes, motorcycles, playhouses, hot tubs, etc.)

Be sure to tell your agency sales representative about the conditions at your new home or apartment so you’ll know beforehand if additional charges are due at destination.

Your agency sales representative is making a mental note of the various services that your move requires as well as completing a ***Table of Measurements***, or cube sheet, as you tour each room of your home. This document is used to determine the cubic feet that your furniture, appliances, cartons and miscellaneous articles will occupy in the van. By using the industry’s average weight value per cubic foot, the agency sales representative converts the total cubic feet into pounds, thus determining the estimated weight of your shipment. The estimated cost is then prepared based on that figure. Your agency sales representative provides you with an estimate detailing the breakdown of charges.



TIP — *To ensure the most accurate estimate possible, it’s important that you mention any items stored in concealed areas such as an attic, crawl space, garage and basement, and, off-site locations such as a storage facility, office or another residence.*

Remember... *an estimate is just an estimate! Unless you’ve been given a guaranteed price (a binding estimate), the **actual** weight of your shipment is used to compute the **actual** charges.*

An ***Order For Service*** will be provided with your estimate. The ***Order For Service*** provides pertinent information and acts as the carrier’s authorization to move your shipment. (The ***Order For Service*** is not binding and can be amended, cancelled or delayed.) Any changes in dates, destinations, valuation or services will require an ***Amendment to Estimate, Order For Service and/or Bill of Lading***.

It is imperative that you complete the **Customer’s Declaration of Value** on the ***Order For Service***. The valuation option you select establishes Atlas’ maximum liability for your goods.

After the Estimate

Finalizing Your Plans

When you've made the decision to move with Atlas, notify your agency sales representative promptly to ensure immediate scheduling of your agreed pick-up and delivery dates. This is especially important during the peak season (May 15 through September 30) when carriers experience about 48 percent of their business.

Your agency sales representative, also known as the booking agent, is now responsible for making the necessary arrangements for your move—from scheduling packing dates, to hiring an outside contractor to perform specialized services for items that require special handling (such as disassembly of a grandfather's clock or pool table).

The booking or origin agent should provide you with a copy of the **Customer Responsibilities Guide/High Value Inventory Form**. Review the form carefully, complete the required information and give it to the van operator. The van operator can not pack or load your shipment unless this form is completed.

If you intend to do your own packing, it is recommended that you purchase special moving cartons and packing material from your local Atlas agency. When properly used, these containers aid in protecting your goods while in transit. For helpful tips on packing, ask your agency sales representative for "**How To Pack For Your Move**" and "**How To Move Your Antiques, Electronics and Collectibles**."

TIP — *The van operator can request that any packed-by-owner (PBO) cartons be repacked if, in his/her judgment, there is risk of damage occurring during transit due to improper packing. The van operator can perform this service for an additional charge.*

Labeling your boxes appropriately assists both you and the van operator in room placement at your new residence.

If your move requires full or partial packing, your origin agent (who may also be the booking agent) notifies you of the date and time that the packing crew is scheduled to arrive to begin preparing your household goods for transit. Depending on the

size of your home and the amount of packing required, it may take one or more days to complete your packing. Usually, the actual loading of the van takes place the following day.

Your agent will give you a **Packing Services Report**. This document lists the containers that were provided and any packing, unpacking and/or appliance services accomplished during your move. Your signature will certify that the completed report correctly reflects the performance of services listed. Charges are based on the actual work completed.

TIP — *Don't forget to set aside those items that will travel with you, such as medication, baby necessities, your pet's leash, etc. It's also a good practice to keep in your possession important documents such as wills, car titles, mortgage papers, etc.*

What Goes On Behind The Scenes?

The information contained on the **Order For Service** is communicated to Atlas Headquarters and your shipment is assigned an identification number (registration number), which appears on all documentation and correspondence.

TIP — *If you have questions about your move, please refer to the registration number. It will assist us in identifying your shipment and in answering your questions in a more timely manner.*

The booking agency may elect to transport your shipment using its own van operator and equipment (self-haul) or it may turn the order over to the van line's Operations Department for assignment.

So, it's conceivable to have up to three different Atlas agencies sharing the responsibility for your move—the booking agent, the origin agent and now the hauling agent. (Note: the booking agent can provide origin and hauling services.)

Moving household goods is not just a matter of picking up the goods at Point A and delivering them to Point B within a reasonable transit time. Consider this: several shipments may be loaded onto one trailer, originating from and delivering to different cities across the U.S., all of which must be moved within a specific time frame. Now, that takes some planning and organization!

That's where our Operations Department comes in. It is the "heart" of the system. Experienced planners coordinate the routing of shipments within and from their respective geographical zone.

Dispatchers communicate a schedule to our van operators and participating agencies and make sure instructions are carried out accordingly. Because our van operators normally "check in" daily, at each stage of your move, a telephone call on our toll-free line can provide you with the status of your shipment. Or, use our internet information system to track your shipment. Click on "Track Your Shipment."

It's a matter of teamwork. Everyone works together toward a common goal, which is to provide you the smoothest move possible!

Moving Day

Upon arrival, your van operator asks you to sign the **Bill of Lading**. Your signature acts as authorization for the carrier to transport your belongings. It's imperative that you check the document for accuracy and completeness. Don't forget to give the completed **Customer Responsibilities Guide/High Value Inventory Form** to the van operator.

TIP —Make sure the **Bill of Lading** includes your new delivery address and telephone numbers where you can be contacted, so the van operator can call in advance of delivery.



Your van operator is required to complete a **Relocation Services Descriptive Inventory** of the items that are being shipped and to note their condition. Once the Inventory is completed, the van operator asks you to sign acknowledging that the inventory is, to the best of your knowledge, a true and complete list of the goods being tendered

to the carrier and the condition in which the goods are received. (If an automobile or boat is included, a signed Motor Vehicle/Boat Descriptive Inventory is also required.)

When additional services are necessary to complete your move, the **Additional Services Performed (ASP)** document must be completed. The ASP indicates, when applicable, the amount of manpower and time that was necessary to accomplish the particular service listed and who performed the service. Your initials confirm that the services listed were completed as stated.

Now that the preliminaries are over, just sit back, relax, and let the van operator and helpers do their job.

Delivery

What Should You Expect?

The agreed delivery period on your **Bill of Lading** specifies the preferred time period when delivery of your goods can be expected (example: 5/26 to 6/07). Most van operators try to advise you of their anticipated arrival at least 24 hours in advance. In the unlikely event that your shipment is delayed past the agreed delivery period, you will be notified of the change.

TIP —When the van operator arrives within the specified time frame and no one is available to accept delivery, Atlas authorizes two hours of "waiting time". When waiting time has expired and every attempt to locate you has failed, Atlas has the option of placing your goods in a storage facility for delivery out at a later date, which results in added cost to you. Atlas requires our van operators to go to your residence...even if we can't reach you by phone.

If you request notification of the actual weight and charges by checking the appropriate box on the **Order For Service**, you will be notified of the amount due prior to delivery.

Unless another means has been prearranged, payment is due at the time of delivery by cash, certified check, traveler's check, bank check, approved personal check or credit card. The van operator will not begin unloading **until** payment is received. Atlas honors six major credit cards: Visa®, MasterCard®, Discover®, American Express®, Diners Club® and Carte Blanche®.



An approved personal check may also be acceptable. Your agency sales representative can discuss Atlas' policies with you regarding personal check and credit card payment options.

In the event the **actual** charges exceed the **estimated** charges by more than 10%, the van operator will release your goods when you pay the 110% Collection Option (not applicable on binding estimates). For example, if the cost of your move was estimated at \$2,500 and the actual charges for services outlined on the estimate are \$2,800, you are only required to pay on delivery the estimated charges (\$2,500) plus 10% (\$250) or a total of \$2,750. Atlas will invoice you 30 days after delivery for the balance.

To this point, there have been up to three agencies involved in your relocation—the booking agent, the origin agent, and the hauling agent. (Recall that it's possible for the booking agent to act as the origin agent and even the hauling agent.) Now, a fourth agency is about to join the moving team.

When the van operator needs assistance with unloading, or specific arrangements need to be made for items requiring special handling, the destination agent assigned to your move assists by providing experienced helpers and scheduling other required services. The destination agency's warehouse is also available in the event your shipment goes into temporary storage.

As the van operator begins to unload at your new residence, mark off the items on your ***Customer Check-off Sheet*** as they are carried in. This helps you determine if all furniture and/or cartons are accounted for. You should also record any noticeable damage. Once you have completed your inventory check, transfer any notations onto the van operator's copy of the Inventory and sign it.

Hopefully, you've had an opportunity to plan ahead in regard to furniture placement. Although most van operators are very cooperative, they are only required to place furniture once.

If you have requested "unpacking," it's important that you understand what unpacking actually entails. The industry definition of unpacking is removing the packed items from the cartons and placing them on a table or counter and, when requested, the disposal of used material and containers at the time of unpacking.

After Delivery

Although Atlas' objective is to transport your personal belongings without incident, there may be times when loss or damage does occur. If you should discover that items are missing or damaged, here's what you should do:

1. Finish your unpacking, then make a list of the damaged and/or missing articles. **DO NOT THROW AWAY ANY OF THE DAMAGED ITEMS OR CARTONS!**
2. Gather your documents for reference purposes. As mentioned before, you save time knowing your shipment registration number. Take advantage of Atlas' on-line claim form* or call our Customer Service Department (800-638-9797, ext. 2850 or 2846) to request a claim form. Your claim form will be mailed promptly.
3. Fill out the claim form as completely and accurately as possible and mail it to the Customer Service Department. It's best to file your claim as soon as possible, however, as long as your claim is received by our Customer Service Department within nine months from the date of shipment delivery, it will be processed. All claims are settled within the parameters defined by the liability option you selected prior to your move.

*www.atlasworldgroup.com - Click on "Customer Service," then "Online Claim Form." Requires Microsoft® Internet Explorer 5.5 or above.

Processing begins at the corporate office upon receipt of your claim. Atlas' Customer Service Department will assign an approved, reputable repair firm to contact you for an in-home inspection appointment. Minor repairs may be performed at this appointment. The repair firm will forward it's inspection report to Atlas and Atlas will contact you regarding the claim repair and/or settlement process.

Every effort is made to locate a missing item. If Atlas is unable to recover it, restitution for a lost and/or non-repairable item will be considered in your final settlement. A letter will be issued advising you of those terms.

***TIP** — If Atlas or your booking agent sends or emails a request for service evaluation, please complete and return. It's important that Atlas know how your move was handled.*

Glossary of Terms

Agent — a local moving and storage company under agreement with Atlas Van Lines and empowered to act in the van line's behalf servicing the interstate movement of your household goods.

Agreed Delivery Period — a spread of dates mutually agreed upon between you and Atlas for the delivery of your goods.

Auxiliary (Shuttle) Service — a required service when it is physically impossible to pick-up or deliver a shipment with an over-the-road van. A smaller van is used to transfer the shipment between the residence and the over-the-road van or vice versa.

Booking Agent — the mover responsible for actually securing the order for your move and registering it with Atlas.

Destination Agent — a local mover in, or near, your destination city responsible for providing destination services when required or requested.

Estimate — a computation of weight, valuation, services, etc., used to determine the estimated cost of your interstate move.

Hauling Agent — a mover whose van operator and equipment are used to transport your goods.

110% Collection Option — when the actual charges for services outlined on the estimate exceed the estimated charges by more than 10%, the van operator will release your goods to you after you pay the estimated charges plus 10% on the day of delivery. Atlas will invoice you 30 days after delivery for the balance.

Origin Agent — a local mover in, or near, your origin city who is responsible for origin services when required or requested. The origin agent and the booking agent may be one and the same.

Registration Number — a reference number assigned to your order by Atlas' Operations Department to identify your shipment. The number appears on all documentation and correspondence.

Self-Haul — the booking agent's prerogative to transport your household goods using its own van operator and equipment, rather than turning the order over to Atlas' dispatching center for assignment.

Storage-in-Transit — the temporary storage of household goods in an agent's facility for delivery at a later date. With Atlas, storage-in-transit is limited to 180 days.

Tariff — the publication that provides the schedule of rates and charges from which Atlas computes the total cost of a move.

Valuation — the liability that Atlas assumes, according to your selection, while your shipment is in our care. The term "valuation" denotes contractual limits of liability, and is not "insurance." Atlas is not an insurance company.

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