



STATE OF TENNESSEE

Division of Consumer Affairs

Moving Scam Prevention Tips

Fraudulent movers use several tactics to swindle you out of getting what you pay for. Some give you a quote and accept a deposit, but don't show up on moving day. Others give you a quote based on weight, but then charge excessive fees after stating your items exceeded the estimates. Finally, some fraudulent movers load your items onto the truck, but never arrive at your new home.

What can you do before you move?

- Research the business thoroughly. Be wary of a company that has no local address and no information about a mover's registration or insurance. If an address is given, look it up. Scammers may list addresses that are actually for a local post office or shipping store.
- Use discretion when hiring someone who is not affiliated with or employed by a credible business. Be wary if a rental arrives rather than a company-owned or marked fleet truck.
- Vet your choices by checking a moving company's reviews and complaint history on the websites of the [Better Business Bureau](#) and the [American Moving & Storage Association](#).
- Steer clear of a moving company that gives estimates over the phone or via email instead of onsite or that states they will determine the charges after loading.
- Beware low-ball estimates. Ask about additional fees and whether the estimate is binding, non-binding, or not-to-exceed. Learn more about the different types of moving estimates [here](#).
- Be wary if a mover asks for a large down payment or full payment in advance of the move. Avoid paying with cash.
- Avoid signing any blank or incomplete documents. Get all details in writing. Confirm the terms and conditions of the contract, including the insurance coverage, limits of liability, pick-up and delivery dates, and rate calculations.
- Know the requirements for interstate movers:
 - All interstate household goods movers must be registered with the federal government. Before selecting an interstate mover, [search the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration \(FMCSA\) database of registered movers](#), or call FMCSA at (202) 366-9805 for licensing information.
 - Interstate movers are required by federal regulations to supply to their customers a copy of the [Your Rights and Responsibilities When You Move](#) booklet and a copy of the [FMCSA's Ready to Move brochure](#) during the planning stage of an interstate move.

REPORTING COMPLAINTS:

- If a mover has stolen your items or says it won't return your items to you without more money than you agreed to pay, contact your local law enforcement for help.
- If you feel you've been treated unfairly by a moving company, file a complaint with the Tennessee Division of Consumer Affairs at www.tn.gov/consumer.
- Interstate moving scams can also be reported to the [Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration](#) and the [Federal Trade Commission](#). Find more helpful consumer tips about interstate moving at www.protectyourmove.org.