

# Whether Your Move Is Local, Across State Lines or Overseas...



## ...Do Your Homework to Understand Your Estimate

Regardless of your destination—within New Jersey, across state lines or overseas—choosing a reputable licensed mover who provides you with a written estimate is essential to help you avoid or get through many of the typical moving problems that can arise.

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### MOVING WITHIN NEW JERSEY (INTRASTATE)

Movers must follow the regulations from The New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs in order to be licensed. These rules protect consumers from the unlicensed and unethical companies that try to operate in New Jersey. These rules require movers to perform thorough in-person site surveys or virtual surveys to enable preparation of your written estimate.

Ball-park estimates provided over the phone or via the internet can be inaccurate. It is important for the mover to inspect every room and view all items that will be moved. The mover must view any stairs and loading areas and discuss access at the destination in order to prepare an accurate estimate.

Movers base their costs on hourly or weight rates in their mover's tariff\*, plus packing and other extra charges for handling large items like pianos. Show estimators what items you intend to pack and what you expect the mover to pack. They must also ask questions about your new home such as the number of flights of stairs, whether there are long or steep walkways, restricted truck parking or trees with low-hanging branches.

Movers may offer you a binding estimate for a direct move, but that price could change if additional services are needed, or delays occur on moving day. A non-binding estimate based on time and material charges may be more practical, if you are undecided as to how much packing you need, or in the event that other questions arise regarding your move. Consumers usually underestimate the amount of work that goes into packing and moving, so inform your mover if you think you may need some help.

Choosing a mover with the lowest estimate is generally not the best value. Estimating is an inexact science with many variables. Choose movers by their reputation not just the price they charge.

*\*A mover's tariff is a document filed with the Office of the Attorney General that outlines the company's rates as well as any terms of service crucial for you to know about before moving day. (e.g., the company's cancellation policy or what services may incur additional fees.)*



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## MOVING TO ANOTHER STATE (INTERSTATE)

Different rules apply when you cross state lines. The mover must have a current Motor Carrier number issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. Movers located within 50 miles of your current place of residence are required to come to your home to give you a written estimate. We advise against using a mover that does not actually view all items you intend to move and pack. This is especially true if they are not coming from your local area, since last minute issues could leave you without a mover.

We advise consumers to avoid brokers since they do not own trucks and will not be your movers. They will also not be responsible for delays or damages. They take a commission, usually the deposit money, then give your job to a mover.

An email or text message is not an estimate. An estimate must have the mover's name, address and license number, as well as required advisories or documents that detail industry best practice protocol. Check the name, license number and actual address as it appears on the estimate. Many movers are authorized agents for major Van Lines companies. Van Lines companies comprise a system of licensed local movers who are under contract to represent one of the many Van Lines companies throughout the world.

Movers base Interstate estimates on mileage and weight or cubic feet, at the rates listed in their tariff, plus additional services, less discount. The actual weight of your move will be the same with any mover, but cubic feet may be different from mover-to-mover.

Choosing a mover with the lowest estimate does not guarantee the lowest final cost, or the best service. Large discounts may affect the quality and delivery dates of your move since the movers are usually paid by percentage.

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## MOVING OUT OF THE CONTIGUOUS UNITED STATES (INTERNATIONAL)

Moving out of the contiguous United States means you are moving to Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico or to another country.

Moving costs are based on actual cubic feet subject to minimum density rates, and your goods will be shipped in special containers. Since these types of moves must be prepaid before they leave the United States, be sure the overseas mover is registered with the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) as either an Ocean Freight Forwarder (OFF) or a Non-Vessel-Operating Common Carrier (NVOCC).

Be aware there is no insurance offered for international moving unless you request insurance. For additional protection, be sure the mover you use is listed with the International Association of Movers (IAM).