

Interstate Move

The cost of an interstate move is usually based on the weight of your belongings and the distance they are shipped, plus the amount of packing and other services that you require.

To help you anticipate the cost of your move, movers will give you an estimate of the price. Be sure to get written estimates from at least 3 different companies so that you can compare their services and prices.

The charge that you will be billed for your move is based on the weight of your shipment, the distance that you move, and the other services that you require. Your bill will be higher or lower depending on how much your shipment weighs and how far you move.

Help the movers calculate the cost of your move by showing them every single item to be moved. Don't forget to go into the attic, basement, garage, shed, and closets and under beds. Reach a clear understanding about the amount of packing and other services needed. Anything omitted from the estimate but later included in the shipment will add to the cost.

Most movers offer two types of estimates – **non-binding and binding**.

Non-binding estimates are not bids or contracts. Instead, a non-binding estimate is an approximation of the cost based on the mover's survey of the items to be moved, with the final cost determined after the shipment is weighed. Since a non-binding estimate is based on the actual weight of your shipment (rather than the estimated weight), the price will usually be lower than a binding estimate. However, when you receive a non-binding estimate there is no guarantee that the final cost will not be more than the estimate.

Under a non-binding estimate, the mover cannot require you to pay more than the amount of the estimate, plus 10 percent, (or 110% of the estimate amount) at the time of delivery. You are then obligated to pay any remaining charges for any additional services that you requested or that were required to accomplish your move that are over this 110% amount 30 days after your shipment is delivered, if the services or quantities were not included in your estimate.

Many movers also provide **binding estimates**. A binding estimate means that you are obligated to pay the price set forth in the binding estimate even if the shipment weighs more than or less than the estimated amount.

All binding estimates cover only the goods and services listed on the estimate. If you add items or request additional services, the mover may revise the original estimate before your shipment is loaded or, if you request additional services after your shipment is in transit, your mover will bill you for these added services 30 days after

your shipment is delivered, if they were not included in your estimate. In addition, all movers reserve the right to charge for services necessary to accomplish delivery, even if those services are not requested by the shipper. For example, additional charges will apply if you are not prepared to accept delivery and the shipment is placed in storage, or if a smaller (shuttle) truck must be used to accomplish delivery because your new home is located on a narrow street. Again, your mover will bill you for these services 30 days after your shipment is delivered, if they were not included in your estimate.

Another type of estimate used by many movers is the **Not-To-Exceed Estimate**. This type of estimate is called various things by various movers, such as Guaranteed Price or Price Protection, but the end result is the same --- an estimate based on a binding estimate **or** on actual cost, **whichever is lower**. Like a binding estimate, a not-to-exceed estimate must be provided to you in writing and is binding on the carrier.

Not-to-Exceed estimates differ though in that the binding estimate amount becomes the maximum amount that you will be obligated to pay for the services listed on the estimate. This maximum amount alternates with the tariff charges applicable based on the actual weight of the shipment, with the customer paying the lesser of the two amounts. When you accept a not-to-exceed estimate, the move is performed at actual weight based on the tariff rate levels, with the binding estimate representing the maximum charge that you will have to pay.

When you are discussing your estimate with your mover, be sure to ask about the arrangements for paying for the move. It is customary for movers to require that charges be paid in cash, by certified check, or by money order. Most movers will not accept personal checks. Some movers will accept payment by credit card. However, do not assume that because you have a nationally recognized charge or credit card that it will be accepted for payment. **Ask your mover before your move.**