

## **COMPLAINT AND INQUIRY HANDLING PROCEDURE FOR SHIPPERS OF ALLIED VAN LINES, INC.**

Thank you for selecting Allied Van Lines for your move. Our primary concern during the critical days ahead will be to provide you and your family with a safe, trouble-free move. To help us serve you, we have developed a simple, single source communications system. Your booking agent is the Allied representative who is responsible for managing all aspects of your move. This agent will coordinate service requirements with the Origin Agent, the Destination Agent and, through Allied Corporate, with the Hauling Agent.

Since the Booking Agent is central to all aspects of your move, they are your one-stop information center. Each Allied Booking Agent has access to system wide information generated by the Allied Corporate office. In addition, they have unique information regarding your relocation requirements.

In the event that a problem cannot be resolved by your Booking Agent, we've included a toll-free contact number for Allied Van Lines Customer Assistance.

During your move the Booking Agent is your central communications source. During the survey and estimating process, you provided information and asked your sales representative questions. Once this information is gathered, your Allied Van Lines Booking Agent assumes the role of the move manager.

Please contact your Allied Booking Agent for any of the following issues:

### **BEFORE PACKING**

- To confirm packing and loading dates
- To purchase cartons for any self-packing
- To request information about storage-in-transit (SIT)
- To advise of change in your moving dates
- To advise of additional/fewer items to be moved
- To change the valuation of your goods
- To obtain the name and telephone number of your Allied Agent in your new city
- To advise of additional delivery information
- To request information about appliance servicing
- To request any additional information about your move

## **ON YOUR PACKING DAY**

For all questions

## **ON YOUR LOADING DAY**

To confirm the agreed delivery dates(s) of your goods in your new city

To advise of a telephone number or contact in your new city

To request information about a delay in loading

## **AT DESTINATION**

To confirm unloading and unpacking dates and appliance re-servicing

To request information about unplanned storage-in-transit (SIT)

IF YOUR PROBLEMS OR CONCERNS HAVE NOT BEEN ADEQUATELY  
RESOLVED OR ADDRESSED BY YOUR ALLIED VAN LINES AGENT,  
PLEASE CALL ALLIED CORPORATE CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE TOLL  
FREE, AT 1-800-470-2851. (WHEN ANSWERED, PRESS "3" FOR  
CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE.)

## **ARBITRATION PROGRAM FOR HOUSEHOLD GOODS SHIPPERS OF ALLIED VAN LINES**

Your mover and the American Moving and Storage Association are making an arbitration program available to you that is a less costly alternative to the court system in settling disputes involving loss and damage claims. The following summary will explain what arbitration is and how the program works. It is being provided to you before your move so that you will be aware of the arbitration program in the unlikely event that the need arises.

*The Program is Sponsored by:*

American Moving and Storage Association  
1611 Duke Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-3406  
Phone: (703) 683-7410  
Fax: (703) 683-7527  
[www.moving.org](http://www.moving.org)

### **INTRODUCTION**

The arbitration procedures provided under this program have been developed by the American Moving and Storage Association (AMSA) and the National Arbitration Forum (NAF) for use by AMSA member carriers and their customers as a less costly alternative to the court system in settling disputes involving loss or damage claims. The arbitration procedures are governed by the provisions of Title 49, Section 14708, of the United States Code under the authority of the U.S. Department of Transportation. The arbitrator will be required to render a decision within 60 days of notification of the dispute, but may extend that time if the mover or the shipper fails to timely provide information reasonably required to resolve the dispute.

Please review the information in this brochure carefully. The next few sections contain questions and answers explaining your arbitration options.

You may request arbitration on a claim dispute by following the instructions, which follow. If you have made an arbitration request through the American Moving and Storage Association and received official Submission to Arbitration and Questionnaire Forms, you must submit your claim to arbitration within 15 working days from the day you receive the Submission to Arbitrate and Questionnaire Forms. Complete and return two copies of the forms and other supporting documentation along with your portion of the fee (\$300.00 for claims of \$10,000.00 or



less) for instituting the arbitration proceeding to:

NATIONAL ARBITRATION FORUM  
ATTN: AMSA DISPUTE SETTLEMENT PROGRAM  
P.O. Box 50191  
Minneapolis, MN 55405

### **WHEN IS ARBITRATION APPROPRIATE?**

Disputes eligible for arbitration are unresolved claims that occur as a result of loss or damage to an interstate shipment of household goods for an individual household (also referred as a C.O.D. shipper) or additional charges that were billed to you by your mover after your shipment was delivered. Claim disputes involving other types of shipments may be arbitrated under the program if both parties agree to do so. In accordance with Federal law and the terms of your Bill of Lading contract, a claim for loss or damage must be filed with your mover within nine months of the delivery (a shorter period may apply if the shipper elects to institute a court action). The carrier must acknowledge your claim within 30 (thirty) days of receipt and within 120 days must either pay, deny, make a settlement offer or advise you of the status of the claim and the reason for any delay in disposition. If you (the shipper) and your mover (the carrier) cannot resolve your claim, typically involving the amount of the settlement offer, you may request that arbitration procedures be used to resolve the claim. Before arbitration can begin however, you must first exhaust your remedies through the mover's regular claims process and the mover needs to have made its final offer.

### **WHO ADMINISTERS THE ACTUAL ARBITRATION PROCEDURES?**

To ensure a fair and neutral resolution of all disputes, this program is administered by the National Arbitration Forum (NAF), an independent, non-government organization that is not affiliated with either the American Moving and Storage Association or any household goods carrier. The NAF is one of the world's largest organizations in the country. It is a public service, non-profit organization with branch offices nationwide, dedicated exclusively to resolution of disputes of all kinds. This program is administered by the NAF regional office in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

### **WHAT ARE THE LEGAL EFFECTS OF THE PROGRAM?**

Congress provides guidelines for dispute settlement programs in Section 14708 of Title 49, United States Code, under the authority of the Department of Transportation. These guidelines are reflected in the program rules. You should carefully consider the legal effects of the following provisions before you decide to use the program:

First, arbitration under this program is optional and voluntary for the shipper, but not always so for the carrier. If a shipper request arbitration of a disputed loss or damage claim over \$10,000, the disputed claim will be submitted to arbitration only if both the shipper and the carrier consent to binding arbitration. Shipper requests for arbitration on disputed claims of \$10,000 or less must be submitted to binding arbitration by the carrier. Once both the shipper and the carrier have signed the official forms and submitted the dispute to NAF for resolution, a neutral NAF arbitrator renders a final decision. Shipper has the option of making an oral presentation before the NAF arbitrator. There is an additional fee and both parties must agree to the oral presentaion.

Second, you may be entitled to reasonable attorney's fees if you prevail in a court action that is instituted after the arbitration process has begun, if:

- (A) your original loss and damage claim was submitted to the carrier within 120 days after the date the shipment was delivered, or the date delivery was scheduled, whichever was later, and
- (B) a decision resolving the dispute was not rendered through arbitration within the time period established by the arbitrator for resolution of the dispute; or the court proceeding is to enforce a decision already rendered through arbitration that is instituted after the period for the performance of such decision has elapsed.

Finally, to discourage shippers from filing non-meritorious claims in court, the Federal law provides that the mover may be awarded reasonable attorney's fees if the shipper brings such court action in "bad faith" either:

- (A) after the resolution of a dispute through the arbitration program; or
- (B) after the shipper has instituted an arbitration proceeding but before the period for the resolution of the dispute as established by the arbitrator has ended or before a decision resolving the dispute is rendered.

## **WHAT CAN AN ARBITRATOR AWARD AND WHAT IS THE LEGAL STATUS OF THAT DECISION?**

The arbitrator may grant any remedy or relief the arbitrator feels is just and appropriate within the scope of the agreement between the parties and within the rules of the program. In general, the amount of any award may not exceed the carrier's liability under the bill of lading. In reaching a decision, the arbitrator considers the applicable law and the provisions of the tariff, as well as applicable practices of the moving industry. Under the rules of the program, the arbitrator only has jurisdiction to consider claims for loss or damage to the household goods. The arbitrator has no jurisdiction to consider any other claims.

The arbitrator's decision is legally binding on both parties and can be enforced in any court having jurisdiction over the dispute. Under the rules

of the program, there is a limited right to appeal the arbitrator's decision; however, courts will not usually revise findings of fact or law in a binding arbitration award.

## HOW MUCH DOES ARBITRATION COST?

The NAF currently charges a fee of \$650.00 to initiate a standard "document arbitration" case for claims up to \$10,000; refer to the fee schedule below for the applicable fees for larger claims. As the party instituting the arbitration proceeding, you will be asked to pay part of the cost of the proceeding, unless both parties have previously agreed to a different amount, when you return the completed arbitration forms to NAF. In reaching a final decision, the arbitrator may determine which party will pay the cost or a portion of the cost of instituting the proceeding. In other words, the arbitrator may decide all, a portion or none of your initial fee, depending on the circumstances of your dispute.

Amount of Disputed Claim	New Total Administrative Fee	Claimant's Share of Administrative Fee	Carrier's Share of Administrative Fee
\$10,000 or less	\$650	\$300	\$350
Over \$10,000 up to \$20,000	\$700	\$325	\$375
Over \$20,000 up to \$30,000	\$750	\$350	\$400
Over \$30,000 up to \$40,000	\$800	\$375	\$425
Over \$40,000 up to \$50,000	\$850	\$400	\$450
Over \$50,000	\$850 plus one (1%) of the amount over \$50,000	\$400 plus one-half of 1% of the amount over \$50,000	\$450 plus one-half of 1% of the amount over \$50,000

## HOW DO I REQUEST ARBITRATION?

You may request arbitration by writing to the ***American Moving and Storage Association, Attention: Dispute Settlement Program, 1611 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-3406***. Your letter of notification to the AMSA must be sent within 60 days after a final offer or a denial of your claim has been made to you in writing by the carrier. Your letter to AMSA may also be sent by fax to (703) 683-7527.

**Along with your name, address and telephone number, the following information should be included in your letter of notification to AMSA:**

- the name of the carrier and the identification number of the shipment,
- any assigned loss and damage claim number,
- the name the shipment moved under,



- the dates and locations of pickup and delivery, and
- the monetary value of the loss and damage claim involved.

**Documents supporting your position on the claim should not be sent at this time, but kept for use later when the actual arbitration forms are being submitted to NAF.**

Upon receipt of this information, the AMSA will promptly notify the carrier of your request for arbitration and, if the dispute falls within the program guidelines, forward to you the required forms and program rules. You will then have 15 days to complete the forms and return them to NAF, along with your portion of the administrative fee. Then the carrier submits its documentation and its portion of the filing fee and the arbitration process begins. Most decisions are made by the arbitrator within 30 days of receiving all the necessary forms and documents.

## **ALLIED VAN LINES TARIFF PROVISIONS**

Federal law requires that movers advise shippers that they may inspect the tariff that govern your shipment. The carrier's tariff, by this reference, is made a part of the contract of carriage (bill of lading) between you and the carrier and may be inspected at carrier's facility, or, on request, carrier will furnish a copy of any tariff provision containing carrier's rates, rules or charges governing your shipment, the terms of which cannot be varied.

Incorporated tariff provisions include but are not limited to those: (1) establishing limitation of carrier's liability, the principal features of which are described in the valuation declaration section of the bill of lading; (2) setting the time periods for filing claims, the principal features of which are described in Section 6 of the bill of lading; and, (3) reserving the carrier's right to assess additional charges for additional services performed and, on non-binding estimates, to base charges upon the exact weight of the goods transported.