

Blank Document Warning

Rogue movers typically offer low estimates over the telephone or web without inspecting the consumer's household goods. Once the household goods are loaded, the mover holds them hostage while demanding more money or increasing the cost of previously quoted estimates. Don't make it easy for rogue movers by signing blank documents.

Consumers should pay special attention to the type and content of documents that moving companies ask them to sign. These documents are legally enforceable contracts, just like the contracts you might sign to buy a home or a car. Make sure you ALWAYS read everything in any contract you are asked to sign; DO NOT SIGN BLANK DOCUMENTS.

Always get a copy of any moving document you sign. If the mover does not have an extra copy for you, insist on making one yourself, or at least take a good picture of the document using a digital camera. This will help to protect you later if the document you signed is subsequently altered.

If your mover is insisting that you sign blank or incomplete documents, consider cancelling your move with that company. Even though it is an inconvenience, it is better to cancel than to deal with the consequences of hiring a dishonest mover.

Always research a mover before you hire the company. You can get more information on the mover you are considering hiring by visiting www.movinginmissouri.gov. Carefully selecting your mover is the best way to avoid fraud.

Quick Tips: Don't Become a Victim of Moving Fraud.

Make sure anything you sign contains no unfilled blank spaces, except for the actual weight of your shipment or charges incurred in-transit.

- Pay attention to pre-checked boxes in online offers; they could bind you to terms you don't want.
- Make sure everything you were promised verbally by the mover also appears in writing.
- Don't be pressured into signing anything.
- Don't be afraid to seek advice if you need it. A lawyer or financial advisor can help.
- Remember, contracts are designed to protect both parties. Make sure you fully understand all the details before signing on the dotted line.
- Be especially careful with movers who provide an estimate based on a list of items you provide via the telephone or internet. If the mover is located within 50 miles of your residence, insist on an on-site estimate.
- Keep a copy of every document you sign.