Motor Carriers of Household Goods

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What requirements are applicable to operators of household goods?

In Interstate Commerce

Under the federal regulation §375.103, the definition of household goods means "… the personal effects or property used, or to be used, in a dwelling, when part of the equipment or supplies of the dwelling. Transportation of the household goods must be arranged and paid for by the individual shipper or by another individual on behalf of the shipper. Household goods includes property moving from a factory or store if purchased with the intent to use in a dwelling and transported at the request of the householder, who also pays the transportation charges."

Motor common carriers of household goods must apply for authority to operate in interstate commerce, show that the applicant is fit, willing and able to provide the transportation and to comply with all of the regulatory provisions and that the transportation service will be consistent with the public interest and the national transportation policy.

In addition, the household goods carrier must:

- Maintain a tariff
- Furnish copies of tariff publications
- Subject to hazardous materials requirements when hazardous materials are transported and other safety requirements as indicated in the code of federal regulations
- May provide service options of space reservation, expedited service, exclusive use of a vehicle, guaranteed service for agreed dates and liability insurance
- Must provide a non-binding written estimate based on a physical survey (if goods are beyond a 50 mile radius or survey is waived) of the household goods to be transported
- May provide a binding estimate upon request if provided in the tariff
- Prepare an order of service
- Prepare an inventory for each shipment
- Issue a bill of lading
- Weigh each shipment on a non-binding estimate
- Dispose of claims
- Liable for loss and damage when accepting goods
- Provide information to prospective customers
- Maintain proof of insurance

In Intrastate Commerce

Under state regulation, the definition of household goods is very similar to the federal definition. Under Missouri law, household goods means "…personal effects and property used or to be used in a dwelling when part of the equipment or supplies of such dwelling and similar property, if the transportation of such effects or property, is either arranged and paid for by the householder, including transportation of property from a factory or store when the property is purchased by the householder with intent to use in his or her dwelling, or arranged and paid for by another party. The term "household goods" shall not include personal property which when tendered to a motor carrier is crated or otherwise packaged to make it suitable for transportation by motor carriers of general commodities, freight or property".

Motor carriers wanting to transport household goods wholly within the state must apply for the authority and show that the applicant is fit, willing and able to provide the service. In addition, other requirements must be complied with that are similar to interstate requirements. These requirements include but are not limited to:

- Maintaining a tarrif.
- Compliance with hazardous materials requirements when hazardous materials are transported and other safety requirements as indicated in the code of state regulations.
- May provide service options of space reservation, expedited service, exclusive use of a vehicle, guaranteed service for agreed dates and liability insurance.
- May provide a binding estimate upon request if provided in the tariff.

- Issue a bill of lading.
- Weigh each shipment for movements where the rates and charges are not on an hourly basis.
- Dispose of claims.
- Liable for loss and damage when accepting goods.
- Provide information to prospective customers.
- Maintain proof of insurance.
- Must include specific state information when advertising service as a household goods mover.
- Filing an annual financial statement.
- Pay an annual intrastate per vehicle license fee (not required if interstate authority is also held by the carrier).

References to the various state statute and regulations can be found on the web at www.modot.org/mcs.