



7<sup>th</sup> JMTC Legal Assistance Information

## Tips for proper Inventory of House Goods Shipments

Please note that this Information Paper only provides basic information and is not intended to serve as a substitute for personal consultations with a Legal Assistance Attorney.

No one likes to have their property damaged or destroyed during a move. However, it does happen. One of the most important steps you can take to ensure that you will be compensated for your damaged or destroyed goods is to make sure that the inventory has been properly filled out.

The inventory is one of the most important documents you can use to establish that your household goods have been lost or damaged. It provides evidence as to what property has been packed, and the condition of the property at the time of the move. Therefore, please pay close attention to your inventory as it is being prepared by the movers.

A representative of the movers will complete the inventory before they leave your quarters. The representative has a responsibility to provide an accurate, legible, and descriptive list of your household goods.

You should be proactive during the packing of your household goods. Pay attention to the preparation for the inventory and the packing of your household goods. Steps you can take include the following:

1. Ensure that each carton and loose item, such as a ladder, has an inventory tag and appears on the inventory.
2. Ensure the contents of the cartons accurately identify the property. For example, if a box contains crystal, make sure the inventory says “crystal,” and not “kitchen items.”
3. It is important that your high value items such as stereo equipment, televisions, cameras, video recorders, jewelry, comic books etc are listed on the inventory. Without listing

such items, your local claims office may not be able to compensate you for your loss, especially if its jewelry.

4. Compact Discs, DVDs, and Videos should be counted and the number entered on the inventory
5. Audio/Video equipment must be identified by make, model and serial number.
6. Televisions must also be identified by size, model, make, serial number and whether or not it's a Plasma, LCD or regular Tube TV.
7. Separate your professional items. Ensure that they are identified on the inventory as professional books.
8. Monitor the wrapping and packing of your items.
9. The condition of the property listed on an inventory is usually reflected by codes. These codes are called "exception symbols" and "location symbols." An explanation for these symbols is found at the top of each inventory page. Check the string of symbols listed for each item closely. The movers use the symbols to show preexisting damage, which can affect any possible award you could receive.
10. If you believe the inventory to be inaccurate, tell the carrier's representative and write down why you disagree. There is a space provided at the bottom of the inventory sheet. Identify the inventory line number and the item you wish to discuss. Please be specific as to why you disagree with the mover's description.
11. Carefully read the inventory prepared by the mover's personnel before you sign it.
12. The movers must provide you a legible copy of the inventory. Never sign a blank, incomplete or illegible inventory or an inventory you cannot clearly understand.
13. Do not argue with the movers' representative. If you have a problem, contact your transportation office at once.

Please keep in mind that if you sign the inventory at the end of the packout, without taking exceptions, you are affirming that the inventory is a true reflection of what you tendered for shipment. The best person to know the items shipped and their condition is you and the movers. Therefore, it is import that you make sure the inventory is carefully prepared.

For further questions, please contact your local claims office.