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# The Interstate Moving Guide

You and the  
Moving Process





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## ➤ Introduction

If you have never relocated between states, you probably have questions about what to expect. This brochure answers your questions by walking you through the relocation process, industry terminology and required documentation. You'll also find tips to save you time, money and worry.

Throughout your relocation, your Atlas Agency Sales Representative will answer your questions and work closely with you to ensure your satisfaction and a smooth, stress-free experience.

**TIP** — Definitions of underlined words can be found in the **Glossary of Terms**. Definitions of underlined and bold words can be found in the **Glossary of Documentation**. These are provided to help clarify information referenced throughout the brochure.

## ➤ The In-Home Estimate

The first step in your relocation is to schedule an appointment with your Atlas Agent for an in-home estimate of costs. Your Atlas Representative will walk through your home with you and complete a Table of Measurements, or cube sheet, to determine the cubic feet that your furniture, appliances, cartons, and miscellaneous articles will occupy in the moving van. Your Atlas Representative will then use industry averages to calculate the estimated weight of your shipment and arrive at a reasonably accurate estimation of charges.

**TIP** — To ensure the most accurate estimate possible, it's important that you mention any items stored in concealed areas such as an attic, crawl space, garage and basement, and off-site locations such as a storage facility, office or another residence. Also, take this opportunity to discuss any concerns you might have or items that may require special attention.

## ➤ How Are Costs Calculated?

To calculate the cost of your relocation, your Atlas Representative will look at three factors: (1) the transportation charge; (2) the cost of valuation; and, (3) the cost of materials and services.

**Transportation Charge** — Transportation is usually the most expensive element in any relocation, accounting for 50 to 70 percent of total charges. It is based on a tariff rate determined by the actual weight of your shipment and the number of miles it will travel. The transportation charge covers the cost of loading, transporting and unloading your goods. It consists of five separate charges for:

- Linehaul
- Origin service
- Destination service
- Insurance surcharge (when applicable)
- Fuel surcharge (depending upon the current price of fuel)

**Your Valuation Choices** — Valuation is the liability Atlas assumes for your goods while in our care. Atlas offers you a choice of two plans: standard liability and Full Value Protection. Full Value Protection is a comprehensive plan that establishes Atlas' responsibility for your goods while they are in our care.

Your valuation choice determines the cost you incur. For more information on your options, ask your Atlas Representative for a copy of "**Valuation Options: What's Right For You?**" or visit our website at [www.atlasvanlines.com/home-moving/valuation](http://www.atlasvanlines.com/home-moving/valuation).

**Materials and Services** — Materials and/or services that are required to complete your relocation result in additional charges. For instance, if you choose to let Atlas pack and unpack your goods, you will pay a charge based upon the service you choose – custom pack or full pack.



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Conditions affecting delivery at your new location may require additional services. For example, the professional van operator may arrive to deliver your shipment and find that your residence is not accessible to an over-the-road vehicle such as the moving van. In such a case, a shuttle service would be required to complete delivery. Since neither you nor your Atlas Representative may know about such conditions in advance, costs for these services may not be included in your original estimate. Therefore, additional charges are due, even on a binding estimate (when the estimated price is guaranteed).

Following are examples of services that may result in additional charges:

- Shuttle service—using smaller equipment to transfer the shipment between the residence and the over-the-road vehicle or vice versa
- Extra pick-up and/or deliveries (e.g. to or from a vacation home or storage facility)
- Overtime loading or unloading
- Storage-in-transit in the event you need to temporarily delay the delivery of your shipment

Be sure to tell your Atlas Representative about conditions at your new home that may require additional services at destination. Once all charges are figured, your Atlas Representative will provide you with a detailed written estimate. Remember, the estimate is a reasonably accurate approximation of charges, but it is still an estimate of charges.

**TIP** — Since its deregulation in 1980, the moving industry has become a competitive market. Although discounting is practiced by most carriers, poor service may result from “deep” discounting. Don’t let “cost” be the principal factor in selecting a carrier. The lowest price may not always be the wisest choice.

Unless you’ve been given a guaranteed price (a binding estimate), the **actual weight** of your shipment (taken once all your goods are loaded onto the moving van) determines the **actual charges**. Talk to your Atlas Representative about the estimate options available to you, including non-binding, binding and Atlas’ Assured Price Protection.

An Order For Service provides pertinent information and authorizes the carrier to transport your shipment. The Order For Service is not binding and can be amended, cancelled or delayed. Changes in dates, destinations, valuation or services require an Amendment to Estimate, Order For Service and/or Bill of Lading.

**TIP** — If you contact Atlas with questions about your relocation, please refer to the registration number. It will assist in identifying your shipment and in answering questions in a timelier manner.

It is important that you complete the Customer’s Declaration of Value, a part of the Bill of Lading. The valuation option you select establishes Atlas’ maximum liability for your goods.







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## ➤ Atlas Handles the Rest

Once you have completed the [Order For Service](#), information is sent to Atlas Headquarters and you are assigned an identification number (registration number), which appears on all documentation and correspondence.

Once you give Atlas the go-ahead, the [booking agent](#) either chooses to transport your shipment using his own van operator and equipment ([self-haul](#)) or to turn the order over to Atlas Headquarters for assignment. In both instances, Atlas Van Lines is represented and working behind the scenes.

If the agent turns the order over to Atlas Headquarters, Atlas' Operations Department assigns a [hauling agent](#).

In this instance, as many as three different Atlas Agencies might share responsibility for your relocation: the booking agent, the [origin agent](#) and the hauling agent. (Note: the booking agent can provide origin and hauling services.)

Once Atlas Headquarters has received the order, it goes to Atlas' Operations Department where experienced planners coordinate the routing of shipments within and from each of their respective geographical zones. Oftentimes, several shipments may be loaded onto one trailer, originating from and delivering to different cities across the U.S., all of which must be moved within a specific time frame.

To accomplish this, dispatchers communicate a schedule to van operators and participating agencies and make sure they carry out instructions. Van operators "check in" every day throughout your relocation, so you can find out the status of your shipment by calling our toll-free line 800-638-9797, or log onto [www.atlasvanlines.com](http://www.atlasvanlines.com) and click on "my atlasvanlines Shipment Tracking and more."

Dispatching thousands of shipments takes careful planning and teamwork. Everyone at Atlas works for a common goal, which is to provide you with the smoothest relocation possible.

## ➤ Let's Get Packing

When you've made the decision to relocate with Atlas, notify your Atlas Representative promptly to ensure immediate scheduling of your agreed pick-up and delivery dates. This is especially important during the peak moving season (May 15 through September 30) when carriers experience almost half of their volume.

The booking agent is responsible for making the necessary arrangements for your move. These include scheduling packing dates and hiring experts to perform specialized services (e.g. disassembly of a grandfather clock, pool table, or preparing a flat screen television for transit).

**TIP** — The van operator can request that any packed-by-owner (PBO) cartons be repacked, if in his judgment, there is risk of damage during transit due to improper packing. The van operator can repack any cartons for an additional charge.

The origin agent (in some instances, the booking agent and origin agent are the same) will provide you with a copy of the [Customer Responsibilities Guide/High Value Inventory Form](#). Review the form carefully, complete the required information and give it to the van operator. The van operator cannot pack or load your shipment unless this form is completed.

If you intend to do your own packing, it's a good idea to purchase moving cartons and packing materials from your local Atlas Agency. When properly used, these containers help protect your goods during transit. For tips on packing, ask your Atlas Representative for a copy of our "How To..." brochures.



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Make sure to label your boxes appropriately to assist both you and the van operator in placing the cartons in their respective rooms at your new residence.

**TIP** — Don't forget to set aside those items that will travel with you, such as medications, baby necessities, your pet's leash, etc. It's also a good idea to keep in your possession important documents such as wills, car titles, mortgage papers, passports, etc.

If your relocation requires full or partial packing, your origin agent (who may also be your booking agent) notifies you of the date and time the packing crew is scheduled to arrive. Depending on the size of your home and the amount of packing required, one or more days might be needed to complete your packing. Usually, the loading of the van takes place the following day, again, depending on the size of your shipment.

**TIP** — Make sure the Bill of Lading includes your new delivery address and telephone numbers so the van operator can call in advance of delivery.

Your agent will give you a [Packing Services Report](#). This document lists the containers that were provided and any packing, unpacking and/or appliances serviced while preparing your goods for transport. Your signature certifies that the completed report correctly reflects the services performed. Charges are based on the actual work completed.

## ➤ Moving Day: Good to Go!

It's moving day — your goods are packed and you're ready to go. When your van operator arrives, he will ask you to sign the *Bill of Lading*. Your signature or the signature of your designated representative, authorizes the carrier to transport your belongings. It's imperative that you or your designated representative, check the document for accuracy and completeness. Don't forget to give the completed *Customer Responsibilities Guide/High Value Inventory Form* to the van operator as well.

In addition, the van operator is required to complete a [Relocation Services Descriptive Inventory](#) of the items being shipped and to note their condition. The van operator will ask you to sign the inventory form, acknowledging that the inventory is, to the best of your knowledge, a true and complete list of goods and their condition. (If the carrier is transporting an automobile or boat, a signed *Motor Vehicle/Boat Descriptive Inventory* also is required.) When additional services are necessary to complete your move, the [Additional Services Performed \(ASP\)](#) document is required. The ASP indicates the amount of manpower and time that was necessary to accomplish the service and who performed it. Your initials confirm that the

**TIP** — When the van operator arrives within the specific time frame and no one is available to accept delivery, Atlas authorizes two hours of "waiting time." When waiting time has expired and every attempt to locate you has failed, Atlas has the option of placing your goods in storage for delivery at a later date, which results in added cost to you. Atlas requires our van operators to go to your residence, even if we can't reach you by phone.

services were completed as stated. If you decide to include additional items once your shipment has been loaded, you may incur additional charges.

Now that the preliminaries are over, just sit back and let the van operator and his helpers do their jobs.





## › Delivery – What You Should Expect

The agreed delivery period, listed on the *Bill of Lading*, specifies the preferred time for you to expect delivery of your goods. Atlas Van Operators will advise you of their anticipated arrival at least 24 hours in advance. In the unlikely event that your shipment is delayed past the agreed delivery period, Atlas will notify you of the change.

To this point, there have been up to three agencies involved in your relocation — the booking agent, the origin agent and the hauling agent. (Recall that it's possible for the booking agent to act as the origin agent and the hauling agent.) Now, a fourth agency is about to join your moving team.

When the van operator needs assistance with unloading, or arrangements are needed for items requiring special handling, the destination agent assigned to your relocation assists by providing experienced helpers and scheduling other services. The destination agent's warehouse is also available, in the event your shipment requires temporary storage.

## › Your Payment Method Options

If you requested notification of the actual weight and charges by checking the appropriate box on the *Order For Service*, Atlas will notify you of the amount due prior to delivery.

Unless other means have been prearranged, payment is due at the time of delivery. The van operator will not begin to unload your shipment until payment is received. Atlas offers the following payment options for your convenience:

- Cash
- Cashier's check
- Traveler's check
- Bank check
- Postal money order
- Approved personal check
- Credit card – Visa®, MasterCard®, Discover®, and American Express®

Your Atlas Representative can discuss Atlas' policies regarding personal checks and credit cards. In the event actual charges exceed estimated charges by more than 10 percent, the van operator will release your goods when you pay the 110% Collection Option (for non-binding estimated amounts only).

For example, if the cost of your relocation was estimated at \$2,500 and the actual charges are \$2,800, you are required to pay on delivery only the estimated charges (\$2,500) plus 10 percent (\$250), or a total of \$2,750. Atlas will invoice you 30 days after delivery for the balance (\$50). If you require services at destination that are not included in your estimate, you may incur additional charges. In addition, if your delivery requires a shuttle not listed on your estimate, and actual charges exceed the estimated price, you are responsible for 110 percent plus up to an additional 15 percent of that amount at delivery for the shuttle service. Atlas will invoice you 30 days after delivery for the charges in excess of the 15 percent.

## › Unloading

As the van operator begins to unload at your new residence, mark off the items on your Customer Check-off Sheet as they are carried in. This helps you determine if all furniture and/or cartons are accounted for. You also should record any noticeable damage. Once you have completed your inventory check, transfer your notations onto the van operator's copy of the *Relocation Services Descriptive Inventory* and sign it.

During unloading, the Atlas Van Operator and crew will place your heavy furniture where you wish. Because of time constraints, most van operators will place your heavy furniture only once, so it is a good idea to have a plan for where you would like it.

If you requested "unpacking" services, know that the industry defines unpacking as removing packed items from cartons and placing them on a table or counter. When requested, Atlas will dispose of used material and containers at the time of unpacking.



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## ➤ After Delivery

Although Atlas' objective is to transport your personal belongings without incident, there may be times when loss or damage occurs. If items are missing or damaged:

1. Finish unpacking your goods, then make a list of damaged/missing articles. **DO NOT THROW AWAY ANY OF THE DAMAGED ITEMS OR CARTONS!**
2. Gather your documents for reference purposes. As mentioned before, you save time knowing your shipment registration number. Take advantage of Atlas' online claim form by going to [www.atlasvanlines.com/service](http://www.atlasvanlines.com/service). Or, call our Customer Service Department at 800-638-9797 ext. 2850 and request a claim form. It will be mailed promptly.

**TIP** — If Atlas or your booking agent sends or emails a request for service evaluation, please complete and return it. It's very important that Atlas knows how your move was handled.

3. Fill out the claim form as completely and accurately as possible and mail it to the Customer Service Department. It's best to file your claim as soon as possible; however, as long as your claim is received by our Customer Service Department within nine months from the date of shipment delivery, it will be processed. Claims are settled according to the liability option you selected prior to your relocation.

Processing begins at the corporate office upon receipt of your claim. Atlas' Customer Service Department may assign an approved, reputable repair firm to contact you and make an appointment for an in-home inspection. Minor repairs may be performed at this appointment.

The repair firm will forward its report to Atlas and we will contact you regarding repair and/or settlement.

For an item that is missing, Atlas makes every effort to locate it. In the event Atlas is unable to recover or repair an item, restitution will be considered in your final settlement.

Atlas makes every effort to make your relocation easy and worry-free. If you have questions, contact your Atlas Representative. Atlas professionals are always ready to help.

## ➤ Glossary of Terms

### 110% Collection Option

When the actual charges for services outlined on the estimate exceed the estimated charges by more than 10 percent, the van operator will release your goods to you after you pay the estimated charges plus 10 percent on the day of delivery. Atlas will invoice you 30 days after delivery for the remaining balance.

### Agent

A local moving and storage company under agreement with Atlas Van Lines and empowered to act in the van line's behalf servicing the interstate movement of your household goods.

### Agreed Delivery Period

A spread of dates mutually agreed upon between you and Atlas for the delivery of your goods.

### Booking Agent

The mover responsible for actually securing the order for your move and registering it with Atlas.

### Destination Agent

A local mover in, or near, your destination city responsible for providing destination services when required or requested.

### Estimate

A computation of weight, valuation, services, etc., used to determine the estimated cost of your interstate move.

### Hauling Agent

A mover whose van operator and equipment are used to transport your goods.

### Origin Agent

A local mover in, or near, your origin city who is responsible for origin services when required or requested. The origin agent and the booking agent may be one and the same.

### Professional Van Operator

A professional driver operating under contract with Atlas, an affiliated Atlas agency, or working as an employee of an Atlas agency to provide moving services. Responsibilities include: supervising packing/loading crews at origin, completing a detailed inventory of items to be shipped and other necessary documentation, transporting goods from origin to destination, and coordinating/assisting with the loading/unloading processes.





### Registration Number

A reference number assigned to your order by Atlas' Operations Department to identify your shipment. The number appears on all documentation and correspondence.

### Self-Haul

The booking agent's prerogative to transport your household goods using its own van operator and equipment, rather than turning the order over to Atlas' dispatching center for assignment.

### Shuttle Service

A required service when it is physically impossible to pick-up or deliver a shipment with an over-the-road van. A smaller van is used to transfer the shipment between the residence and the over-the-road van or vice versa.

### Storage-in-Transit

The temporary storage of household goods in an agent's facility for delivery at a later date. With Atlas, storage-in-transit is limited to 180 days.

### Tariff

The publication that provides the schedule of rates and charges from which Atlas computes the total cost of a move.

### Valuation

The liability that Atlas assumes, according to your selection, while your shipment is in our care. The term "valuation" denotes contractual limits of liability, and is not "insurance." Atlas is not an insurance company.

## > Glossary of Documentation

### *Additional Services Performed*

A form that substantiates that additional services were performed at origin and/or destination. Your initials verify that the service(s) was completed as stated.

### *Amendment to Estimate, Order For Service and/or Bill of Lading*

A form used for updating the original *Estimate, Order For Service and/or Bill of Lading* indicating changes you agree to make in your relocation (e.g., change in dates, address, items to be shipped, services, etc.).

### *Bill of Lading*

A contract between you and Atlas authorizing us to transport your household goods. It also serves as a delivery receipt for goods.

### *Customer Check-off Sheet*

A form to assist you in verifying that all items listed on the inventory were delivered.

### *Customer's Declaration of Value*

A document (as part of the Bill of Lading) that explains the different levels of protection for loss or damage to your household goods. The option you select establishes Atlas' maximum liability for your goods while they are in our care.

### *Customer Responsibilities Guide/High Value Inventory Form*

A form that advises you of your responsibilities as a customer, assists you in determining the total value of your shipment and assists Atlas in determining which items need special handling and protection.

### *Order For Service*

A written agreement authorizing the carrier to transport your household goods. Provides a summary of the services and charges required to handle your move. It is not a contract. It is a supporting document to the *Bill of Lading*.

### *Packing Services Report*

A document that provides a record of containers, packing and unpacking, and appliance services. Your signature is authorization for the services.

### *Relocation Services Descriptive Inventory*

A listing of items that are received for transportation by Atlas and the condition in which they are received.

### *Table of Measurements*

A document used to determine the cubic feet that your furniture, appliances, cartons and miscellaneous articles occupy in the van. By converting cubic feet into pounds, an estimated weight is determined. The estimated weight is used to calculate the estimated cost for your move.

## > Questions for the Mover:





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**You've got it in you to go new places.**  
So do we. We go there every day.

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NOTICE: Atlas Van Lines, Inc. is an interstate motor carrier. Each agency is independently owned and operated. An agency represents Atlas for **interstate** (from one state to another) moves only. **Local** and **intrastate** (within a single state) moves are not provided as an agent of Atlas. Questions concerning local and intrastate moves should be directed to your local agency representative, not to Atlas Van Lines, Inc.

Atlas Van Lines, Inc. is an ISO 9001 certified company.

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