

Legal Information for Moving Companies

For all US DOT FMCSA regulated interstate movers of household goods

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Are visual in home estimates required?

Yes, under U.S. D.O.T. regulations shippers whose property is **located within 50 miles** of the estimator's location must receive a physical survey/visual estimate of the property. The estimate must be prepared in writing, signed by both the shipper and mover, and state whether it is binding or non-binding.

The 50 mile rule:

Federal law under 49 USC Section 14104(b)(1)(C) requires that estimates (both binding and non-binding) be in writing and be based on a visual in home inspection of the property if the shipper's pickup location is within a 50 mile radius of the location of the carrier's household goods agent preparing the estimate.

Exception to the 50 mile rule:

A visual estimate is NOT required if:

(1) The pickup address is outside the 50 mile radius;

OR

(2) A written waiver is signed by the shipper stating that they waive their right to a visual in home estimate.

Note: All estimates must be in writing and be either binding or non-binding.

Note: In addition to the above general requirements, a mover must continue to follow all provisions of federal law governing interstate moves.

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT: This document was created to help protect consumers by educating moving companies as to the regulations they must follow. Federal laws regulating moving companies are designed to help protect consumers and create an even playing field for moving companies. By following the law, moving companies can avoid government fines, lawsuits, and provide better service to their customers. This document is provided for general informational purposes only. This document is not intended to and does not provide legal advice or counsel. The author of this document is offering general information about the law cited and is not offering specific legal advice. Laws and procedures change frequently, and they can be interpreted differently by different people. For legal advice and answers to specific questions regarding your situation please call the Law Offices of Michael Garcia at 408-730-5683.