



## Movers vs. Brokers

When booking a move, know the difference between a mover and a moving broker. A mover, formally known as a motor carrier, owns or leases moving trucks and provides staff to handle the actual transportation and delivery of goods from one location to the next. A moving broker is an intermediary that arranges a household's move but hires a motor carrier to complete the move. Moving brokers do not assume responsibility for household goods in a move, nor are they authorized to transport them. They usually do not have moving trucks or moving employees.

## Red Flags

Recognize the following business practices that are red flags before signing a contract:

- ❑ Answering the phone as "moving services" or something generic rather than a specific company name;
- ❑ Refusing to provide a written estimate or offering an estimate without assessing the scope and quantity of household goods;
- ❑ Claiming the final estimate will be provided upon loading the goods;
- ❑ Supplying blank or incomplete estimates or contracts for approval and signature; or
- ❑ Requiring a large, up-front deposit or payment in cash.



## Florida Attorney General's Office Scams at a Glance: **On the Move**

Visit [MyFloridaLegal.com](http://MyFloridaLegal.com) to find consumer tips or to file a complaint. By remaining vigilant and informed, savvy consumers can help us build a Stronger, Safer Florida.

Report fraud by calling  
1-866-9-NO-SCAM  
(1-866-966-7226).

Attorney General Ashley Moody  
Office of the Attorney General  
PL-01 The Capitol  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399  
[MyFloridaLegal.com](http://MyFloridaLegal.com)

Scams at a Glance:  
**On the Move**

ATTORNEY GENERAL  
STATE OF FLORIDA

OFFICE OF  
**ATTORNEY GENERAL**  
**ASHLEY MOODY**  
Stronger, Safer Florida

# Stop Moving Scams in Their Tracks

A common moving scam occurs when a mover packs up and transports household goods then refuses to release them until the consumer pays an additional, often exorbitant, fee.

Another common scam occurs when a mover gives a low-ball offer to secure a job then increases the rate significantly upon arrival, threatening to walk away from the job unless paid.

Consider the following tips when seeking estimates, choosing between companies, and booking a move:

- Movers or brokers that conduct interstate moves (from one state to another) must be licensed with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. Determine whether a company is properly licensed by visiting [FMCSA.DOT.gov/Protect-Your-Move](http://FMCSA.DOT.gov/Protect-Your-Move) and clicking "Research Your Mover";
- Florida movers and brokers that only handle intrastate (within Florida) moves must be licensed with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Determine whether a company is properly licensed by visiting [FDACS.gov/Consumer-Resources](http://FDACS.gov/Consumer-Resources) and clicking "Business Search";
- Research the companies under consideration. Ask friends and colleagues for recommendations, look up the company's name online using terms like "scam" and "held hostage" to see if there are negative reviews. Additionally, check with the Better Business Bureau at [BBB.org](http://BBB.org) to see if the business has any complaints against it;



- If booking a move through a broker, ask for a list of motor carriers that they use and research both the carriers and the broker;
- Seek multiple itemized, written estimates for the move. Know whether the estimate accounts for any packing services, dis- and re-assembly of furniture, packing materials, mileage charges, hourly rates for the movers, and stair or elevator charges, as applicable;
- Before signing a contract, ensure that it contains all items agreed upon in the estimate, the date of the move, the origin and delivery addresses, and any cancellation or dispute policies;
- Read all documents thoroughly, and understand what is being agreed to prior to signing;
- Know whether items will be delivered directly and individually or if they will be stored or combined with another household within a common delivery area;
- Ask the mover for proof of liability and worker's compensation coverage, and call the insurer to confirm that the policy is active;
- Check with the current renter's or homeowner's insurance provider, as applicable, to determine whether the coverage insures the loss or damage of household goods during a move;
- Consider creating an inventory before the movers arrive and documenting the condition of items. This documentation will be helpful if something is lost or damaged in the move;
- Know that if items are lost or damaged, financial recoveries are limited to \$0.60 per pound, so additional coverage may be needed; and
- Consider personally moving important items such as daily medication or supplies that will be needed immediately upon arrival, rather than packing them on a moving truck.

Anyone who encounters any type of moving scam should contact the Florida Attorney General's Office at [MyFloridaLegal.com](http://MyFloridaLegal.com) or at 1-866-9-NO-SCAM (1-866-966-7226).