

MANUAL: Personnel  
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Part 2--Commissioned Corps Personnel Administration

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Public Health Service

Chapter CC24--Travel and Transportation  
Subchapter CC24.6--Transportation of Household Goods  
Personnel INSTRUCTION 8--Excess Costs of the Shipment of Household  
Goods and Personal Effects

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Section A. Purpose and Scope

This INSTRUCTION provides Public Health Service (PHS) policy and procedure for determining and collecting costs, in excess of authorized allowances, incurred in connection with the shipment or drayage of household goods and personal effects at Government expense.

Section B. Authority

The Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR), Volume 1, Paragraphs U4753 and U5340, provide the authority for collection of costs in excess of authorized allowances for shipment of household goods and personal effects.

Section C. General

1. Costs of Transportation and/or Services Related to the Shipment of Household Goods in Excess of Authorized Allowances

- a. Excess costs that are incurred by an officer when called to active duty or when retired from active service are normally determined by the fiscal accounting point responsible for payment and collected from the officer after shipment has been made.
- b. Excess costs incurred incident to a permanent change of station, other than call-to-duty or retirement, will be determined at origin by the designated household goods shipping officer after weight has been estimated by the carrier, and such excess costs will be collected from the officer prior to shipment. Charges in excess of authorized allowances for temporary storage and other services provided while shipment is in transit or at destination, will be paid by the officer to the carrier's agent at destination.

2. Examples of Circumstances in Which Excess Costs May Be Incurred:

- a. Special services, specific routing, or specific loading, not provided under ordinary rates, furnished at the request of the officer;
- b. Shipments made in separate lots between the same or different points;
- c. Shipments made to and/or from points other than those authorized;
- d. Shipments released at a valuation which exceeds that prescribed for the lowest applicable transportation rate in carrier's tariff; and
- e. Household goods in excess of the authorized weight allowance.

Section D. Released Valuation on Shipment

1. All shipments of household goods, unless otherwise requested by the officer, will be released at the valuation prescribed for the lowest applicable transportation rate in carrier's tariff. (For example, shipments of household goods by van lines are valued at \$1.25 per pound per article.) If an officer desires to place a higher value on a shipment, he/she should request such higher valuation in block 16, "Remarks," of the form

PHS-4013-1, "Application for Shipment of Household Goods," or at the time arrangements are made for shipment with the shipping officer.

2. If the shipment of household goods is to be released at a valuation greater than \$1.25 per pound per article, the higher valuation must be equivalent to at least \$3.50 per pound times the estimated weight of the shipment. Shipments may be released at a lump-sum valuation in any amount the officer requests as long as this minimum valuation is met.
3. The shipping officer, or the commissioned officer, if acting as his/her own shipping officer, must indicate a higher released valuation in the block marked "Description of Articles" on the Government bill of lading.
4. An example of a Government bill of lading showing an increased valuation is contained in INSTRUCTION 4, "Government Bills of Lading," of this subchapter.

#### Section E. Determination of Excess Costs

1. Excess Weight. The provisions of this subsection apply in cases involving only excess weight. When excess distance is also involved, see Section E.3, below.

The carrier's representative should be asked to provide an estimate of the following items:

- a. The net weight of household goods (not including professional books, papers, and equipment) to be shipped;
- b. The net weight of professional books, papers, and equipment to be shipped; and
- c. The cost of the entire shipment, including the estimated cost of any accessorial services and/or temporary storage which is contemplated.

If it appears that the weight of household goods in item a, above, will exceed the maximum authorized allowance for the officer's grade, as shown in paragraph U5310-B of the JFTR, prepare an estimate of the excess costs by following these steps:

- a. Determine the amount by which the net weight of household goods (not including professional books, papers, and equipment) exceeds the maximum authorized allowance;

- b. Divide the amount obtained in Step a. by the total net weight to be shipped (including professional books, papers, and equipment);
- c. Multiply the result obtained in Step b. by the estimated cost of the entire shipment. The result is an estimate of the excess cost to be borne by the officer. Inform the officer of this cost.

Example. An officer in the Senior grade (paygrade O-5) will be shipping 19,000 pounds of household goods and 800 pounds of professional equipment. The table of maximum authorized weight allowances in the JFTR shows that he is entitled to ship 17,500 pounds at Government expense; in addition, he may ship the professional equipment at Government expense. The estimated cost of the shipment is \$4,250.

1.  $19,000 - 17,500 = 1,500$  pounds (amount of excess weight)
  2.  $\frac{1,500}{19,800} = 0.076$  (proportion of total shipment which is excess weight)
  3.  $0.076 \times \$4250.00 = \$323.00$  (estimate of excess cost)
2. Excess Distance. In addition to estimates of the net weight of household goods and professional books, papers, and equipment (it is assumed that the maximum authorized weight is not exceeded), request the carrier's representative to provide estimates of the following:
- a. What it would cost to ship the total estimated weight between authorized points; and
  - b. What it will cost to ship the same weight from the actual point of origin to the place specified by the officer.

The cost of temporary storage and necessary accessorial services need not be included in these estimates. If any such services are included, it is important that both estimates are made assuming the same services, as the only costs to be borne by the officer are those resulting from excess distance (e.g., line haul and fuel surcharges).

Inform the officer that the difference between the two cost estimates is the estimated excess cost to be borne by the officer.

3. Excess Weight and Excess Distance. Obtain the following estimates from the carrier's representative:
- a. Net weight of household goods (not including professional books, papers, and equipment);
  - b. Net weight of professional books, papers, and equipment;

- c. Cost of shipping the maximum authorized weight of household goods plus the professional books, papers, and equipment between authorized points; and
- d. Cost of shipping the estimated total weight (including professional books, papers, and equipment) between the points requested by the officer.

Contemplated accessorial services and temporary storage should be included in the cost estimates. Inform the officer that the difference between the two cost estimates is the estimate of excess cost to be borne by the officer.

- 4. Unauthorized Services and Articles. Should the officer request services not authorized in the JFTR or in this subchapter, the cost of such services shall be considered as excess costs and shall be borne by the officer. Examples of unauthorized services include shipment in multiple lots, assembly/disassembly of toys, storage sheds, etc., and specialized packing not normally provided by the carrier. This does not prohibit the Government from paying for preparation of household appliances and articles as is normally required to prevent damage in transit.

Articles which do not meet the definition of household goods shall not be included in the same shipment as authorized articles. If such articles are inadvertently included and later discovered, the full cost of transporting (and storing, if applicable) such articles shall be charged to the officer. If the costs associated with the unauthorized articles cannot be established separately, the weight of such articles shall be considered as excess weight for the purposes of determining excess costs.

- 5. Excess Valuation. The cost of releasing household goods at a valuation greater than the lowest applicable rate (see Section D., above), and the cost of excess coverage for goods in storage, will be borne entirely by the officer.
- 6. Final Determination. After the shipment has been accomplished, the finance office responsible for auditing the claim for payment shall utilize the provisions contained in Sections E.1 through E.5, above, substituting actual weights and costs for the corresponding estimates, to determine the final extent of the officer's obligation in connection with the shipment.

The net weight of a shipment by a conventional household goods carrier van, as shown on a bill of lading, is the difference between the weight of the truck before and after being loaded with the household goods; as such, this weight includes the weight of interior packing materials. When it is not possible to determine the net unpacked weight of household goods, the net weight as shown on a bill of lading will be reduced by ten percent to arrive at the net weight figure for use in final auditing.

When an overseas shipment is performed using standard overseas shipping boxes (such as type II containers or CONEX transporters) and the unpacked weight of household goods is not known, the net weight for auditing purposes will be computed by determining the difference between the empty and full weights of the container, and then reducing this figure by 20 percent. This allows for interior packing and bracing materials.

When the unpacked weight of household goods is not known and shipment is made in the crated condition, the weight upon which the transportation charges are based will be reduced by 50 percent to arrive at the net weight for auditing purposes.

In those cases which involve a complex mixture of the excess cost items described herein, it may be necessary to combine provisions of Sections E.2 through E.5, above. The rule of thumb to use is that the Government's maximum obligation is to ship the actual weight of the officer's household goods (not to exceed the maximum allowable) plus professional books, papers, and equipment, in a single lot, from an authorized origin to an authorized destination, with the goods being released at the lowest applicable valuation in the carrier's tariffs.

#### Section F. Payment of Excess Costs

Excess costs will be collected as specified in Section C.1, above. In those cases where the excess cost is to be collected in advance of shipment, the shipping officer will inform the officer that further arrangements for shipment of goods cannot be made until the officer submits a certified check or money order made payable to the Treasurer of the United States for the amount of the estimated excess costs. Under no circumstances will checks or money orders be made payable to shipping officers or any payee other than the Treasurer of the United States.

#### Section G. Method of Payment

1. Upon receipt of a certified check or money order for excess charges, the shipping officer will provide the commissioned officer with a receipt for the amount received. The following format should be used in preparing the receipt:

Received from \_\_\_\_\_ the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name of Commissioned Officer)  
 in payment of excess transportation costs and/or excess charges involved  
 in the movement of household goods.

By \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Signature of Shipping Officer)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Title) (Date)

2. The shipping officer will advise the officer that in the event there is an over-collection or under-collection determined through later audit, the fiscal accounting point responsible for payment of transportation charges will take appropriate adjustment action. If the officer considers the amount of payment or subsequent adjustment action by the fiscal accounting point to be incorrect, and the matter cannot be resolved by the fiscal accounting point, the officer may request that the fiscal accounting point forward the claim to the General Accounting Office, Washington, D. C., for final determination.

#### Section H. Limiting Destination Costs

1. If temporary storage or other services have been authorized on the Government bill of lading, the origin shipping officer will advise the carrier's agent at destination that any charges in excess of those payable by the Government, unless otherwise advised by the shipping officer, shall be collected from the officer by the agent upon delivery of goods.
2. If an officer does not request temporary storage, and there is no indication that temporary storage will be required, temporary storage will not be routinely authorized on Government bills of lading.

#### Section I. Personally Procured Moves

1. Officers may arrange for transportation of household goods out of personal funds and apply for reimbursement of the cost of transportation, not to exceed the amount that would otherwise be payable by the Government. If an officer elects to arrange for shipment out of personal funds on a commercial bill of lading, the officer should be advised that reimbursement will be limited to the amount within authorized allowances that otherwise would have been payable by the Government for shipment in one lot, on a Government bill of lading, with goods released at the declared valuation which provided the lowest transportation rate in the applicable military and/or Government rate tender.

2. If an officer must arrange for his/her own shipment because he/she has been directed to do so and has not been supplied with a Government bill of lading, the officer may be reimbursed the actual cost of the shipment excluding any unauthorized services, excess weight, and/or excess distance (see JFTR, paragraph U5320-D).
3. Shipping officers will advise commissioned officers electing to transport their household goods and personal effects by means of rental vehicles (see INSTRUCTION 2, "Modes and Types of Transportation," of this subchapter) that the following documents are necessary for vouchering purposes for reimbursement after the completion of shipment:
  - a. Rental vehicle contract;
  - b. Weight certificates indicating both the empty and the loaded weight of the vehicle (used to verify weight of shipment; these can be obtained at many moving companies which allow the use of their scales for a moderate fee);
  - c. Receipts for gasoline, toll roads, and/or bridges, etc.; and
  - d. Receipts for monies expended in the preparation of goods for shipment (e.g., packing material, paid labor to load, etc.) and for hiring of a driver.

No reimbursement will be made for labor and/or driving performed by the officer or members of his/her family. Reimbursement is limited to what it would have cost the Government to ship a like weight of household goods (not to exceed maximum authorized weight) in one lot by use of a Government bill of lading.

PHS does not participate in the Department of Defense program on reimbursement for Do-It-Yourself moves and does not recommend this type of move to its officers.