

Standards for a good mover

Finding a good mover to move your worldly possessions safely from your old home to your new one doesn't have to be difficult. Good, ethical movers are in your community — you just have to know what to look for.

Reputable movers want to have a good relationship with their customers. They take steps to deliver ethical and professional moving services and avoid customer dissatisfaction. The Canadian Association of Movers (CAM) and the Office of Consumer Affairs of Industry Canada have taken the lead in developing standards for good moving services.

CAM has established a set of ethical principles for movers to promote professional conduct in the moving industry. Movers that are members of CAM promise to follow this Code of Ethics:

- i. They will act with fairness and honesty to clients, being considerate of their needs.
- ii. They will honour the terms of contracts.
- iii. They will maintain professional integrity and personal honour.

iv. They will provide efficient, reliable, high-quality service.

v. They will ensure that services are provided in a safety-conscious environment.

vi. They will foster the continuance of competitive practices.

vii. They will promote education in the industry, to improve service to the public.

viii. They will fulfill all obligations of membership.

Along with this Code of Ethics, movers that are CAM members also agree to abide by other principles of CAM's Certified Canadian Mover Program. They agree to adhere to the Good-Practice Guidelines for Canadian Movers jointly developed by CAM and Industry Canada, in cooperation with the Better Business Bureau and other moving industry stakeholders. They also agree to participate in an independent arbitration process if it is required.

The Good-Practice Guidelines for Canadian Movers are a set of standards by which good movers conduct their business. Their commitment is to provide good customer service. A good mover will:

- **PROVIDE** customers with a plain-language pamphlet which outlines customer and mover rights and responsibilities, mover liability for loss or damage, optional programs available, limitations on liability and additional costs associated with each level of liability. In a local move involving an estimate by telephone, the mover will offer to send the



pamphlet by mail, fax, or email.

■ **PROVIDE** written estimates of costs that describe the shipment and the cost of all services requested by the customer. The details of the moving services to be provided and their costs will be on company letterhead showing contact information so the customer can follow up with the mover. Both the company representative and the customer should sign this estimate.

■ **ABIDE** by the terms of the estimate given to the customer, consistent with local laws.

■ **IN LONG** distance moves, tag all goods and prepare an inventory of those being moved, noting any existing damage to the goods. A copy of this inventory will be given to the customer prior to shipping. The customer signs this inventory after loading and again at unloading.

■ **AT THE TIME** of pickup, provide customers with a bill of lading that clearly includes details about services being provided and costs, such as the payment terms and the delivery date.

■ **WHEN CHARGES** are based on weight, determine the shipment's weight after loading using a certified scale and provide proof of the weight if asked. A good mover will re-weigh the shipment if the actual weight is greater than the estimated weight by more than 10% and give the customer

proof of the re-weigh if asked.

■ **MAKE** reasonable efforts to deliver the services as arranged, including making the pickup and delivery as agreed. The mover will advise the customers of any delays, re-schedules and relevant contact information.

■ **ON DELIVERY**, ensure the customer receives a copy of the bill of lading or invoice, with a clear description of charges and services provided.

■ **RESPOND** to a customer's written claim for damage, loss or delay within 30 days and resolve the claim within 120 days. A customer has 30 days after delivery to file a claim in a local move and 60 days in a long distance move.

■ **PROMPTLY** and fairly attempt to resolve disputes concerning loss or damage claims to household goods through a dispute-resolution process.

■ **BE FAIR** and accurate in public advertisements, estimates and sales literature regarding their services.

■ **ENSURE** that their agents also comply with these commitments.

■ **MAINTAIN** and clean facilities and equipment regularly.

You can review these guidelines in their entirety on Industry Canada's web site, www.consumer.ic.gc.ca or on CAM's at www.mover.net.

We recommend that you talk to at least three movers and get an estimate from each before choosing one. Ask them whether they provide moving services that are consistent with these accepted business practices. Contact the Canadian Association of Movers to verify whether they are Certified Canadian Movers. A good mover will provide you with moving services that are consistent with these professional, ethical standards and guidelines and that will protect your valuable possessions.

- John Levi



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