

MOST COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS
CONCERNING THE MOTOR CARRIER INDUSTRY

What types of carriers are regulated by the Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities and Carriers?

The Division regulates all person(s) who transport either passengers or property *within* the State of Rhode Island. This includes tow trucks, household goods movers, sand & gravel haulers, taxicabs, limited public motor vehicles, jitneys, ferry boats, boat haulers, courier services, and armored car services. Also, items requiring expertise in handling (i.e. riggers, petroleum product)

I want to start a transportation company. How do I obtain an application to start such a business?

You may obtain an application by calling this office at 941-4500, extension 158, from this web site or by appearing in the Motor Carriers Division office at 89 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick, RI 02888.

What are my rights as a consumer for transporting my household goods by a certificated carrier within the State of Rhode Island?

You have plenty of rights when you have your household goods transported by a certificated household goods mover. The most important of these rights is your assurance that the carrier will only charge rates that have been approved by the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers. If you feel you have been overcharged, you may contact the Division to review the rates you were charged. The Division will then investigate all charges assessed to you and report back to you.

Also, the Division insures that all carriers maintain financial responsibility (insurance) to insure you against loss or damage to your goods.

What do I do if I have goods damaged by a household goods carrier?

The first thing you need to do is contact the motor carrier, in writing, notifying them of damages to your goods during the move. With your letter include a copy of any documentation you have as to the estimated cost to repair the item(s). Most times, the carrier will send someone to inspect the item(s). If they accept responsibility for the damage, they usually will approve the repair and deal directly with you in the matter.

What if a carrier does not accept responsibility for damages?

If the carrier does not accept responsibility, you may file a claim directly with the insurance company of the certificated carrier. Insurance information can be obtained by calling the Division at 941-4500.

What should I do to ensure that the company has adequate insurance coverage as a household goods mover?

There are two primary things you can do to make sure adequate insurance is in effect:

1. Be sure that any items of unusually high value are brought to the attention of the mover. You should declare the value of those pieces and they should be specifically noted on the bill of lading.
2. Second, take out additional insurance coverage. The Mover will offer you the option of taking out additional insurance coverage at a minimal cost. This is advisable in cases where your furniture is new or expensive.

How about the towing of automobiles, what happens if my car gets towed, are those charges approved by the Division?

If it is a non-consensual tow (police-ordered or private property tow), the Division has tariffs in effect regulating the towing, storage charges, loaded miles, weight, etc. If you feel that you were charged unfairly, and wish to file a complaint, a form will be mailed upon request or you can download the complaint form at this web site.

How do I obtain a license to drive a taxi/limited public motor vehicle in the State of Rhode Island?

There are several things you must do before you can be approved to drive a cab. The following items must be obtained in order for the Division to review your application to drive:

- a. You must have a Chauffeur's license or a CDL.
- b. Obtain a Certified **Copy of your Driving Record** from Operator Control Section of the R.I. Division of Motor Vehicles, 286 Main Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860. The Fee is \$16.00.
- c. Obtain a **Criminal History Record (BCI) check** from the Office of the Attorney General, 150 South Main Street, Providence, RI 02903. The fee is \$5.00 payable by either check or money order.

Once you've obtained the above-mentioned documents you bring everything to the Division of Public Utilities, Motor Carriers Section, 89 Jefferson Blvd., Warwick, RI 02888. When you come into the office you'll be asked to fill out a short one-page application form available at the front desk. Assuming you have no extensive criminal record or bad driving history you'll receive approval immediately to drive a cab in Rhode Island. There is no fee for this process.

If I live outside Rhode Island, may I still drive a taxi?

Yes. However, you must obtain approval from the R.I. Division of Motor Vehicles, 286 Main Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860. They will verify that you meet the requirements of Section 31-10-2 of the R.I. General Laws. They will then issue you a letter that you must bring to R.I. DPUC, 89 Jefferson Blvd. Warwick, RI 02888. You must also meet the requirements of a criminal history check and driving record from your home state. See above question.