

Local Move Questions

Costs

Do you have minimum charges?

Unlike many moving companies we do not have minimum charges. We charge only to the nearest quarter hour. This would include the time it takes to travel to and from our office.

Do you charge extra for pianos?

Every van has the equipment necessary to move a piano and our crews are trained and experienced to move most types of pianos. The cost of moving your piano would be part of the hourly charges included in your estimate.

How do hourly rates work and why do hourly rates change?

May through September is the busy season for moving companies. Many of these companies, including Beltway, establish higher rates each spring to compensate for their increased annualized expenses. Customer demand during these busy times peaks the last few days of each month and the first few days of the next month with Friday and Saturday being the premier move days. In general, increased summer volume requires moving companies increase investment in equipment, recruiting, training, and associated company infrastructure. **A rate for June 30, for example, is always going to be higher than a rate for November 30.**

Another factor in the rate process is availability of crews and trucks. Beltway Movers has not missed a single move day appointment since 1961 because unlike some companies (and many airlines we are sure you have experienced.) we do not overbook hoping that someone will cancel. If on June 30th we have 50 crews available we will schedule only 50 moves. As our daily schedules fill our costs increase due to overtime factors, balance of travel times to branches and other factors too numerous to list. **Our rates go up as our crew availability decreases.** The last crew simply has more resources invested to get them to the last move job.

The rate for a customer scheduled for a specific move date never changes once they secure a crew with a deposit. It is important to understand that a move day rate is not guaranteed until a crew is committed in exchange for a customer deposit. If a customer is unable to commit to a date at the time they receive an estimate there is risk that due to crew availability the quoted rate could change. During high volume periods it is not uncommon for popular dates to be scheduled out completely within a few hours time and therefore be no longer available at any rate. **So just like air travel or beach vacations the later a customer confirms with a deposit there is an increase risk of a higher cost.**

The best way to get the lowest rate is

- move off season
- move in the middle of the month
- move in the middle of the week
- and secure the crew early with a deposit.

Of course you cannot always control all the factors for your move but following the best combination of the above guidelines should help you secure a lower rate per hour.

Deposits and Payments

When do I pay for the balance of my move? Do I pay you or the driver?

About thirty minutes prior to completion of unloading, the crew foreman will alert you so that you can inspect each room to ensure that items are placed to your satisfaction. You can then request any changes. At this time the crew will begin assembling beds and placing mirrors on dressers, etc. You will be asked to inspect the van to ensure that all items have been unloaded. You have exclusive van rights on local moves so there will be nothing left on the van(s) except Beltway's equipment. The crewforeman will total the charges and answer any questions you may have about the move. Don't forget to complete our customer comment card while the crewforeman is doing the math. The last thing you need to do is pay the crewforeman with pre-arranged credit card or certified check.

What are the payment options?

We accept MasterCard, Visa, Discover, cash or certified funds. We will require a non-refundable deposit in order to re-

serve your preferred move date and time. The deposit is deducted from your final move cost and payment is expected at the completion of the move. This arrangement will be documented on your estimate and will be verified by the dispatcher the day before the move and your crew foreman on the day of the move.

Why do I need to give a deposit?

When you reserve a move date we commit resources such as drivers, vans, crewmembers and materials specifically to you. Our strict control of scheduling is what has prevented us from ever missing a move. The non-refundable deposit is a mutual guarantee but not meant to be inconvenient. If your move date(s) change, we simply apply your deposit to the new date.

Elevators

Does it make any difference that my building has an elevator?

You can expect to pay more when long hallways must be transversed to get to the service elevator. You can minimize charges of this kind by selecting a company that has the proper equipment and training. Only a moving specialist can achieve the desired efficiency and safety on an elevator move.

Estimates and Scheduling Move Services

A Phone or in-home Consultation offers you the benefit of a trained consultant who will not only help you determine price but will also help you "think through" the services you want and need. **We can guarantee that an estimate conducted by a BMA consultant will be within 10% of the actual cost if all items, services, conditions and move dates you discuss remain the same.**

How can I ensure I get an accurate move estimate?

A company should be able to supply in writing:

- the estimated move size in cubic feet or pounds
- the size crew required
- an itemized furniture list with estimated number of cartons
- a detailed explanation of additional services requested including packing of mirrors, lamps and pictures.
- an itemized estimate of total cost.

You will then have a basis from which to compare cost, services and not just hourly rates.

What do companies mean when they say they are bonded and insured?

This type of language can have various implications and can be confusing to the customer. Some questions that might better serve you when selecting a mover is to ask if a company can offer valuation coverage and what are their hiring policies. Our bottom line is that we stand behind our employees and their work. We don't allow anyone in your home we wouldn't want in ours. Our employees submit to a thorough screening and background check. Of course, any reputable business will be insured.

Are materials included in the estimate?

Generally we work on a time and material basis. Your written estimate will show the number of hours that we have determined it will take to travel to your residence, the amount of time for loading and unloading, the travel time back to our office and an itemized list of materials we expect to use. Products such as our crushproof cartons, large canvas lined bins, rental cartons such as wardrobe cartons and the sale of used cartons will greatly reduce the cost of your materials. Our exclusive [SmartPack®](#) Move system, at no additional cost to you, will provide you with floor runners, shrink wrapping of your upholstered items and a two tiered loading system that will lower the cost, hasten your move and reduce the hassles.

Insurance and Liability

Why don't movers offer insurance?

Movers cannot sell insurance. However, reputable movers can offer you protection called "valuation coverage". Learn how this confusing but necessary coverage is determined by downloading our page about Insurance in the customer resource center. Never be satisfied until you know exactly what to expect from your mover in case of a mishap.

Do I have insurance on my move?

This is an easily misunderstood move requirement. Movers must have various insurances such as for their vans and workman's compensation simply to be in business. The term "limits of liability" is what matters to you, the customer. These limits should be clearly discussed in the movers contract or bill of lading. There are industry guidelines for setting limits of liability but the customer must make the final decision. Make sure you are well informed of the cost associated with valuation coverage. It should be noted in your estimate and move contract.

What if something gets broken?

Relax; we've got you covered. We'll resolve the problem to your satisfaction within the confines of the type of valuation coverage you elected for your move.

Move Day Planning, Expectations and Logistics

Do I have to be there during the move?

We advise that you get your best value by being present on move day. Communication is not compromised and flexibility is increased. If it is not possible to be there throughout your move please advise your consultant so that your individual circumstances can be addressed.

What do you do if it rains or snows?

Good weather is certainly more pleasant and cost effective for moving but not mandatory. As long as our crews are not at risk we keep moving. We will cover your furniture with moving pads and/or shrink-wrap and use floor runners to protect your floors. If rescheduling is an option for you we will do our best to accommodate.

What time will the crew be here?

Beltway has never stood up a customer since 1961. All of us who live in the Washington Metro area understand its traffic issues. These unforeseen gridlocks will on occasion make us late, however, be assured that they will be there! Our consultants noted an approximate arrival time on your written estimate. You will receive a call from our dispatcher on the day before your move to confirm the arrival time, introduce you to the crew and discuss any last minute details.

What about the things in my refrigerator/freezer?

A legitimate concern and one that can be easily handled on a local move. To prepare your freezer--pack all of the contents in small cartons and then return them to the freezer. On move day the movers can temporarily remove the boxes while handling the freezer and reload it when it is safely on board the van. This way you are able to use the freezer like a portable cooler without risk of damage. Refrigerator items should be moved in separate containers due to their sometimes fragile and spillable nature. We will load these items last and unload first so they can be transferred to the working refrigerator at the destination.

Will you disassemble and reassemble my furniture?

We provide usual and customary disassembly of headboards, footboards and dresser mirrors. Some furniture items such as large wall units or light bridge headboards require a more complex process and may require more time. Please discuss this type of item with your consultant. We will advise you of the additional time and or expense and possibly the need for a third party specialist.

Storage

What do I need to know about storage?

Professional movers have the most cost effective means for household goods storage. It requires move planning to take advantage of this savings by knowing the items you want stored and how long you anticipate the items being in storage. If frequent access to your stored goods will be a requirement consider a self-storage facility.

Do you have your own storage facility?

We have storage facilities at our office locations as well as mobile storage.

Is your storage climate controlled?

Our warehouses employ the household good standard called "palletized" storage. This system allows air circulation and prevents moisture and condensation. The warehouse temperatures do not reach outside extremes and change at a very slow rate. "Climate controlled" is a more recent concept designed for more climate sensitive items such as fine art and some electronics that require constant humidity and temperature.



Travel Time

Do you charge travel time?

Yes, we do. When calculating your move estimate our consultant estimated the time it would take for the moving van to travel from our nearest office to your home and the return time from your new residence to the office. We have found this method not only fair to our customers but it also allows fair compensation to our crews and helps maintain our high quality of drivers and moving personnel.

- **What happens if there is an accident on the beltway? Do I get charged for the delay in travel?**

All of us who live in the Washington Metro area understand its traffic issues. These unforeseen gridlocks will on occasion make us late, however, be assured that we will be there! Our company policy is to charge customers for travel to and from the office to the nearest quarter hour. If an extreme traffic situation occurs our corporate staff will work with you to ensure that your move experience is still a positive one