INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILING A HOUSEHOLD GOODS CLAIM

Thank you for giving the Claims Branch, Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, Fort Meade, Maryland, the opportunity to assist you in filing a household goods claim. We are a US Army claims office, which means that we can process and pay claims from Department of the Army and Department of Defense personnel. We will also assist other service members from the USAF, USN, and the USMC in processing their claim, which must ultimately be forwarded to the specific service's claims office for payment. This office's address is:

Office of the Staff Judge Advocate
ATTN: Claims
2257 Huber Road
Fort Meade, Maryland 20755-5030

Our telephone numbers are (301) 677-9898/9960. Our fax number is (301) 677-9686. The attached claims packet has the addresses and telephone numbers of the other armed services if a service member wishes to deal directly with his/her service's claims office.

If, during the course of reviewing these instructions, a claimant notes that his claim has some unusual aspect, or a claimant has a question, please contact this office immediately, at (301) 677-9898/9960.

_____ **DD Form 1840/1840R:** For every movement of household goods, whether it is called a household goods move, a non-temporary storage move, or a "hold baggage" move, when the items are delivered, the carrier should provide a DD Form 1840/1840R to the recipient of the household goods. This form, pink in color, is the first form in a potential claims file.

DD Form 1840/1840R is given to the claimant at the time of delivery. The DD Form 1840/1840 with 4 carbon copies, is used by the claimant on the DD Form 1840 side, to note any damaged or missing property while the carrier's representative is making the delivery. At the conclusion of the delivery, after the claimant has annotated the DD Form 1840 form noting missing or damaged items, the carrier's representative will take the top copy of the DD Form 1840/1840R and leave the remaining copies with the claimant. As is printed in bold print at the top of the DD Form 1840R side (the reverse), a claimant has **70 days** to complete the form by making a list of any additional household goods damaged, destroyed or missing that were discovered after the carrier has left and that were not listed on the front of the DD Form 1840/1840R. **A claimant must present the completed DD Form 1840/1840R to a claims office within the 70 days.** When preparing the form, a claimant merely has to list the inventory number(s) for the item(s), what the items are, and how the items are damaged or missing, At this point in the claims process, a claims office does not have to know specifically what is wrong with an item, and a claims office does not need to know the cost to repair or replace the item. For example, if a television set is not working, the only listing needed on the DD Form 1840/1840R is the inventory number, the item (television) and that it does not work.

When presenting DD Form 1840/1840R, **no estimates are needed** – just provide a list of missing or damaged items.

Why is this form so important? A copy of the form will be mailed to the carrier. This mailing is the legal "notice" from the Government advising the carrier that a claimant might be filing a claim and that the Government will seek reimbursement from the carrier. If a damaged item is not listed on the form going to the carrier, a claims office probably will be unable to pay the claimant for that item.

What if I do not file the form with a claims office within 70 days? File the form as soon as you can. There are some limited circumstances in which the claims office has the authority to extend the 70-day filing deadline.

____ **Special Situation – Multiple Deliveries.** A claimant must ensure that if there were multiple, different shipments, for example an overseas household goods shipment and a shipment coming from non-temporary storage, the DD Form 1840/1840R corresponding to each shipment must be used. With multiple shipments, providing notice to the wrong carrier will prevent the Government from recovering its reimbursement for those items listed on the "wrong" DD Form 1840/1840R.

____**Special Situation – Claimant did not receive a DD Form 1840/1840R.** What if you did not receive DD Form 1840/1840R? Call a claims office at first opportunity.

____ **Which Inventory Number?** What if I cannot identify a damaged item by inventory number? File the form within 70 days with as much information as possible.

Remember, presenting DD Form 1840/1840R is not filing a claim.

Statute of Limitations - A claim is presented when DD Form 1842, or another written demand, signed by the claimant, is presented to a claims office.

A CLAIM MUST BE FILED BY PRESENTATION OF DD FORM 1842 TO A CLAIMS OFFICE, WITHIN 2 YEARS OF THE DATE OF DELIVERY.

The claim form must be physically presented to a claims office. Mailing a claim does not toll the 2-year statute of limitations until the claim is physically received on the military installation.

FULL REPLACEMENT PROTECTION (FRP)

_____ **Insurance.** You need to advise a claims office, and your insurance company, if you had any insurance coverage for your move. It is possible that you had 1 of 3 types of insurance.

1. Option 1 or Option 2 Insurance. These types of insurance are generally "purchased" at your outbound transportation appointment. You will be billed for a portion of this added insurance cost.

   a. **Option 1** insurance provides for waving certain maximum amounts. For example, if a piece of furniture is damaged or not delivered, a field claims office can pay a maximum amount of $3,000. Option 1 insurance provides that there is no maximum payment limitation for items claimed.

   b. **Option 2** provides for full replacement protection. Option 2 insurance provides that the carrier will either repair an item to pre-shipment condition, or that the carrier will pay the claimant for a new item. For example, a 10-year old television set that is missing will be replaced by the carrier with a brand new television set.

   c. A claimant must select this insurance at the point of origin for the shipment, and the claimant must pay a portion of the cost of this additional insurance. Generally, a claimant will see this payment reflected on a Leave and Earning Statement.

2. Private Insurance. Normally this insurance is called renter's insurance or home owner's insurance.

3. **Full Replacement Protection (FRP).** Technically not insurance, but FRP coverage is sometimes provided by the carrier as part of an expanded shipping program contracted with the Government.

_____ **Why have additional Insurance**? Under the Government claims program, a claims office must pay depreciated value, also referred to as "actual cash value" to a claimant for property. If, for example, a 5-year old electronic item is not repairable, a claims office will pay a claimant about 50% of the value of a similar new item. Under Option 2 Insurance, and with most private insurance policies (renter's insurance or homeowner's insurance), a claimant will be paid to replace the old item with a new item.

_____ **Special Situation – Insurance.** If you have **Option 1, Option 2,** or a carrier's full replacement protection please make note – if a claimant is offered a settlement by the carrier for less than the claimed amount, and a claimant accepts a carrier's check in final settlement of the claim, the claim is concluded. A claimant will be unable to make any further demand against the carrier, and a claimant will be unable to file a claim with a Government claims office.

FILING A CLAIM

_____ **Filing a Claim.** As has been stated, a claim must be filed within 2 years of the date of delivery. If a claimant determines that the statute of limitations is fast approaching, a claimant must come to the claims office to present the claim in person.

Any delay beyond the 2-year statute of limitations, regardless of circumstances, prevents a claims office from paying a claim.

_____ **DD Form 1842.** There is an example of a completed DD Form 1842 in the packet provided. **Filing this form with a claims office constitutes filing a claim.** You have 2 years from the date of delivery to file your claim. The DoD member with the shipping entitlement (the Government employee) must sign the form. If someone other than the DoD member with the entitlement signs the form, then the person signing the form needs to present some authority (Power of Attorney) to sign the DD Form 1842 when the claim is presented. Any person can bring the claim into the office, but the DoD member, or his designated representative (power of attorney) must sign the DD Form 1842.

_____ **DD Form 1844.** There is an example of a completed DD form 1844 in the packet provided. As the example shows, please number each line item on the form in block 5. At block 6, indicate the quantity of an item damaged or missing. In block 7, described the item damaged or missing. In block 8 provide the inventory number of this item. In block 9, as best as you can, provide the approximate cost of the item and when purchased. In block 11, provide the amount claimed as a repair cost or a replacement cost.

_____ **Government Orders.** Provide 1 copy of orders.

_____ **Shipping Inventory.** Provide 1 readable copy of the Inventory. Please include High-Risk Inventory sheet(s) if applicable.

_____ **Government Bill of Lading (GBL).** A GBL is the Government contract that shipped the property. The GBL "number" will have 2 letters followed by 6 numbers (e.g., AP-123,456). The GBL number is also found on the DD Form 1840/1840R (the pink sheet) in block 7. If you did not receive a GBL, you should still file your claim. Indicate to the intake personnel that you do not have a GBL and the claims office will obtain the document.

_____ **DD Form 619 and 619-1.** This form is provided by the carrier for any item re-assembled at destination.

____ **DD Form 1299 (Application for Shipment and/or Storage of Personal Property):** This form is necessary if you had your household goods placed in non-temporary storage for long term.

_____ **DD Form 1797 "Personal Property Counseling Checklist"** If applicable

_____ **DD Form 1780/1841 "Government Inspection Report"** If the Inspection Branch of JPPSO performed a government inspection, we will need one copy of the report.

_____ **Replacement Costs and Repair Cost Estimates.** If an estimate to repair or replace an item is **$100 or more**, that estimate must be provided "in writing" by the claimant. "In writing" can be a written estimate from a repair firm on the firm's letterhead, a written quotation from a store on the store's letterhead, something found in a catalog, a newspaper ad, or an internet quote. If the repair or replacement cost for an item is **under $100**, then the dollar amount claimed, without further documentation, is annotated in block 11 of DD Form 1844. Remember, no written estimate is needed if the items can be repaired or replaced for less than $100. For example, while a severely damaged and unreparable lamp, valued over $100, requires a written replacement quotation, the replacement of 3 lamp shades, each worth $60, requires no written documentation.

_____ **Replacement Costs and Repair Cost Estimates – Special Situations – Electronic Items.** Unless you receive prior approval from a claims office, you **must** obtain written repair estimates for damaged electronic items (computers, televisions, CD players, DVD players, boom boxes). As stated below, you probably will be reimbursed for any estimate fees. If the electronic items are certified as unrepairable by the repair facility, and the item is worth **$100 or more**, then a claimant must also obtain a written replacement cost.

In addition, for any damaged electronic items, a claims office will require a short, handwritten statement from the claimant attesting to the fact that the electronic item was operating properly prior to shipment of that item.

_____ **Replacement Costs and Repair Cost Estimates – Special Situations – Furniture.** Unless you receive prior approval from a claims office, you **must** obtain a written repair cost for damaged furniture. As stated below, you probably will be reimbursed for any estimate fees. If a furniture item is certified as unrepairable by the repair facility, and the item is worth **$100 or more**, then a claimant must also obtain a written replacement cost.

_____ **Estimate Fees.** Estimate fees generally are reimbursed to a claimant unless the estimate fee will be deducted from any work done. For example, if a repair facility charges $45 to provide an estimate, and the estimate fee will not be included in any future work, then the estimate fee is reimbursable. However, if the estimate fee will be deducted from the final cost of repair, then the estimate fee is not reimbursable.

_____ **Special Situations – Missing Items.** If you are missing a significant number of small items (a box of children's clothing is missing), please call a claims office for instructions. If you are missing an expensive item, valued at $100 or more, whether or not the item is listed on the inventory, for example a camcorder is missing from box marked "bedroom items," or you are missing an expensive item listed on the inventory such as a Persian carpet, you need to contact a claims office for special instructions. The burden is on the claimant to demonstrate the value of an expensive item, and the purchase price/replacement cost of the item.

____ **Special Situations – Damaged fabric or leather furniture**. If you have a set (sofa, love seat, ottoman, etc) and one or more items are damaged, you need to contact a claims office for specific instructions. On most occasions, a claims office will only consider repair or replacement of the individual item.

____ **Special Situations and Reupholstering**. Please also note that in most cases where reupholstering is indicated that it is less expensive for a claims office to compensate a claimant to purchase a new piece of furniture than it is to pay the cost of reupholstering a piece of furniture. Accordingly, please contact a claims office as that office might require a repair estimate for reupholstering **and** a written replacement cost.

_____ **Special Situations – Authority to Dispose of Items**. Unless you receive specific authorization from a claims office to dispose any damaged items, and you are seeking the replacement costs for an item (not repair costs), the carrier has a right to recover those items for which you are paid the replacement costs. Accordingly, you should seek authorization to dispose of damaged items before attempting to dispose of those items.

PAYMENT

____ **Payment Instructions**. Active duty personnel will be paid by electronic fund transfer **(EFT)** to their military accounts. All other **claimants** can elect to either have a check mailed to their residence, or, if they provide either a cancelled check or deposit slip, by EFT.

_____ **Claimants from Other Armed Services.** As an Army claims office, we can only process and pay Army claimants or civilian DoD claimants. However, we will process claims by service members from the other services. In addition to DD Form 1840/1840R intake, this office will accept claims from members of the other armed services, verify that the claim is complete and properly documented, accept the claim on behalf of the DoD, and forward the claim to the proper armed service for adjudication and payment.

_____ **Claims for Damage to Residence.** A claims office **cannot** pay for damages to a residence caused by the movers. Examples include scraped hardwood floors and dents or holes in drywall. A claimant should contact the carrier's delivery agent immediately to seek repairs. If a claimant is experiencing problems with a carrier's representative regarding damage to a residence, please call the claims office for further instructions.

DD Form 1840/1840R: These forms can be presented to this claims office on a walk-in basis, 0730-1600 daily.

Filing a claim.

1. Remember, presenting the pink form (DD Form 1840/1840R) to a claims office is not filing a claim.

2. Filing a claim requires submission of a signed, written form – usually DD Form 1842.

3. The claim form (minimally the DD Form 1842) must be presented to a claims office within 2 years of the date of delivery. Please call the claims office for an appointment. Routinely, the actual filing of a claim is normally done by appointment.

4. If you are filing a claim and you are within 30 days of the 2-year statute of limitations to file your claim (**2 years from date of delivery**) make sure the claims personnel are aware of the statute of limitations.

5. Please call the office if you have a specific question regarding the claims process.