

**What Do I Do If My Household Goods Are Damaged or Lost in Shipment?
Timely Notice Is Essential
Completion of the DD Form 1840/1840R**

If you have made a PCS move, you may have experienced loss of or damage to some of your personal possessions during your move. This article will address the first steps that you need to follow to receive compensation for your loss through the military claims system.

You must provide timely notice of damage or loss to the carrier. The military claims system requires members to give timely notice to the carrier. This allows the Government to recover funds from the carrier responsible for the damage or loss. The funds recovered from carriers are also used to fund payment of future claims filed with the Government.

How do I give notice to the carrier? You give notice to the carrier when you complete the pink-colored DD Form 1840 for any damage or loss discovered at delivery. The carrier will give this form to you to sign at the completion of the delivery. You should take the time to list damage or loss that you have observed during the delivery. You also provide notice to the carrier when you enter additional damage on the reverse side of the form (DD Form 1840R) and deliver it to the claims office. When you unpack and discover any additional damage or loss not listed at delivery, enter that damage or loss on the DD Form 1840R of the form. One word of caution: When you make entries on the DD Form 1840R, reverse the carbons to prevent confusion and ensure legible entries on each of the forms.

What should I enter on the DD Form 1840/1840R? You should list three things on the DD Forms 1840/1840R.

- The inventory number of the item as listed on the household goods inventory. This is critical for missing items, because the information listed on these forms is required to allow the carrier to locate, if possible, the missing items from your shipment. If the carrier is not provided an adequate opportunity to locate the missing items, liability may be denied.
- A description of the item. You should describe the item as you would expect to eventually list the item on a claim form. For example, a “27” Toshiba combination color television/DVD/VCR, including the model no.,” is a much better description than “television.”
- A detailed description of all damage. List all damage that you intend to claim. Don’t omit significant damage that you intend to claim just because the item is listed on the notice form. Notice for scratches to a dining room chair is not notice for a broken leg. Be specific. Many household good inventories list minor pre-existing damage to some items. Identify the location and describe the damage so that shipment damage may be distinguished from entries made by the carrier.

How long do I have to provide notice to the carrier? You must deliver the completed form to your local military claims office within 70 days after delivery. The claims office will record the date of its receipt of the form and send the form to the carrier. You will then be prepared to begin the next step of the claims process.

What do I do if I barely miss the 70-day notice requirement? Call your local military claims office immediately. In some cases, the claims office may be able to timely forward the notice to the carrier.

What should I do if I discover damage and loss after I have turned in the DD Form 1840R to the claims office? If you discover additional damage and loss after you have submitted the DD Form 1840R to the claims office but within 70 days after delivery, you should list all additional damage that you have discovered and bring it to the claims office within the 70-day notice period. If you discover the damage more than 70 days after delivery, you should provide notice to the claims office if you meet the requirements of good cause discussed below.

What happens if I don't provide timely notice to the carrier? Army policy is that claims offices must reduce the claimant's award by the amount of the lost anticipated recovery. For most moves, this is the entire amount of the loss. Good cause exceptions are generally limited to situations where hospitalization or other officially recognized absences (TDY, deployments, and training exercises) prevent the claimant from turning in notice to the claims office within 70 days. If you have been unable to turn in the DD Form 1840R to the claims office because of one of these situations, complete the form and deliver it to the claims office as soon as possible. You should provide proof of your status to the claims office. This will provide timely notice to the carrier and avoid deduction of lost carrier recovery from your claim.

We want you receive fair and full reimbursement for damage and loss due to your PCS move. Please take the time to accurately and fully list the damage to your household goods on the DD Form 1840/1840R and deliver the form to a military claims office within 70 days of delivery. If you have questions, please contact your local military claims office.

The Fort Belvoir claims office is located at 9990 Belvoir Drive, Building 257, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, 22060. Telephone numbers for questions regarding household shipment claims are (703) 805-4395.