

CLAIMS

Packing up for a PCS and moving from one place to another always promises to be a busy time. Often during the hustle and bustle of moving, military members fail to prepare themselves for a potential claim involving their household goods. In order to ensure your household goods are taken care of, there are several things you should accomplish prior to your move. First, you should assess what you own, as well as the condition of your belongings prior to your Transportation Service Provider (TSP) arriving at your home. Take digital photos or a video of high-value items and family heirlooms, and also consider keeping such items in your possession during your move. Although members are not prohibited from shipping currency and jewelry, the Air Force Claims Service Center (AFCSC) strongly discourages this, and recommends members move these items personally.

Hiring a professional to conduct an appraisal on any antique furniture is also a good idea. A professional appraisal establishes the value of the item, and can be used in the claims process to help establish any loss in value should the item arrive damaged from the move.

When your goods are packed by the TSP, some of your high-value items may be placed on the high-value/high-risk inventory. This special inventory supplements your household goods inventory and is used by the TSP to protect high-value items such as currency, jewelry, crystal, and art. There are specific rules regarding the use of the high-value inventory, and you should contact your TSP or the AFCSC to educate yourself on these rules.

If your belongings are damaged, your property is covered under the Full Replacement Value (FRV) legislation enacted by Congress in 2006. TSPs are either required to replace the item, or pay the full replacement value on any items missing or destroyed during your move. TSPs are also required to repair any item that can be repaired, and are responsible for contacting a repair firm.

There are several important aspects of the FRV program. First, most Airmen will be required to use the Defense Personal Property System (DPS) for the claims process. DPS can be accessed online at www.move.mil. Secondly, the FRV program requires Airmen to deal directly with the TSP. For example, the Loss/Damage report listing losses/damages discovered after the TSP has completed delivery goes directly to the TSP through DPS. (If DPS is not available for your move, you can also file your Loss/Damage Report through the AFCSC website at <https://claims.jag.af.mil>).

Filing a Loss/Damage Report is not the same as filing a claim. The Loss/Damage Report simply puts the carrier on notice that an Airman has discovered additional damage or loss since delivery. The Loss/Damage Report must be received by the carrier within 75 days of delivery. Failure to meet the deadline could result in no reimbursement for loss or damage to those items not noted at the time of delivery.

Under the FRV program you are required to file your claim directly against your TSP. Your claim must be made within nine months of the delivery date of your household goods in order for you to receive FRV. If you miss the nine month deadline, you can still file a claim up to two years from the delivery date, but you would receive only depreciated valuation. If you are unhappy with the claims process, you can

transfer your claim to the AFCSC 30-days after filing against your TSP for any reason. Additionally, if you are negotiating with your TSP and would like Air Force assistance, you can contact the AFCSC for support. Finally, if you receive an offer from your TSP that you believe is unfair, you can transfer the claim to the AFCSC. The AFCSC can only pay depreciated valuation in most situations. However, after paying your claim, the Air Force can file an FRV claim against the responsible TSP and may be able to pay you an additional award recovered from the TSP. The AFCSC currently has a 98% recovery rate against responsible TSPs.

The AFCSC is available to assist Airmen throughout the claims process. You can reach the AFCSC by calling DSN 986-8044 or 1-877-754-1212 and pressing "1" to talk to an expert. You can also email AFCSC.JA@wpafb.af.mil for assistance. The Shaw Air Force Base Legal Office is available to assist you if you have questions concerning the claims process, or if you would like help getting your claim started.