



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
1300 S. Evergreen Park Dr. S.W., P.O. Box 47250 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7250  
(360) 664-1160 • [www.utc.wa.gov](http://www.utc.wa.gov)

July 3, 2014

Steven V. King, Executive Director and Secretary  
Utilities and Transportation Commission  
1300 S. Evergreen Park Dr. SW  
P.O. Box 47250  
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

RE: *Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission v. Bergman, Heidi Ann*

Commission Staff's Response to Application for Mitigation of Penalties TV-140945

Dear Mr. King:

On June 4, 2014, the Utilities and Transportation Commission issued a \$600 Penalty Assessment in Docket TV-140945 against Bergman, Heidi Ann for 6 violations of Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 480-15-480, which requires household goods carrier companies to furnish annual reports to the commission no later than May 1 each year.<sup>1</sup>

On June 19, 2014, Heidi A. Bergman wrote the commission requesting mitigation of penalties (Mitigation Request).<sup>2</sup> In its Mitigation Request, Heidi A. Bergman does not dispute that the violation occurred. The company statement provided information regarding a recent change in company ownership as of March 2014 and awaiting information from the prior owner before sending in the completed report. The company attempted to contact the commission on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and left a voicemail for commission staff without receiving a return call for a week. Upon speaking with commission staff on May 9<sup>th</sup> the report was immediately filed.

It is the company's responsibility to ensure that the regulatory fee is paid and the annual report is filed by the May 1 deadline. On February 28, 2014, Annual Report packets were mailed to all regulated household goods companies. The instructions for annual report completion page of the annual report informed the regulated company that it must complete the annual report form, pay the regulatory fees, and return the materials by May 1, 2014, to avoid enforcement action.

On May 9, 2014, Bergman, Heidi Ann filed the 2013 annual report and paid the regulatory fees and late payment penalty. On January 10, 2014 the company did submit an application to transfer authority from Terry Munsell, d/b/a/ Alice the Mover, to Heidi Bergman, d/b/a Alice the

<sup>1</sup>See attachment A for a copy of the penalty assessment sent on June 4, 2014

<sup>2</sup>See attachment B for a copy of Bergman, Heidi Ann's Mitigation Request received on June 19, 2014

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Mover. The company original household good permit application was received on April 11, 2013. No prior violations of WAC 480-15-480 are on commission record. Staff supports the company's request for mitigation due to the ownership change and good faith effort of new ownership to comply with commission rules. Staff recommends the penalty be reduced to \$25 per day for a total penalty assessment of \$150.

If you have any questions regarding this recommendation, please contact Amy Andrews, Regulatory Analyst, at (360) 664-1157, or [aandrews@utc.wa.gov](mailto:aandrews@utc.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

Sondra Walsh, Director  
Administrative Services

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<sup>1</sup>See attachment A for a copy of the penalty assessment sent on June 4, 2014

<sup>2</sup>See attachment B for a copy of Bergman, Heidi Ann's Mitigation Request received on June 19, 2014

## ATTACHMENT A

### WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

#### NOTICE OF PENALTIES INCURRED AND DUE FOR VIOLATIONS OF LAWS AND RULES

PENALTY ASSESSMENT: TV-140945  
PENALTY AMOUNT: \$600

Bergman, Heidi Ann  
4133 268th St NW  
Stanwood, WA 98292

According to Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) records, you have violated Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 480-15-480, which requires household goods carrier companies to file their annual reports and pay regulatory fees each year by May 1. You did not file an annual report or pay regulatory fees by May 1, 2014.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 81.04.080 authorizes the Commission to assess penalties of \$100 for violations of Commission rules. Each violation is a separate and distinct offense and, in the case of a continuing violation, every day's continuance is a separate and distinct violation. The Commission interprets noncompliance with WAC 480-15-480 beyond May 1 as a continuing violation, and assesses penalties of \$100 for each day a company fails to file its report or pay its regulatory fees after that date.

As a result, the Commission has assessed penalties against you in the amount of \$600 on the following basis:

On February 28, 2014, the Commission mailed the 2013 annual report forms and the 2014 regulatory fee packets to all household goods carrier companies registered in Washington. The instructions page for the annual report form instructed these companies to file annual reports and pay regulatory fees by May 1, 2014. The instructions page also stated that failure to file the annual report by May 1 would result in penalties. The deadline for requesting an extension to file your annual report was April 17. You did not request an extension.

On May 9, 2014, Heidi Ann Bergman filed its 2013 annual report and paid its 2014 regulatory fee. May 9 is 6 business days from May 1, resulting in a total penalty of \$600.

Your penalty is due and payable now. If you believe the violation did not occur, you may request a hearing to contest the penalty assessment. The Commission will grant that request only if material issues of law or fact require consideration of evidence and resolution in a hearing. A request for a hearing must include a written statement of the reasons supporting that request.

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<sup>2</sup>See attachment B for a copy of Bergman, Heidi Ann's Mitigation Request received on June 19, 2014

Failure to provide such a statement will result in denial of the request. If there is a reason for the violation that you think should excuse or reduce the penalty, you may ask for mitigation (reduction) of this penalty through evidence presented at a hearing or in writing. A request for mitigation must include a written statement of the reasons supporting that request. Failure to provide such a statement will result in denial of the request. See RCW81.04.405.

If you properly present your request for a hearing and the Commission grants that request, the Commission will review the evidence supporting your dispute of the violation or application for mitigation in a Brief Adjudicative Proceeding, before an administrative law judge. The administrative law judge will consider the evidence and will notify you of his or her decision.

**You must act within 15 days after receiving this notice** to do one of the following:

- Pay the amount due.
- Request a hearing to contest the occurrence of the violations.
- Request mitigation to contest the amount of the penalty.

Please indicate your selection on the enclosed form and send it to the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, Post Office Box 47250, Olympia, Washington 98504-7250, **within FIFTEEN (15) days** after you receive this notice.

**If you do not act within 15 days**, the Commission may refer this matter to the Office of the Attorney General for collection, which may file suit in state court to collect the penalty. The Commission may also initiate proceedings under WAC 480-15-450 to cancel your permit to operate as a household goods carrier in Washington.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective June 4, 2014.

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DENNIS J. MOSS  
Administrative Law Judge

<sup>1</sup>See attachment A for a copy of the penalty assessment sent on June 4, 2014

<sup>2</sup>See attachment B for a copy of Bergman, Heidi Ann's Mitigation Request received on June 19, 2014

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

PENALTY ASSESSMENT TV-140945

**PLEASE NOTE:** You must complete and sign this document, and send it to the Commission within 15 days after you receive the penalty assessment. Use additional paper if needed.

I have read and understand RCW 9A.72.020 (printed below), which states that making false statements under oath is a class B felony. I am over the age of 18, am competent to testify to the matters set forth below and I have personal knowledge of those matters. I hereby make, under oath, the following statements.

1. **Payment of penalty.** I admit that the violations occurred. I have:
- Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in payment of the penalty
  - Submitted my payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ online at [www.utc.wa.gov](http://www.utc.wa.gov). My confirmation number is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. **Request for a hearing.** I believe that one or more of the alleged violations did not occur, for the reasons I describe below, and I request a hearing based on those reasons for a decision by an administrative law judge:
3. **Application for mitigation.** I admit the violations, but I believe that the penalty should be reduced for the reasons set out below:
- a) I ask for a hearing to present evidence on the information I provide above to an administrative law judge for a decision
  - OR  b) I ask for a Commission decision based solely on the information I provide above.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing, including information I have presented on any attachments, is true and correct.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ [month/day/year], at \_\_\_\_\_ [city, state]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Respondent (company) – please print

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

RCW 9A.72.020:

“Perjury in the first degree. (1) A person is guilty of perjury in the first degree if in any official proceeding he makes a materially false statement which he knows to be false under an oath required or authorized by law. (2) Knowledge of the materiality of the statement is not an element of this crime, and the actor’s mistaken belief that his statement was not material is not a defense to a prosecution under this section. (3) Perjury in the first degree is a class B felony.”

<sup>1</sup>See attachment A for a copy of the penalty assessment sent on June 4, 2014

<sup>2</sup>See attachment B for a copy of Bergman, Heidi Ann’s Mitigation Request received on June 19, 2014

ATTACHMENT B

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

PENALTY ASSESSMENT TV-140945

PLEASE NOTE: You must complete and sign this document, and send it to the Commission within 15 days after you receive the penalty assessment. Use additional paper if needed.

I have read and understand RCW 9A.72.020 (printed below), which states that making false statements under oath is a class B felony. I am over the age of 18, am competent to testify to the matters set forth below and I have personal knowledge of those matters. I hereby make, under oath, the following statements.

2014 JUN 19 AM 8:11

- 1. **Payment of penalty.** I admit that the violations occurred. I have:
  - Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in payment of the penalty
  - Submitted my payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ online at [www.utc.wa.gov](http://www.utc.wa.gov). My confirmation number is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2. **Request for a hearing.** I believe that one or more of the alleged violations did not occur, for the reasons I describe below, and I request a hearing based on those reasons for a decision by an administrative law judge:
- 3. **Application for mitigation.** I admit the violations, but I believe that the penalty should be reduced for the reasons set out below:
  - a) I ask for a hearing to present evidence on the information I provide above to an administrative law judge for a decision
  - OR  b) I ask for a Commission decision based solely on the information I provide above.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing, including information I have presented on any attachments, is true and correct.

Dated: 6/17/14 [month/day/year], at Stanwood, Wa [city, state]

Alice the Mover  
Name of Respondent (company) – please print

Heidi A Bergman  
Signature of Applicant

RCW 9A.72.020:  
“Perjury in the first degree. (1) A person is guilty of perjury in the first degree if in any official proceeding he makes a materially false statement which he knows to be false under an oath required or authorized by law. (2) Knowledge of the materiality of the statement is not an element of this crime, and the actor’s mistaken belief that his statement was not material is not a defense to a prosecution under this section. (3) Perjury in the first degree is a class B felony.”

<sup>1</sup>See attachment A for a copy of the penalty assessment sent on June 4, 2014  
<sup>2</sup>See attachment B for a copy of Bergman, Heidi Ann’s Mitigation Request received on June 19, 2014



6/7/14

Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission  
P.O. Box 47250  
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

2014 JUN 19 AM 8:12

To Whom it May Concern,

I, Heidi Bergman, did not obtain my household good permit, THG 64915, and the name "Alice the Mover" transferred over to me until the end of March, 2014. The annual yearly report was sent to 4126 268<sup>th</sup> St NW, Starwood, WA 98292... the original address of previous owner, Jerry Murrell. By the time I had received the form to fill out I was working on building the company, as myself as the new owner. I was waiting for some additional info from the previous owner to fill out the form accurately. I was not aware of the \$100.00 a day late fee. I called the UTC and left a message on Lynda's phone (I believe it was Lynda's phone), so I could discuss the annual report with her and explain what was going on. I did not receive a call back until a week later on the 9<sup>th</sup> from someone else who had gone through her messages. She transferred me through to someone (I want to say Tami?). She explained to me on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May that there was that \$100 fee daily and to fill it out the best I could and fax it immediately. I faxed it later that day and mailed

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a copy. I explained to her the reason was the recent transfer of the company to me, that I was unaware of the \$100.00 fee, and the transitioning into owning the company myself... the reasons for the delay is the report. As well as I needed additional information from previous owner. I wanted the paperwork to be thorough and accurate because that is how I do business, that is why I called the UTC to explain this. If I had reached someone on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and not left a message I would have sent it in immediately on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. When I left a message there was no message saying someone was out of the office, nor did I realize my call would take a week to be returned. I feel with all the circumstances that I did reach out to the UTC on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, I should only be charged the late fee through the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the \$600.00 penalty fee should be reduced. I am striving to make Alice the Mova a success, a company that helps and treats customers as if they are family. I am proud of Alice the Mova since I have taken over. I take all the requirements and the laws of the UTC very seriously in all that I do, even calling often to speak with Lynda or other staff to ask questions whenever I need a correct answer. There will be no late reports since I have taken over as the owner, no late reports here or out ever. And paying \$600.00 right now is quite alot between my new business owner expenses, new insurance, etc.

<sup>1</sup>See attachment A for a copy of the penalty assessment sent on June 4, 2014

<sup>2</sup>See attachment B for a copy of Bergman, Heidi Ann's Mitigation Request received on June 19, 2014





I do not want to start out as the new owner  
with a huge penalty in my file with UT.  
Please consider this when making your decision.

Sincerely,

Heidi Bergman  
Alice the Mover

When I spoke to the person on May 9th, she told me  
to explain this all to you and there maybe a chance  
of a reduced fee due to the circumstances.

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