

Agenda Date: October 29, 2020
Item Number: B2

Docket: TV-200809
Company Name: Household Goods Movers Tariff 15-C

Staff: Greg Hammond, Regulatory Analyst, Water and Transportation
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Recommendation

Issue an order approving the tariff revisions to Household Goods Movers Tariff 15-C as proposed by staff, to become effective November 1, 2020.

Discussion

This tariff revision is intended to clarify a few rules within Tariff 15-C, and to correct two tariff rates which were missed during the rate review that took effect in February of 2020.

Revisions to Item 85

The first proposed change is being made to codify the commission's guidance regarding mobile applications and digital platforms for estimates. In March 2017, the commission issued a letter to the household goods industry stating carriers may conduct visual inspections using video conferencing applications that allow the carrier to interact with the consumer "in real time." The proposed change would implement this guidance into Item 85 Estimates.

Revisions to Item 15

The second proposed change is to revise the title of Item 15, as it is not apparent that this item also addresses alternative pick up or delivery options. The current title implies this item only addresses refusal to provide service, pick up shipment or deliver shipment. However, this item also allows a carrier to provide additional service, such as a smaller vehicle, if the company is unable to provide service due to roads or driveways that are inaccessible or unsafe when using a standard sized moving truck.

Staff also reorganized this rule so it is more apparent that this activity is available for use.

In addition, while Item 15 currently allows the company to charge the customer for the additional cost of using smaller vehicles and/or other equipment to deliver or pick up the shipment, there is no guidance on how to appropriately charge for these activities. It appears that this guidance was inadvertently removed in a previous tariff revision, and staff's proposal aims to clarify that this additional service should use the hourly rates listed in Item 230.

Revision to Item 62, Item 195

The third proposed change is to correct two rate errors which have been discovered since the rate review took effect in February of 2020. The first rate change is to a rate contained in Item 62 (Appliance Service), specifically the maximum rate for appliance re-servicing for each additional article or appliance. The current maximum rate is lower than the current minimum rate. This change would correct this maximum rate to be in line with the other services listed under this section. The second rate change is to correct the minimum and maximum rates for “King mattress single-use cover” contained in Item 195 (Packing Charges). In the current tariff, these rates are lower than the rates for queen mattresses and were out of line with the rates contained in Item 196 (Container Prices). In staff’s proposal, the king mattress minimum and maximum rates listed in Item 195 have been corrected upward to maintain the correct ratio between the different sized containers.

Comments

On October 19, 2020, the Washington Movers Conference (WMC) filed comments generally supporting staff’s proposed revisions to Item 85 and providing alternative revisions to Item 15. Specifically, WMC proposes adding the definition of “household goods shuttle service” to Item 10, Definitions, and creating a new Tariff Item governing “household goods shuttle service.” Staff believes that WMC’s proposed changes unnecessarily duplicate existing language in Item 15 and fail to provide additional clarity.

Conclusion

Issue an order approving the tariff revisions to Household Goods Movers Tariff 15-C as proposed by staff, to become effective November 1, 2020.