

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of Amending Washington
Utilities and Transportation Commission
Tariff 15-C, Relating to Intrastate
Transportation of Household Goods

DOCKET TV-240781

ORDER 01

AMENDING TARIFF 15-C

BACKGROUND

- 1 On June 27, 2024, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) issued Order 08 in Dockets TV-210535 and TV-210812, immediately increasing the banded rates published in Tariff 15-C and requiring Commission staff (Staff) to propose rates to increase the banded rates so as to match inflation. Staff is required to calculate a proposed a rate annually, every November, so as to be effective every January 1.
- 2 This is the first inflation adjustment to the banded rates in Tariff 15-C. The inflation rate used was inflation growth from the 12 months ending October 2024, for the Seattle metro area as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The amount of the increase is 3 percent. Staff has revised the rates in Tariff 15-C to reflect the new rates. Staff has also made other administrative or grammar corrections as needed.
- 3 The Washington Movers Conference (WMC) filed comments, which have been posted to this docket. From the comments filed it appears the Washington Movers Conference opposes the rate increase proposed. WMC is an association representing companies that are engaged in the business of providing household goods services within the state of Washington.
- 4 Staff has evaluated inflationary data from the 12 months preceding November 2024, and has proposed an increase of 3 percent to the maximum band, so as to account for inflation. Staff believes that the revised rates are fair, just, and reasonable and in compliance with Order 08 in Dockets TV-210535 and TV-210812.
- 5 Accordingly, Staff recommends the Commission allows the tariff revisions, which it has filed in this docket, to take effect January 1, 2025.

6 This matter came before the Commission at its regularly scheduled open meeting on June 29, 2023.

7 Staff reiterated its position as outlined in its memorandum. Members of WMC, Jim Tutton, Executive Director, and Larry Nelsen, of Hanson’s Moving and Storage, provided comments expressing frustration with the Commission’s process and method of increases. The WMC recommended the Commission adopt a process whereby each company may file a maximum rate sheet that could be used by individual companies and amended up to twice a year. WMC also expressed concern that the Commission approved rates have simply not kept up with inflation and that the movers have struggled to attract employees and run their businesses. The WMC expressed that competition is overly present in the state and maximum rates would enable better business conditions. The WMC also expressed concerns that even with over 300 members, tariffs are so low that the WMC cannot afford attorneys or accountants to formally contest proceedings at the Commission.

DISCUSSION

8 The Commission recognizes that the household goods business is a competitive industry, and we recognize that added flexibility is needed. However, there are legal issues which must be addressed to ensure that the Commission can maintain it’s oversight over the safety of the industry.

9 On June 27, 2024, the Commission issued Order 08 in Dockets TV-210535 and TV-210812, immediately increasing the banded rates published in Tariff 15-C and requiring Commission staff (Staff) to increase the banded rates to match inflation to be effective every January 1.

10 Staff has calculated and proposed a rate of 3 percent, based on the preceding 12 months’ inflationary data as reported in the Seattle CPI. Notwithstanding the comments of the WMC, we believe this statewide increase is warranted and that an enduring mechanism to account for interest creates fair, just, equitable, and reasonable rates.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

11 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington vested by statute with the authority to regulate the rates, rules, regulations, practices, accounts, and affiliated interests of public service companies, including household goods carriers.

- 12 (2) Household goods carriers are subject to WAC 480-15-490(3).
- 13 (3) Companies subject to WAC 480-15-490(3) are required to follow the terms,
conditions, rates, and other requirements of the published tariff.
- 14 (4) This matter came before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on
December 19, 2024.
- 15 (5) After reviewing the Staff's request, we find that it is consistent with Order 08
in Dockets TV-210535 and TV-210812.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 16 (1) The revisions proposed by Commission Staff to Tariff 15-C are adopted for use
by all carriers transporting household goods in the state of Washington that are
subject to Commission regulation. Specifically, along with minor grammar
changes, the Commission authorizes a 3 percent increase in maximum rates to
Tariff 15-C to become effective January 1, 2025.
- 17 (2) The Commission adopts the Tariff revisions proposed by Commission Staff and
presented at the regularly scheduled Open Meeting on December 19, 2024.
- 18 (3) The Commission retains jurisdiction over the subject matter, to effectuate the
provisions of this Order.

Dated at Lacey, Washington, and effective December 19, 2024.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DAVID W. DANNER, Chair

ANN E. RENDAHL, Commissioner

MILTON H. DOUMIT, Commissioner