



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

621 Woodland Square Loop S.E. • Lacey, Washington 98503

P.O. Box 47250 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7250

(360) 664-1160 • TTY (360) 586-8203

**Date:** August 1, 2019

**To:** Rayne Pearson, Director, Administrative Law Division

**From:** Jason Sharp, Motor Carrier Safety Supervisor, Transportation Safety Division

**Re: TV-190514 and TV-190515 Safe to Go Movers, LLC**  
Evaluation of Safety Management Plan, Recommendations regarding the company's safety rating, and the cancellation of its household goods operating authority (HG066130)

On June 13, 2019 staff completed a routine safety investigation of Safe to Go Movers, LLC which resulted in a proposed *unsatisfactory* safety rating.

Commission rules prohibit motor carriers from operating beginning on the 61<sup>st</sup> day after the date of the notice of a proposed unsatisfactory rating. A company may request a change in its safety rating based on evidence that it has taken corrective actions to address the identified violations, and that its operations currently meet the safety standard and factors in 49 CFR 385.5 and 385.7. In this case, Safe to Go Movers, LLC has until August 13, 2019, to come into compliance with applicable laws and rules by obtaining commission approval of a safety management plan.

**The proposed unsatisfactory safety rating was based on four violations of acute and critical regulations – 391.15(a), 395.8(a)(1), 396.17(a), and WAC 480-15-555.**

**“Acute”** regulations are those identified as such where non-compliance is so severe as to require immediate corrective actions by a motor carrier regardless of the overall safety posture of the motor carrier.

**“Critical”** regulations are those identified as such where non-compliance relates to management and operational controls. These are indicative of breakdowns in a company's management controls. Patterns of non-compliance with a critical regulation are linked to inadequate safety management controls and higher than average accident rates.

**Acute violation discovered during investigation:**

1. Forty-two violations of Title 49 CFR Part 391.15(a) – Using a disqualified driver.

**Critical violations discovered during investigation:**

2. One hundred twenty violations of Title 49 CFR Part 395.8(a)(1) – Failing to require driver to prepare a record of duty status using the appropriate method.
3. Two violations of Title 49 CFR Part 396.17(a) – Using a commercial motor vehicle not periodically inspected.
4. Thirty-four violations of WAC 480-15-555 – Failing to acquire criminal background checks of prospective employees.

In a July 1, 2019, Notice of Intent to Cancel Permit, the commission instructed the company to submit its proposed safety management plan no later than July 26, 2019.

On July 9, 2019, the commission issued a penalty assessment against Safe to Go Movers, LLC in the amount of \$8,600 as a result of violations discovered during the routine safety investigation.<sup>1</sup> On July 24, 2019, Safe to Go Movers, LLC filed with the commission its application for mitigation of penalties. In the request for mitigation, James Mwangi, owner of Safe to Go Movers, LLC, admitted the violations, stated he believed that the penalty should be reduced. Safe to Go Movers, LLC asked for a commission decision based solely on the information provided and has waived its right to a hearing

On July 30, 2019, Safe to Go Movers, LLC submitted a safety management plan addressing each violation noted during the investigation. Staff only recommends approving a safety management plan that addresses the following seven items:

1. The plan must address each acute, critical, or serious violation discovered during the most recent investigation. It must also include corrective actions that address other violations noted during the investigation.
2. Identify why the violations were permitted to occur.
3. Discuss the actions taken to correct the deficiency or deficiencies that allowed the violations to occur. Include actual documentation of this corrective action.
4. Outline actions taken to ensure that similar violations do not reoccur in the future. The plan must demonstrate that the company's operations currently meet the safety standard and factors specified in 49 CFR 385.5 and 385.7. To do so, the plan must demonstrate the company now has adequate safety management controls in place which function effectively to ensure acceptable compliance with applicable safety requirements.
5. If the request includes actions that will be conducted in the near future, such as training, reorganization of departments, purchasing of computer programs, etc., companies must include a detailed description of the activity or training and a schedule of when that activity will commence and when it will be completed.
6. Include any additional documentation relating to motor carrier safety and the prevention of crashes that the company believes supports its request.
7. Include a written statement certifying the company will operate within federal and state regulations and the company's operation currently meets the safety standard and factors specific

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<sup>1</sup> TV-190514

in 49 CFR 385.5 and 385.7. A corporate officer, partner, or the owner of the company must sign the statement.

### **Summary and Recommendations**

Staff reviewed Safe to Go Movers, LLC's proposed safety management plan and concludes it is acceptable and meets the requirements of 49 CFR, Part 385. Staff recommends the commission consolidate Dockets TV-190514 and TV-190515 and upgrade the company's safety rating to *conditional*.

In response to the request for mitigation, the company corrected each violation and took steps to prevent future occurrences. Staff recommends no mitigation of the \$8,600 penalty and aims to communicate with the severity and number of repeat violations discovered is intolerable. Staff recommends that \$5,000 of the penalty be suspended for a period of two years before being waived, on the conditions that: 1) staff conducts a non-rated safety investigation at least six months from the date of an Order, 2) the company may not incur any repeat acute or critical violations, 3) Safe to Go Movers, LLC maintains a conditional safety rating, and 4) Safe to Go Movers, LLC pays the \$3,600 portion of the penalty that is not suspended.

The company took all the required steps to bring its safety operations into compliance with commission regulations. Safe to Go Movers, LLC submitted a safety management plan that addresses each violation, identifies how they occurred, describes the steps taken to correct them, and put controls in place to ensure the company maintains compliance.

Documentation of driver medical certification, driver qualifications, a criminal background check of the company's employee, hours of service records and vehicle maintenance files including the annual inspection were included in the plan.

