

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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

PENALTY ASSESSMENT: TV-250666

PENALTY AMOUNT: \$600

Away We Go Moving LLC
23403 East Mission Avenue, Suite 205
Liberty Lake, Washington 99019
kenny@awgmoving.com

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) believes Away We Go Moving LLC (Away We Go or Company) violated Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 480-15-555, Criminal Background Checks for Prospective Employees; and WAC 480-15-560 Vehicle and Driver Safety Requirements, which adopts Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (49 C.F.R.) Part 396 – Inspection, Repair and Maintenance.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 81.04.405 allows penalties of \$100 for each violation. In the case of an ongoing violation, every day's continuance is considered a separate and distinct violation.

On August 15, 2025, Commission Motor Carrier Investigators Sandra Yeomans and Jacob Brunton completed a routine safety investigation of Away We Go and documented the following violations:

- **Five violations of WAC 480-15-555(1) - Failure to complete a criminal background check for every person the carrier intends to hire.** The Company failed to acquire criminal background checks prior to hiring employees Anthony Parham, Hugo Piedra, Tyler Sandow, Jourdan Schroeder, and Joshua Williams.
- **Three violations of 49 C.F.R § 396.3(b) – Failing to keep minimum records of inspection and vehicle maintenance.** The Company failed to keep the minimum records of inspection and maintenance for the three commercial motor vehicles (CMV) as required.¹

The Commission considered the following factors in determining the appropriate penalties for these violations:

1. **How serious or harmful the violations are to the public.** The violations noted are serious and potentially harmful to the public. Household goods moving companies that (1) fail to conduct criminal background checks prior to hiring their employees, and (2) fail to keep minimum records of inspection and vehicle maintenance, put their customers, their customers' belongings, and the traveling public at risk. These violations present safety concerns.

¹ VIN: 5PVNE8JT282S52797 and 1FVACWDT3HHJB2159

2. **Whether the violations were intentional.** Considerations include:

- Whether the Company ignored Commission staff's (Staff) previous technical assistance; and
- Whether there is clear evidence through documentation or other means that shows the Company knew of and failed to correct the violation.

On January 19, 2024, Kenneth Smith, owner of Away We Go, completed the Commission's online safety training for household goods companies.

On February 26, 2024, the Commission received an application for household goods moving authority. In the application, Kenneth Smith acknowledged the Company's responsibility to understand and comply with applicable motor carrier safety laws and regulations.

The Company knew or should have known about these requirements.

3. **Whether the Company self-reported the violations.** Away We Go did not self-report these violations.
4. **Whether the Company was cooperative and responsive.** The Company was cooperative throughout the safety investigation and expressed a desire to come into compliance.
5. **Whether the Company promptly corrected the violations and remedied the impacts.** Away We Go corrected several violations.
6. **The number of violations.** Staff identified 19 violation types with a total of 34 individual occurrences during its safety investigation of Away We Go. Of those violations, Staff identified two violation types with eight individual occurrences that warrant penalties in accordance with the Commission's Enforcement Policy.
7. **The number of customers affected.** Away We Go Moving traveled 7,304 miles in 2024. These violations presented a public safety risk.
8. **The likelihood of recurrence.** Staff provided technical assistance with specific remedies to help the Company assess how well its safety management controls support safe operations and how to begin improving its safety performance. The Company was cooperative throughout the safety investigation and took corrective actions during the safety investigation. In light of these factors, Staff believes the likelihood of recurrence is low.
9. **The Company's past performance regarding compliance, violations, and penalties.** The Company has no history of penalties for safety violations.
10. **The Company's existing compliance program.** Kenneth Smith is responsible for the Company's safety compliance program.

11. **The size of the Company.** Away We Go currently employs four drivers and operates three CMVs. The Company reported \$251,200.91 in gross revenue for 2024.

The Commission's Enforcement Policy provides that some Commission requirements are so fundamental to safe operations that the Commission will issue mandatory penalties for each occurrence of a first-time violation.² The Commission generally will assess penalties by violation category, rather than per occurrence, for first-time violations of those critical regulations that do not meet the requirements for mandatory penalties. The Commission will assess penalties for any equipment violation meeting the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's "out-of-service" criteria and for repeat violations of critical regulations, including each occurrence of a repeat violation.

The Commission has considered these factors and determined that it should penalize Away We Go \$600 (Penalty Assessment), calculated as follows:

- Five violations of WAC 480-15-555(1) – Failure to complete a criminal background check for every person the carrier intends to hire. The Commission assesses a penalty of \$100 for each occurrence of these first-time critical violations, for a total of \$500.
- Three violations of Title 49 CFR § 396.3(b) – Failing to keep minimum records of inspection and vehicle maintenance. The Commission assesses a "per category" penalty of \$100 for this first-time critical violation, for a total of \$100.

This information, if proven at a hearing and not rebutted or explained, is sufficient to support the Penalty Assessment.

Your penalty is due and payable now. If you believe either or both of the violations did not occur, you may deny committing the violation(s) and contest the penalty through evidence presented at a hearing or in writing. Alternatively, if there is a reason for either or both of the violations that you believe should excuse you from the penalty, you may ask for mitigation (reduction) of the penalty through evidence presented at a hearing or in writing. The Commission will grant a request for hearing only if material issues of law or fact require consideration of evidence and resolution in a hearing. Any request to contest the violation(s) or for mitigation of the penalty 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* RCW 81.04.405.

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(s) 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 their decision.

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

- Pay the amount due.
- Contest the occurrence of the violation(s).

² Docket A-120061 – Enforcement Policy of the Washington Utilities & Transportation Commission – Section V.

- Admit the violations but request mitigation of the penalty amount.

Please indicate your selection on the enclosed form and submit it electronically through the Commission's web portal at <https://efiling.utc.wa.gov/Form> **within FIFTEEN (15) days** after you receive this Penalty Assessment.³ If you are unable to use the web portal, you may submit it via email to records@utc.wa.gov. If you are unable to submit the form electronically, you may send a paper copy to the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, PO Box 47250, Olympia, Washington 98504-7250.

If you wish to make a payment online, please use this link: [Make a Payment Now \(wa.gov\)](#).⁴

If you do not act within 15 days, the Commission may take additional enforcement action, including but not necessarily limited to suspending or revoking your certificate to provide regulated service, assessing additional penalties, or referring this matter to the Office of the Attorney General for collection.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, and effective October 1, 2025.

/s/ Connor Thompson
CONNOR THOMPSON
Director, Administrative Law Division

³ <https://efiling.utc.wa.gov/Form>.

⁴ <https://www.utc.wa.gov/documents-and-proceedings/online-payments/make-payment-now>

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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.
☐ Enclose \$600 in payment of the penalty.
OR ☐ Attest that I have paid the penalty in full through the Commission's payment portal.
- ☐ 2. **Contest the violation(s).** I believe that the alleged violation(s) did not occur for the reasons I describe below (**if you do not include reasons supporting your contest here, your request will be denied**):
- ☐ 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.
- ☐ 3. **Application for mitigation.** I admit the violations, but I believe that the penalty should be reduced for the reasons set out below (**if you do not include reasons supporting your application here, your request will be denied**):
- ☐ 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 or she makes a materially false statement which he or she 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 or her 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.