

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In re Application of

FITZGERALD TRANSPORT INC.  
D/B/A COAST MOVERS,

for a permit to operate as a motor carrier  
of household goods.

DOCKET TV-250738

ORDER 01

INITIAL ORDER DENYING  
APPLICATION FOR PERMANENT  
AUTHORITY

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 **Current Application.** On October 1, 2025, Fitzgerald Transport Inc. d/b/a Coast Movers (Fitzgerald Transport) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) an application for authority to operate as a household goods carrier in the state of Washington (Application). The Application lists Jonathon Sheridan as Fitzgerald Transport's owner.
- 2 Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 81.80.075(3) requires the Commission to consider whether an applicant for a household goods carrier permit is fit to perform the services proposed and is willing and able to conform to the requirements, rules, and regulations of the Commission. RCW 81.80.075(3) also requires the Commission to consider whether the applicant's proposed operations are consistent with the public interest.
- 3 The Commission will grant or deny an application for permanent authority after it conducts a complete review of the application, including supporting statements, reports, or other information necessary to determine fitness. The Commission's rules provide that the Commission may reject or deny an application for permanent authority if the Commission believes the applicant is unfit, or if issuing the permit is not in the public interest.<sup>1</sup>
- 4 The Commission will not grant provisional or permanent authority if an application contains any indication of fraud, misrepresentation, or erroneous information<sup>2</sup> or if other circumstances indicate.

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<sup>1</sup> See generally WAC 480-15-302, -305.

<sup>2</sup> WAC 480-15-302(2).

5 If it is necessary to resolve outstanding issues or concerns related to fitness or the public  
interest, or any other issue resulting from a complaint or public comment, the  
Commission may hold a hearing or brief adjudicative proceeding on any application for  
permanent authority.<sup>3</sup>

6 Commission staff (Staff)<sup>4</sup> has reviewed the Application and recommends that the  
Commission deny the Application for reasons set out below.

7 On October 1, 2025, Fitzgerald Transport filed the Application. The Application lists  
Jonathon Sheridan as that company's sole owner and states that the company had  
previously possessed Commission-issued household goods carrier permit HG064232. In  
response to question 12(3) of the Application Questionnaire, which concerns whether any  
person named in the application had been found to have violated Commission rules, Mr.  
Sheridan checked "No."

8 **Reincarnation.** In 2010, Jonathon Sheridan applied for and received from the  
Commission, in Docket TV-101646, a household goods carrier permit. The household  
goods carrier permit, number HG064232, authorized Jonathon Sheridan to operate under  
the trade name JFS Transport.<sup>5</sup>

9 Later, in Docket TV-121441, the Commission approved an application to transfer  
household goods carrier permit HG064232 to a limited liability corporation called JFS  
Transport, Inc. (JFS Transport). The JFS Transport's articles of incorporation, provided  
to the Commission in the transfer docket, list Jonathon Sheridan as the JFS Transport's  
owner.<sup>6</sup>

10 The address provided for Jonathon Sheridan in the Application is the same as the one  
listed on the Secretary of State's website for the Jonathon Sheridan who was the governor  
and registered agent of JFS Transport.<sup>7</sup> Given the common ownership and management,

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<sup>3</sup> WAC 480-15-350.

<sup>4</sup> In adjudications the Commission's regulatory staff participates like any other party, while the  
Administrative Law Judge or the Commissioners make the decision. To ensure fairness, the  
Commissioners and the presiding administrative law judge do not discuss the merits of the  
proceeding with regulatory staff or any other party without giving notice and opportunity for all  
parties to participate. *See* RCW 34.05.455.

<sup>5</sup> Remfrey, Exh. PR-4 at 5.

<sup>6</sup> Remfrey, Exh. PR-2.

<sup>7</sup> Remfrey TR 16:2-5; Remfrey, Exh. PR-3 (The Secretary of State administratively dissolved JFS  
Transport, effective January 1, 2024, for failing to file its annual report.).

Fitzgerald Transport is a reincarnation of JFS Transport.<sup>8</sup> As a result, when we refer to “Company” in this Order we refer to JFS Transport and Fitzgerald Transport as the same entity and attribute JFS Transport’s history to Fitzgerald Transport’s application.<sup>9</sup>

- 11 **Enforcement History.** JFS Transport was not a stranger to the Commission’s enforcement docket. The Commission: (1) on two occasions canceled the company’s operating permit, once for failure to file or maintain proof of insurance and once based on a default in a proceeding arising from a proposed unsatisfactory safety rating resulting from a Staff compliance review;<sup>10</sup> (2) on four occasions suspended the company’s operating permit for some period of time for failure to file or maintain proof of insurance;<sup>11</sup> (3) imposed penalties for failure to timely submit an annual report;<sup>12</sup> and (4) twice imposed penalties for violations of the public service laws, the Commission’s rules, and Tariff 15-C.<sup>13</sup>
- 12 **Outstanding Penalty.** Under Washington Administrative Code WAC 480-15-305(1)(f), the Commission will not grant permanent authority to an applicant who has an outstanding Commission-issued monetary penalty. As a result of the Company’s past conduct, the Commission previously assessed a total of \$28,350 in penalties.<sup>14</sup> To date, the penalty remains unpaid. Mr. Sheridan and Fitzgerald Transport may not obtain permanent authority as long as that penalty is outstanding.<sup>15</sup> The Company’s testimony<sup>16</sup> at the hearing admitted to, at the time, lacking the financial resources to pay for

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<sup>8</sup> See generally 49 C.F.R. § 385.1001-.1019; WAC 480-15-560(1).

<sup>9</sup> See generally 9 C.F.R. § 385.1001-.1019; WAC 480-15-560(1).

<sup>10</sup> The Commission canceled JFS Transport’s operating permit in Dockets TV-132247 and TV-220509.

<sup>11</sup> The Commission JFS Transport’s operating permit in Dockets TV-121246, TV-131657, TV-132247 (this suspension later became a cancellation, as noted supra, note 6), and TV-140730.

<sup>12</sup> The Commission imposed these penalties in Dockets TV-120943 and TV-150911.

<sup>13</sup> The Commission imposed the first set of these penalties in Docket TV-180315. Some of the penalties were initially suspended but later made due and payable due to violations of the suspension conditions. The Commission imposed the second set of penalties in Docket TV-200861.

<sup>14</sup> JRemfrey, TR. 24:4-6.

<sup>15</sup> WAC 480-15-305(1)(f) (requiring that “[t]he applicant has no outstanding commission-issued monetary penalties.” WAC 480-15-305(1)(g) (requiring that “[t]he applicant has paid all outstanding fees or other amounts due to the commission.”).

<sup>16</sup> Sheridan, TR. 31:17-34:17.

insurance.<sup>17</sup>

- 13 **Opportunity to Cure.** Staff informed Fitzgerald Transport that it believed the Application contained material omissions.<sup>18</sup> The Company supplemented with an addendum that stated “regarding question #12 [my] apologies on my answer.<sup>19</sup> I have had violations years ago. I do not remember the details.”<sup>20</sup>
- 14 **Notice Of Intent to Deny.** On October 22, 2025, the Commission issued a Notice of Intent to Deny Application for Permanent Authority and Notice of Opportunity for Hearing (Notice) resulting from Staff’s review and investigation of the Application. Staff alleged: (1) the Application is misleading because it does not disclose Sheridan’s previous ownership and operation of JFS Transport; and (2) the undisclosed history with the Commission weighs heavily against a finding of regulatory fitness to operate as a household goods carrier in the state of Washington. The Notice provided Fitzgerald Transport the opportunity to request a hearing to contest these allegations by November 5, 2025.
- 15 **Hearing.** On October 27, 2025, Fitzgerald Transport filed with the Commission a Request for Hearing. The Commission noticed the matter as a brief adjudicative proceeding and convened an evidentiary hearing before Administrative Law Judge Bijan Hughes on December 8, 2025, at 1:31 p.m.
- 16 Sydney Goldberg, Assistant Attorney General, represented Staff. Mr. Sheridan, *pro se*, represented Fitzgerald Transport.<sup>21</sup>
- 17 Staff filed and served 17 exhibits to the Company at the email address on file.<sup>22</sup> The Company did not object to any of the exhibits.<sup>23</sup> The first 16 exhibits were entered into evidence.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> WAC 480-15-302 (4)(“The applicant has provided evidence that the applicant possesses sufficient financial resources to operate a moving company.”).

<sup>18</sup> Remfrey, TR. 25:2-10 (“I gave Mr. Sheridan the benefit of the doubt. And on October 1<sup>st</sup>, I emailed him . . .”).

<sup>19</sup> Remfrey, Exh. PR-17 at 1.

<sup>20</sup> Remfrey TR. 25:11-14.

<sup>21</sup> Sheridan, TR. 7:4-5.

<sup>22</sup> Goldberg, TR. 10:5-9.

<sup>23</sup> Sheridan, TR. 14:14-17.

<sup>24</sup> Hughes, TR. 25:17-19.

- 18 At the hearing, Staff presented documentary evidence and the testimony of Patrick Remfrey, licensing services manager of the Transportation Safety Division;<sup>25</sup> Mr. Sheridan testified for the Company.<sup>26</sup>
- 19 Staff explained in its testimony that in the process of reviewing the Application, Staff recognized Mr. Sheridan's name.<sup>27</sup> Due to Staff's previous dealings with the Company, it suspected that the applicant did not candidly answer "Part 3 of Question 12," which inquires if the applicant has ever been found to have violated Commission rules.<sup>28</sup>
- 20 Staff recommended the Commission deny the Application for failure to meet the requirements of WAC 480-15-302(2) and WAC 480-15-302(13) based on the reasons and testimony described above.<sup>29</sup>
- 21 Staff also recommended that the Commission deny Fitzgerald Transport's application as not in the public interest.<sup>30</sup> Staff based this recommendation on the evidence tending to show that the Company has "a very long history of not following Commission rules."<sup>31</sup>
- 22 The Company's representative Mr. Sheridan testified, asking for "reinstatement" of his "household goods authority permit for Fitzgerald Transport."<sup>32</sup> Mr. Sheridan testified that he had overcome great personal difficulties, and that some of his past violations during the 2021-24 time frame were attributable to a drug addiction and a need for subsistence.<sup>33</sup> When asked about the time period between 2012 and 2020, Mr. Sheridan testified that the violations were the result of his disorganization.<sup>34</sup> When asked about the candidness of his initial answer, he acknowledged the mistake.<sup>35</sup> When asked why he did not candidly

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<sup>25</sup> Remfrey, TR. 11:5-11.

<sup>26</sup> Sheridan, TR. 7:4-15

<sup>27</sup> Remfrey, TR. 13:7-9.

<sup>28</sup> Remfrey, TR. 14:22-25, 25:2-14.

<sup>29</sup> Remfrey, TR. 26:22-25.

<sup>30</sup> Goldberg, TR. 41:18-19.

<sup>31</sup> Remfrey, TR. 27:3-5.

<sup>32</sup> Sheridan, TR. 31:19-21. We note that the current preceding is an application for new authority, and not for reinstatement. WAC 480-15-450(b) ("If the carrier files an application for reinstatement after thirty days of cancellation, the application will be considered in all aspects to be an application for new authority. . .").

<sup>33</sup> Sheridan, TR. 33:13-34:11.

<sup>34</sup> Sheridan, TR. 35:5-23.

<sup>35</sup> Sheridan, TR. 38:5-6.

answer the question when the omission was brought to his attention, he did not have an explanation.<sup>36</sup>

### DISCUSSION

- 23 Based upon the information Staff presented, the Commission agrees with Staff's recommendation and denies the Application. The Commission finds the material omissions on the Application and the poor compliance history of JFS Transport, Jonathon Sheridan's previous household goods carrier, show the company is unfit to hold a permit under WAC 480-15-302(2) and (13).
- 24 RCW 81.80.075(3) requires the Commission to issue a household goods permit to any qualified applicant found to be fit, willing, and able to perform the services proposed and conform to the applicable laws, requirements, rules, and regulations of the Commission. As the applicant, Fitzgerald Transport bears the burden of proving that it is fit, willing, and able to conduct business as a household goods carrier, and that issuing a permit to the Company is in the public interest.<sup>37</sup>
- 25 WAC 480-15-302 and -305 set out the various criteria for obtaining provisional or permanent authority to operate as a household goods company. As relevant to this matter, the rules explain that the Commission may deny applications: (a) that contain any indication of fraud, misrepresentation, or erroneous information;<sup>38</sup> (b) when the applicant has an outstanding Commission-issued monetary penalty;<sup>39</sup> or (c) when other circumstances cause the Commission to believe issuing a permit is not in the public interest.<sup>40</sup>
- 26 Under WAC 480-15-302(2), the Commission may deny an application containing any indication of fraud, misrepresentation, or erroneous information. Staff believes that the Application, as originally filed, contained fraud, misrepresentation, or erroneous information because it omitted mention of the numerous instances in which the Commission cancelled or suspended JFS Transport's permit or imposed penalties on JFS Transport for violations of the Commission's rules. Staff does not believe that the Company has cured these omissions.

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<sup>36</sup> Sheridan, TR. 40:2-3.

<sup>37</sup> RCW 81.80.075(3)

<sup>38</sup> WAC 480-15-302(2).

<sup>39</sup> WAC 480-15-305(1)(f).

<sup>40</sup> WAC 480-15-302(13) and WAC 480-15-305(1)(j).

- 27 Under WAC 480-15-302(13), the Commission will deny operating authority when other circumstances justify doing so. JFS Transport, which Jonathon Sheridan owned and managed, had a significant and negative compliance history. Both the Commission and the Secretary of State took action against the company for failing to file annual reports. The Commission repeatedly suspended or cancelled the company's permit for failing to file or maintain insurance. The Commission imposed penalties for JFS Transport's hundreds of violations of the public services laws, the Commission's rules, and Tariff 15-C. Ultimately, the Commission cancelled JFS Transport's permit after a compliance review produced a proposed unsatisfactory safety rating, a rating that became permanent when JFS Transport failed to appear at hearing. JFS Transport's compliance history shows that Fitzgerald Transport, JFS Transport's reincarnation, does not possess the regulatory fitness to operate as a household goods carrier in the state of Washington.
- 28 Staff's presentation of evidence, and Fitzgerald's lack of rebuttal, both support the conclusion that the Applicant failed to meet the requirements of WAC 480-15-302(2) and (13), and that the Commission should deny the Application.

#### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 29 (1) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is an agency of the state of Washington, vested by statute with authority to regulate rates, rules, regulations, and practices of public service companies, including household goods companies, and has jurisdiction over the parties and subject matter of this proceeding.
- 30 (2) Fitzgerald Transport is a reincarnation of JFS Transport. The two entities share a mailing address and ownership, and the Company did not contest these facts.
- 31 (3) The Application filed by Fitzgerald Transport for authority to operate as a household goods moving company is misleading, as the lack of candor obfuscated material information.
- 32 (4) The Commission has previously assessed a total of \$28,350 in penalties against JFS Transport. To date, the penalty remains unpaid, which automatically bars Mr. Sheridan from obtaining a permanent permit.
- 33 (5) Mr. Sheridan's testimony at hearing admitted a lack of adequate financial resources to pay for insurance, which is independently disqualifying for a provisional permit. Moreover, the history of violations testified to by Staff were serious and numerous. In total, the sum of past conduct of the Company constitutes "other circumstances" warranting denial of the Application.

- 34 (6) Fitzgerald Transport failed to demonstrate that it is fit, willing, and able to provide household goods moving services.
- 35 (7) For each of the reasons set forth above, the Commission should deny Fitzgerald Transport's Application for permanent authority to operate as a household goods carrier in the state of Washington.

**ORDER**

THE COMMISSION ORDERS THAT:

- 36 (1) The Application filed by Fitzgerald Transport Inc. d/b/a Coast Movers on May 26, 2025, for permanent authority to operate as a household goods carrier in the state of Washington is DENIED.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, and effective March 6, 2026.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

/s/ Bijan Hughes  
BIJAN HUGHES  
Administrative Law Judge

### NOTICE TO THE PARTIES

This is an Initial Order. The action proposed in this Initial Order is not yet effective. If you disagree with this Initial Order and want the Commission to consider your comments, you must take specific action within the time limits outlined below. If you agree with this Initial Order, and you would like the Order to become final before the time limits expire, you may send a letter to the Commission, waiving your right to petition for administrative review.

WAC 480-07-825(2) provides that any party to this proceeding has twenty (20) days after the entry of this Initial Order to file a *Petition for Administrative Review*. What must be included in any Petition and other requirements for a Petition are stated in WAC 480-07-825(3). WAC 480-07-825(4) states that any party may file an *Answer* to a Petition for review within (10) days after service of the Petition.

WAC 480-07-830 provides that before entry of a Final Order any party may file a Petition to Reopen a contested proceeding to permit receipt of evidence essential to a decision, but unavailable and not reasonably discoverable at the time of hearing, or for other good and sufficient cause. No Answer to a Petition to Reopen will be accepted for filing absent express notice by the Commission calling for such answer.

RCW 80.01.060(3) provides that an initial order will become final without further Commission action if no party seeks administrative review of the initial order and if the Commission fails to exercise administrative review on its own motion.

One copy of any Petition or Answer filed must be served on each party of record with proof of service as required by WAC 480-07-150(8) and (9). An Original and four (4) copies of any Petition or Answer must be filed by mail delivery to:

Attn: Jeff Killip, Executive Director and Secretary  
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission  
P.O. Box 47250  
Olympia, Washington 98504-7250